**English Education Advisory Board**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, March 28, 2022**

**Virtual Meeting**

**5:00-6:30pm**

**In attendance**: Michael Boatright, Catherine Carter, Jenny Zimmerman, Jill White, Amelia Allman, Andrew Devine, Ben Cutler, Robbie Robles, Morgan Denton, Nicole Cockey, Michelle McSwain, Kristina McCall

Michael Boatright started the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and then everyone in the meeting introduced themselves. After introductions, Michael shared that effective February 2020, English Education at WCU is recognized by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) as a program of excellence and encouraged Board members to share the new brochure that reflects this wonderful recognition with colleagues and students. He also announced that English Education continues to have 100% job placement for program graduates.

The next topic was program changes. Michael Boatright let Board members know that the newly renamed Department of English Studies adopted a new curriculum that will be rolled out this fall. This new curriculum has a required core set of courses for all English majors, and those courses are *ENGL 201: Introduction to Literature and Film*, *ENGL 301: Introduction to Linguistics*, *ENGL 302: Introduction to Creative Writing and Editing*, *ENGL 303 Introduction to Professional Writing*, *ENGL 314: Introduction to Public Rhetorics*. He shared with Board members that these new courses better reflect the professional pathways students pursue after graduation. He also let Board members know that the English Education BSEd will abide by this core, that no methods courses were changed, and that Shakespeare is no longer a required course. Instead, it is an encouraged elective. Michael also shared with Board members that the November Unit/April Unit, first implemented in 2018 for Intern I’s at the behest of this Advisory Board, continues to receive positive reviews from Interns and Clinical Educators. It is a required project for Internship I in English Education.

After program highlights and program changes were shared, the floor was open to contributions from Board members.

Robbie Robles suggested that we incorporate more opportunities for students in methods courses to **practice teaching poetry**, and Catherine Carter shared that she is in the process of writing a methods book for teaching poetry. A few Board members talked about the Teach Living Poets resource for using poetry that speaks to adolescent readers (<https://poets.org/anthology/teach-living-poets>), and Catherine stated that she begins units on teaching poetry by using poetry written by children/adolescent poets. There are a few online resources that spotlight young poets that could be used in our classrooms.

Next was the topic of **teaching challenges during the pandemic**. Several Board members spoke of the learning loss that has occurred over the past two years as well as issues with socialization. Students are relearning how to be classmates again, readjusting to 90 minutes of instruction, and being accountable for their work. Jill White said that we also need to look at what learning was gained as a result of the pandemic because it’s easy to view things only from a deficit perspective. What did students learn how to do? Are they more savvy with technology and making interactive content than they were before the pandemic? This comment from Jill followed in the chat feature, “I have changed a lot about my teaching to make it more equitable in COVID times. If you had told me pre-pandemic that I would not take off late points, I would have scoffed. But, kids need our grace just like we need theirs right now, and it is okay to give it. We are allowed to reinvent our profession and should take this opportunity to do so.” Several Board members agreed.

Another topic that came up was providing opportunities for students in their methods classes to do **teaching demos** in front of actual high school students. Most teaching demos have historically occurred in front of students’ own classmates on campus. Michael Boatright and Catherine Carter will devise a project for their methods classes in which students will travel to a local school and teach one lesson, or a full day of lessons, with a participating Board member or teacher in our area. This would not only free up space in already full methods courses; it would allow students opportunities to experience real life teaching to high school students prior to Internship.

**Assessment** was another topic. Jenny Zimmerman, while acknowledging the challenges of assessment and preparing Interns for high-stakes assessments like edTPA, stated that we need a balance between how much we emphasize assessment/standards and how we are encouraging students to find joy in learning. The two can coexist. Robbie Robles asked how we can do assessment and do it fairly, purposely, and efficiently. The following online resources were shared that can help Interns develop engaging lesson plans that also integrate test prep: <https://www.quill.org>, <https://www.activelylearn.com>, <https://www.commonlit.org/en>, <https://www.edmentum.com>.

**Teacher Panels** was another topic that surfaced. Current and recent graduates have shared how important these panels are for having real conversations about life after graduation. As a program, English Education faculty have used teacher panels in the past but have restricted them to the capstone course (ENGL 417), which is halfway through Internship for fall Intern I’s and before spring Intern I’s have met their future CE’s and students. These teacher panels could occur in ENGL 414 (fall) and English 418 (spring), and they could address the following:

* work/life balance
* classroom management
* ways to resist as a beginning teacher
* time management (use of planning periods, days to grade, days to give feedback, days for meetings, etc.)
* building rapport with students and how to do it and encourage it

Robbie Robles brought up the importance of teachers’ **attendance during pre-planning at host schools** and asked if this is something that can be required of Fall Intern I’s. This is something that Michael Boatright will look into with the Office of Field Experience. The November/April Unit requirement is something required only by English Education, and perhaps attending pre-planning can be added as a requirement, or a highly encouraged professional development activity, for Intern I’s. Michael will report back to the Advisory Board later this spring on this one.

**Forms of compensation for Clinical Educators (CE’s)** served as one of the closing topics discussed. Robbie Robles suggested giving CE’s the opportunity to take one free graduate course in English Studies each year. Michael Boatright and Catherine Carter both thought this would be one way to give back to CE’s for their dedicated work all year in mentoring Interns. Michael will investigate this possibility and report bac to the Board what he finds out.