Writing Across Communities (WAC) Alliance Constitution and By-Laws

Revised date: August 24, 2011
Approved: August 26, 2011

Article I: The name of the organization is Writing Across Communities (WAC) Alliance.

Article II: The WAC Alliance is a forum for conversations regarding literacy, a think tank for UNM and the greater community. The WAC Alliance engages campus and community in dialogue about literacy, addresses the changing literacy needs of its constituents, and bridges civic, academic, and professional communities by cultivating discussion and pedagogical support for diverse literacy practices.

A. To accomplish this mission, the WAC Alliance undertakes several initiatives that have included:

- WAC Alliance Meet and Greet
- Write On! Workshops
- Celebration of Student Writing
- Working with Writers Symposia
- Earth Day Conference
- Civil Rights Symposia
- Albuquerque Community Writing Center
- In Progress Journal
- WAC Newsletter

B. Each initiative is organized by a WAC committee, chaired either by the WAC Alliance Event Coordinator (EC) or by another WAC member.

C. WAC Alliance initiatives must not be conducted for the financial gain of WAC Alliance, any of its individual members, or partnering organizations or individuals.

Article III: Membership to the Alliance is open to all students, staff and faculty at UNM, as well as all community members not directly affiliated with UNM. Any student, staff, faculty, or community member who participates in a planning committee will be considered a Full member of WAC. Full members are eligible to apply for any grants offered by the Alliance. Full members may also be posted on the WAC Alliance website.

A. Members must attend at least 75% of meetings to be a Voting member.

B. The WAC Head Council (HC) consists of the committee heads of various WAC Alliance committees, and thus fluctuates depending on the number of committees each semester. Head Council members are expected to attend 100% of meetings, to participate in WAC Alliance votes and/or to send a representative in their place.

C. In HC meetings, each HC member receives one vote on behalf of his or her represented committee. In matters concerning the entire WAC Alliance, all Voting members (including HC members) have one equal vote.
D. No dues will be collected at this time. No grants are being offered at this time.

Article IV: The WAC Alliance Events Coordinator (EC) and Assistant Events Coordinator (AEC) are year-long, volunteer position, held by graduate students.

A. EC and AEC are chosen in the Spring semester by vote or consensus.

B. EC convenes meetings of the HC in the Fall semester to set the agenda for the year.

C. EC acts as liaison between the officers of the HC, graduate and undergraduate students, and the Faculty Mentor.

D. EC is the central point of contact for the WAC Alliance, and handles scheduling for events and full Alliance meetings.

E. AEC provides support to EC in coordinating initiatives and communicating between liaisons, WAC Alliance members, and constituents.

F. Should the EC fail to convene a meeting within the first month of classes in the Fall semester, fail to act in accordance with the charter, or otherwise not perform the duties of the EC to the satisfaction of the HC and the WAC Alliance, the HC will convene a meeting to discuss the matter with the EC. The outcome of the meeting could be that the EC remains in place and resumes proper duties, or the HC may resolve to remove the EC for ineffective leadership. Should the HC pass a resolution to remove the EC for any reason, HC must submit another name for the EC and take the matter before the entire WAC Alliance for a vote, both on the removal of the old EC and the instatement of a new EC.

Article V: The WAC Faculty Mentor will be the liaison between the faculty and administration and the WAC Alliance, and will communicate the resolutions of the WAC Alliance to these entities.

Article V: Officers of the Head Council shall be equal in duties and responsibilities.

A. HC consists of the EC and the committee chairs. HC members are volunteers individually in charge of a WAC committee who organize and act as representative of that committee.

B. HC positions are held for one semester and can be renewed at the end of each semester for the following semester based on a vote or if no other members wish to be the committee representative.

C. New committees will be formed each year (and as needed) based on the events and initiatives outlined by HC/EC and Faculty Mentor.

D. Committee chairs will act as representative of their committee to the HC and will therefore report and present opinions and decisions from their committee as accurately and objectively as possible.
E. HC representative's main concerns in making decisions shall lie with the committee’s best interest rather than an individual's best interest.

F. Should a HC member be unable to remain objective, he or she shall select another committee member to represent that issue or topic as a temporary HC representative.

G. HC will discuss all major decisions with the entire council prior to enacting decisions. When a decision is to be made immediately, a HC member must attempt to contact the rest of the Council by calling an emergency meeting or via email or by phone to discuss the matter. All members must answer before decisions are to be made by a 2/3 vote. All members must make every effort to respond to requests ASAP. Votes can be taken over email or phone in these instances. In the event that a decision is to be made on the spot, the HC member must contact the rest of the Council immediately afterwards to inform them of the decision and action.

H. Should a HC member wish to be selected for any grants offered or other positions within the Alliance, they must be represented by someone else within the Alliance to avoid a conflict of interest.

I. Matters of inappropriate conduct exhibited by a Alliance members with regard to WAC matters, as determined by an Alliance or another HC member, will be dealt with by a member of the HC on an individual basis. If necessary, the matter will come before the HC as a whole to determine fair process in handling the situation.

J. Should there be a dire situation with a HC member and only after discussion by the HC, that HC member may choose to step down or will be asked to step down and another Alliance member will be elected by the respective committee in their place.

K. In the case that a WAC member is chair of two committees with competing interests, a representative from one of the committees will act as a temporary representative in the case of an HC vote.

Article V. Projects initiated by WAC members that fall under the WAC umbrella but do not arise from HC meetings or agendas will be considered semi-autonomous. The chairs of these committees will be the project initiators, indefinitely.

A. These project chairs will attend meetings of the full WAC Alliance and HC and will have voting rights.

B. If members of these committees feel that the chair (project initiator) is not acting in the best interest of the committee or the WAC community, these concerns should be brought before the HC or taken to the EC.

C. Conflicts of interest brought before the HC/EC will be handled on an individual basis as outlined in Article V.I and V.J, above.

Article VI: Faculty mentor/advisor will be either self-selected or requested by an Alliance member and will change every year unless no new mentor can be found and the previous mentor is still interested in continuing.
A. Faculty mentors should be from a different academic department every year if possible.

B. Faculty mentors will be selected at the end of each year for the following year.

C. If a Faculty mentor is not interested in continuing at the end of a Fall semester, the HC will approach and select another Faculty mentor for the Spring semester.

Article VII: Alliance meetings will be called at the beginning and end of each semester to prepare committees, choose a Faculty mentor (Spring), welcome new members, discuss amendments, and any other business necessary for the entire Alliance.

A. These meetings shall be held within the first month of classes and within the last month of classes for the semester.

B. The Alliance may also meet as a whole as necessary and when called by the HC/EC.

C. HC will meet as a whole as needed as determined by the HC or as called by the EC.

D. Votes announced at WAC Alliance (or committee) meetings may be conducted over email if a deliberation period that exceeds the meeting time is necessary. EC (or committee chair) will set the time for the vote. Members that do not vote by the required date will be counted as having abstained.

E. If an elected HC representative is unable to attend, another committee member will be selected to represent the committee and stand in as temporary HC representative at HC meetings.

Article VIII: Committees will meet at a time scheduled by the committee members and chair on at least a monthly basis or as determined by the chair for that committee.

A. Committee meetings shall conduct business only if at least 2/3 of that committee’s members are present. Committees should consist of at least three members including the HC representative.

B. Committee members who consistently miss meetings or do not complete promised tasks shall be deemed non-participatory and business can be conducted by other members without their presence at meetings.

C. Committee chairs are responsible for informing non-participatory members that they are considered non-participatory and for outlining actions necessary for these members to return to participatory status.

D. Should conflicts arise due to members being designated non-participatory, these matters will be taken before the HC and dealt with as in Article V.I and V.J, as outlined above.

E. Any business conducted by committees when committee members are absent should be immediate communicated to absent members.
Article IX: These WAC Alliance By-Laws shall govern the general and administrative operations of the organization. In all other matters, common fairness shall govern with an emphasis on the community rather than the individual.

Article X: The WAC Alliance By-Laws will be revised and updated as necessary on a yearly basis; revisions will be submitted to the EC and approved by the HC.

A. Any proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be submitted in writing to the HC. The proposed amendments shall be discussed at the next meeting (or at a special meeting called for the purpose), and a vote shall take place at the meeting (or over email) within a week’s time.