Jim Frank began with a course assessment overview. He reviewed the process for instructors to input course assessment information using the WAVE’s class roster section, and encouraged those who had not yet submitted information to do so for English 101 and 102 students from the Fall ’15 semester.

A discussion of Student Gen Ed Testing (S-GET) followed. The guiding question was this: What can we do to improve writing outside the English curriculum?

- John Lusk recalled two previous English Department initiatives: the Writing Assistance Team (WAT) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). The idea behind these was to provide mobile English instructor services in helping professors develop clear writing assignments, giving brief writing instruction in courses outside of English comp, and helping professors develop clear, measurable outcomes for writing assignments. Suzanne O’Brien did much work in these areas, particularly on the WAC initiative.

- John Lusk also shared that he has begun to incorporate the teaching of Writing Assessment Outcomes #3 (“Demonstrate ability to locate and gather information from primary and secondary sources . . .”) and #4 (“Demonstrate ability to write informative, interpretive . . .”) into his English 075 courses, in an attempt to increase students’ exposure and success in attaining these higher-level writing skills in English 101 and 102.

- Kraig Archer informed the group that students in Sociology 101 often have not had English 101 yet, and thus they “struggle to be articulate, engaged, and insightful” compared to students who have completed English 101. The participants discussed ways to remedy this – such as
encouraging advisers to suggest students take English 101 earlier in their college careers, or re-creating the Writing Assistance Team.

- Cliff Johnson remarked on the difficulty of measuring Writing Assessment Outcome #2 (“Demonstrate ability to vary writing style . . .”) given the current Gen Ed Writing Assessment tool. The same tool also makes it impossible at this time to measure outcomes #3 and 4.
- There appears to be an interest by the members of the English discipline to resurrect the Writing Assistance Team.

- The general assessment of writing assessment was that while the current assessment tool is clearly flawed and other alternatives must be explored, in the meantime the English discipline will explore more fully the idea of renewing the Writing Assistance Team for the Fall ’16 semester.