FYW Pedagogy Meeting Minutes for January 30, 2015

Meeting Called to Order: 2:00pm

Attending: Nicole Blair, Alison Cardinal, Caitlin Carle, Ruiming Cash, Jeff Fitzgerald, Asao Inoue, Kelvin Keown, LeAnne Laux-Bachand, Jim Liner, Andrea Modarres, Ali Walker Stromdahl, Amy Whitcomb

Announcements & Updates:

Housekeeping - The Writing Center closes at 3pm on Fridays.

Discussion Notes:

_Kelvin_ (ch 1, p. 11): Critical thinking as radical openness; critical thinking is a process (not a "right answer").
_Nicole_: Think out loud.
_Ali_: It’s hard to adjust students to "I don't have an answer"; takes a while to get used to that.
_Jeff_: We (teachers) are not infallible.; how do we deal with ambiguity with so many disciplines that seem to have "the right answer"?
_Nicole_: Writing as process? Writing as a tool of discovery?
_Caitlin_: How to be more comfortable with discomfort; many students don't see the "transfer" with inductive or explorative approaches to writing (writing to learn).
_Ruiming_: Often there is no one right question either; sometimes students need to be helped in finding the right kinds of questions.
_Amy_: What's the problem you're trying to figure out (research question)?
_Jim_: Absence of a single right answer; there's a balancing act: it's not that anything goes.
_Asao_: Maybe we teach students that knowledge is contingent and contextual (kairotic); assignments are not done, they are due.
_Ali_: Writing is never done, just due.
_Asao_: How do you address the labor of students who write and miss the mark?
_Jim_: Get credit for draft, even if the draft doesn't meet the requirements; repurpose the work for other things, just not this assignment.
_Nicole_: Need a midpoint draft, not just a final draft (syllabus issue).
_Amy_: Students have busy lives, so they don't always have time to revise and process drafts and writing.
_Jim_: Question about students' time and obligations - At traditional flagship campuses, do students have the same issues? I was surprised, initially, that folks assigned less writing in UWT writing classes; people in other fields write.
_Amy_: To be a better writer, students have to practice writing.
_Amy_: (reading, p. 132) Should we be teaching students how reading is pleasurable?
_Ali_: The art of the possible (p. 139).
_Ruiming_: Even reading books that we don't like can offer us information that we can use later.
_LeAnne_: Could students not liking reading be from students' struggles with reading?
_Alison_: We assume that everything we assign is good for the students.
_Nicole_: How do you help students deal with the cognitive dissonance when students confront contradictions in their reading practices in the class?
_Alison_: Textual analysis is very discipline-specific; critical thinking is discipline-specific; as a habit
of mind (non-cognitive) critical thinking is transferable, but as a cognitive dimension it is not.

Nicole: Writing is a good class to help students understand what they are thinking and how they are thinking.

Asao: Have we fooled ourselves into believing that we don't love language?

Ali (and Nicole): Imagination (pp.60-61); synthesizing, creativity. Exploration: creating a topic; the killing off of imagination serves the dominator culture.

Nicole: What we cannot imagine cannot come into being (p. 59).

Andrea: Lectures as less effective; read a lot of compelling arguments that active listening can be as effective.

Amy: We try to actively listen to students; actively listening is hard; we do it in the 1-on-1 work in the writing center.

LeAnne: We can/should do it when we read students’ papers.

Caitlin: Students don't see feedback as a conversation.

Ruiming: Sometimes I spend more time thinking than writing.

Asao: Social justice agenda for writing classes and decolonization (p. 26).

Nicole: Good, revolutionary movements get co-opted by dominant culture (owns it).

Ali: (p. 101) Co-opted (sorry, lost this thought).

Caitlin: There is never a taking over.

Takeaways (Most Important Points):

Ruiming: There's no single way to articulate or approach "critical thinking" (I don't know how to answer what is critical thinking).

Jeff: There is no one critical thinking, but "critical thinkings".

Nicole: Education is about healing and wholeness (149); teach the whole student; see students as persons.

Andrea: Students often don't see education and learning is an exchange (117); a sense of shared responsibility and agency.

Ali: Self-Esteem (124-125). Acknowledge students' self-esteem issues; we teaching to build healthy self-esteem; maybe too teacher-oriented, wants the process to be more student-centered.

Caitlin: Want students to be more comfortable in ambiguity, but there is always a rhetorical situation that dictates a power relation (that she's telling them to ignore the power relationship).

LeAnne: (p 27) Education not having gone a radical transformation, so those trying to have a critical pedagogy is always situated within hegemony (no one is meant to live the way we have to live)

Kelvin: (p. 139) Focus on the issue of trust for students of color and the power relations around white males in authority; his work in the writing center; the paradox is: white male who realizes his privilege.

Amy: The message that students have to make their voice heard, but that isn't always good with students who speak with an accent or multilingual students. (There are often different consequences.)

Meeting Adjourned: 3:30pm