COMMITTEE: Writing Across the Curriculum Committee


PERSON PRESIDING: H. Garza

REGULAR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: G. Hubbard, H. Garza, A. Spuches, E. Swaggerty, D. Dennison

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: W. Sharer, T. Morse, M. Eble, T. Atkinson, W. Banks, J. Neil

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: NA

ACTIONS OF MEETING

Agenda Item: Removal of WI credit for SOCI 4385

Discussion: Dr. Sitawa Kimuna (Undergraduate Director) and Dr. Marieke Van Willigen (Interim Chair Department of Sociology) submitted a memo requesting the removal of WI designation for SOCI 4385: Theoretical Perspectives and Applications.

Action Taken: The committee unanimously approved the removal of WI credit for SOCI 4385. H. Garza will follow up with notification memo.

Agenda Item: Addition of WI Credit for POLS 2090: Writing for Political Science.

Discussion: Dr. Jody Baumgartner presented the proposal for this new course to the committee. The committee discussed the proposal and requests consideration of the following recommendations: (a) advise students to take POLS 2090 after ENG 2201; (b) revise course title to include a more content-specific focus and to ensure that it is not too similar to the title of ENG 2201: Writing about the Disciplines to prevent confusion; (c) ensure that course number is consistent on the syllabus and proposal form, and (d) revise syllabus to ensure writing is clear and perspective is consistent. A memo from the unit leader supporting this request must be forwarded to the WAC chairperson.

Action Taken: Vote was unanimous to approve Writing Intensive credit for POLS 2090, pending receipt of unit leader support memo and consideration of recommendations listed above. H. Garza will follow up with notification memo.

Agenda Item: Writing Intensive Resolutions

Discussion: The WAC Ad-hoc committee met last week and conceptualized six resolutions to be presented at the November Faculty Senate meeting. Discussion and revision of the items resulted in the following list (some resolutions are included in the proposed Writing Intensive Proposal Form):

The Writing Across the Curriculum Committee proposes:

1) The elimination of Writing Intensive by Section.
2) That all Writing Intensive courses require students to upload writing samples for the purposes of programmatic assessment.
3) That all Writing Intensive courses have a maximum of 25 students per section.
4) That courses designated “Writing Intensive” will engage students in the University Writing Outcomes establishes by the QEP; attention to these outcomes replaces the five WI models currently in place. This change is reflected in the new Writing Intensive proposal form (see attached).
5) That the current “Writing Intensive Syllabus Statement” be revised to reflect the changes of Writing Intensive courses from model-based to outcome-based. This change is reflected in the new Writing Intensive Proposal Form (See attached).
6) By Fall 2015, each unit will submit an initial self-audit report to the WAC Committee. This process will involve unit-level discussion of writing intensive courses, identification of courses...
that comply with the new writing intensive designation, and inclusion of a plan for changes in WI Courses that are not in compliance. Each unit will submit the self-audit to the WAC Committee.

**Action Taken:** The committee agreed to present the resolutions and proposed Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form at the November Faculty Senate meeting.


**NEXT MEETING:** November 11, 2013

[http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/wc/wc.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/wc/wc.cfm)

Submitted by Elizabeth Swaggerty

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**Faculty Senate Agenda**

**November 5, 2013**

**Attachment 4.**

**WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT**

Revised Writing-Intensive Course Proposal Form

**What Is “Writing Intensive” at ECU?**

Courses that have been designated “writing intensive” are those which go beyond merely assigning a writing project or series of writing projects to test students' knowledge of course content. Rather, a WI course provides students with opportunities to learn how to write in the genres, styles, and voices appropriate to the discipline of the course.

While any number of courses in a degree program/major/minor may require students to write in various ways – e.g., short, writing-to-learn activities; formal or informal reading responses; annotated bibliographies; essay exams – the WAC Committee reserves the title “Writing Intensive” for those courses which clearly demonstrate that students are working toward the following university Writing Outcomes:

Students will

1. Use writing to investigate complex, relevant topics and address significant questions through engagement with and effective use of credible sources;
2. Produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience;
3. Demonstrate that they understand writing as a process that can be made more effective through drafting and revision;
4. Proofread and edit their own writing, avoiding grammatical and mechanical errors;
5. Assess and explain the major choices that they make in their writing.

In order for a course to be considered “Writing Intensive,” faculty must demonstrate that the course engages students in all of these writing outcomes.

Research on learning transfer makes the compelling case that reflective-analytical/metacognitive activities increase the likelihood that students will be able to transfer knowledge and skills from one activity, project, or course to another. As such, the WAC Committee expects all WI courses to provide space for students to analyze/reflect on the choices they make as writers. The University Writing Program provides several examples of reflective writing assignments that faculty can
use/adapt in their courses [INSERT WEBSITE]. The UWP staff are also happy to meet and provide feedback on your ideas as you prepare your WI course proposal.

The WI course designation further requires that, at or near the end of the term, students submit samples of their writing to their University Writing Portfolios (housed in iWebfolio) for WAC program assessment purposes. Ideas for implementing this requirement, as well as instructions for uploading materials to iwebfolio will be provided on the writing@ecu website (www.ecu.edu/writing). UWP staff will gladly meet with you to discuss strategies for incorporating this assessment component into your course.

Preparing Your WI Course Proposal

As you work on your course proposal for WI consideration, keep in mind that the members of the WAC Committee represent very different disciplines from across campus, and as such the committee holds no singular assumption about the “right” way to design a WI course. The committee is interested in seeing how your course, as you articulate it below, provides students a scaffold for reaching ECU’s Writing Outcomes. As there is no one way for course projects/activities to meet these outcomes, it is likely that faculty will use a variety of writing activities in order to achieve the goals of a WI course. Your proposal should enable committee members outside your discipline to understand the types/genres of writing you plan to assign and how those types/genres are intended to help students reach the university Writing Outcomes. Additionally, your proposal should make clear how you plan to integrate the requirement that students submit writing samples for program assessment. On its website (www.ecu.edu/writing), the University Writing Program provides several examples of course proposals for you to use as you create your proposal. UWP staff are available to meet with you and provide feedback as you prepare your WI course proposal.

What Documents Should I Send the WAC Committee for Review?

1) **Letter of Support**

Because WI courses require faculty to provide significant feedback on student work-in-progress, the WAC Committee has established a course cap of 25 students per section for WI courses. Therefore, in addition to the completed form that makes up the rest of this document, faculty proposing a course should include a letter of support from the unit administrator indicating that the unit understands the WI course cap and has the resources to meet that requirement.

2) **Sample Course Syllabus**

A sample syllabus should be included with the proposal. The sample syllabus, as well as future syllabi for the course should the WI designation be approved, must include the following WI statement:

**Writing Intensive (WI)**

____________ is a writing intensive course in the Writing Across the Curriculum Program at East Carolina University. This course will focus on the development of writing skills. Upon completion of the course students will:

1. Use writing to investigate complex, relevant topics and address significant questions through engagement with and effective use of credible sources.
2. Produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience, particularly within the written genres (Including genres that integrate writing with visuals, audio or other multimodal components) of their major disciplines and/or career fields.
3. Demonstrate that they understand writing as a process that can be made more effective
though drafting revision.
4. Proofread and edit their own writing, avoiding grammatical and mechanical errors.
5. Assess and explain the major choices that they make in their writing.

This course contributes to the twelve-hour WI requirement for students at ECU. Additional information is available at the following site: http://www.ecu.edu-writing/wac/

What Happens at the WAC Committee Discussion of My Course Proposal?

Once your proposal has been distributed to the WAC Committee, you will receive a notice that your packet has been assigned a time on the agenda of a future meeting of the WAC Committee. When possible, faculty are encouraged to attend this meeting to discuss the proposal with the committee. The committee uses that time to better understand what writing looks like in the discipline that is proposing the course and how this course helps students to be more effective writers in that discipline. The committee may ask for revisions to the course proposal based on that conversation.

Typically, the committee votes either to a) accept the proposal as is, b) to accept the proposal pending minor revisions that can be submitted to the chair of the committee and do not require full committee review a second time, or c) to return the proposal to the department for significant revision. Courses that require significant revision will come back to the WAC Committee at the next meeting for reconsideration.

How Are WI Courses Assessed?

Grading student work is always the responsibility of the course instructor. Neither the WAC Committee nor the University Writing Program has any interest in second-guessing or questioning the way that faculty evaluate the work of their students.

However, in order to ensure quality of the WAC program at ECU, the WAC Committee, in conjunction with the University Writing Program, has established several methods for assessing the effectiveness and the integrity of the program.

1. Each semester, faculty teaching WI courses are asked to send a copy of their syllabus (and a description of their writing assignments if those are not already detailed in the syllabus) to the University Writing Program. The UWP uses these documents to garner a yearly snapshot of how writing is being taught across campus and reports to the WAC Committee on its findings.
2. Each semester, faculty teaching WI courses instruct students to upload writing samples to their University Writing Portfolios. Each year, compensated, trained assessors use a rubric based on the university Writing Outcomes to score randomly selected university writing portfolio samples. The results of these direct assessments of student writing inform the development of instructional support for WI course faculty and supplemental writing support for students in WI courses.
3. Based on an established rotation, available on the UWP website, departments/programs are asked every five years to review their WI course offerings and to provide a packet of materials to the WAC Committee demonstrating (or in order to demonstrate) that WI course syllabi have consistently included the Writing Outcomes and that writing assignments and teaching practices have worked to help students meet those outcomes. Extensive directions on how to prepare those assessment packets are available on the UWP website.
4. Upon review by the WAC Committee, if courses have not been taught as “writing intensive” and have not sought to meet the ECU Writing Outcomes, the relevant department
chair will be notified that the WAC Committee may vote to remove the WI designation from the course at a future meeting.

What about Writing Intensive by Section (WI*)?

In an effort to reduce the potential for confusion among students and advisors alike, the WAC Committee no longer approves courses as “Writing Intensive by Section.” Faculty/departments that propose a WI course should make all faculty aware that all sections of the course, if approved, would be Writing Intensive.

Is There Anywhere I Can Go for Help with Creating the Writing Components of My Course?

Absolutely. The staff of University Writing Program welcomes faculty at any time and is happy to work individually with faculty on proposals or on effective methods for integrating writing into a course. They can also help departments think about what courses are best suited for WI designation.

University Writing Across the Curriculum Committee

Writing-Intensive Course Proposal

All existing WI courses must comply to the new Writing-Intensive Course Proposal format and submit an audit addressing how they are going to comply.

Course Information

1. Course number:
   
   Department: 

2. Course name:
   
3. Faculty involved:
   
   Email:

4. This course is for:
   
   Majors  Non-majors  Both
   
   An Existing Course  A New Course

5. This proposal is for:
6. How often is this course offered?

7. What is the average student enrollment across all sections?
   (WI Courses are capped at 25 students per section.)
8. What types of documents (genres) will students write in this course (i.e., reports, memos, research papers, annotated bibliographies, etc.)? Include the expected or required word count for each assignment.

9. How are the writing assignments integrated into teaching & learning goals for the course?

10. How will you integrate the submission of writing samples for program assessment into the course?

University Writing Across the Curriculum Committee
Writing-Intensive Course Proposal

The following outcomes represent the ECU Writing Outcomes approved by the WAC Committee. Explain how the projects and activities in your proposed course help students to meet these outcomes.

SLO 1 How will students use writing to investigate complex, relevant topics and address significant questions through engagement with and effective use of credible sources?
SLO 2 How will students produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience? If this is a WI course specific to majors, please explain how students will produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience in written genres of their major disciplines and/or career fields.

SLO 3 How will students demonstrate that they understand writing as a process that can be made more effective through drafting and revision?

SLO 4 How will you help students proofread and edit their own writing, avoiding grammatical and mechanical errors?

SLO 5 How will students assess and explain the major choices that they make in their writing?