

Faculty Senate Resolution #15-68

Approved by the Faculty Senate: April 21, 2015

Approved by the Chancellor: May 26, 2015

*Editorially revised to remove reference to College of Human Ecology: September 26, 2016

Writing Intensive Course Audit and Program Review, as follows:

The focus of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on a vertical writing curriculum has led to a number of important changes to the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program. The first stage of revision to the program involved shifting the curriculum for WI classes from “models-based” to “outcomes-based” as the WAC Committee enacted the University Writing Outcomes for all Writing Intensive courses.

The second stage of this revision involves instituting an ongoing program review related to WI courses. Every five years, on a rotating schedule, the WAC Committee will request materials on WI courses taught over the most recent five-year period. This ongoing review allows the committee to work with departments/programs

- 1) to ensure that courses are being taught in ways that help students meet the University Writing Outcomes;
- 2) to determine whether current WI courses should remain WI; and
- 3) to discover if different courses should become WI in order to better support a vertical writing curriculum.

This ongoing review provides a much needed space every five years for departments and programs, in consultation with the WAC Committee, to review WI course offerings and make any curricular revisions the department, program, or WAC Committee thinks necessary.

In order to begin Stage Two, the WAC Committee has prepared the following materials to help departments/programs prepare their WI courses for review:

- A timeline indicating when different colleges, departments, or programs will be up for review by the WAC Committee;
- A list of materials that each college, department, or program will be asked to compile as part of ongoing review;
- An explanation of how those materials will be reviewed by the committee and reported back to the college/department/program.

Preparing Materials for Your WI Course Review

Each *new* WI course proposal involves a completed proposal form, a sample syllabus, and a letter from the unit administrator indicating unit support for a course to be taught as writing intensive. Because some courses are always taught WI and others only when instructors choose to teach them as WI (e.g. WI*, or “WI by Section”), there is tremendous variability about what types of materials may be available for program review. Likewise, since courses typically come to the WAC Committee one at a time, it is hard for the committee to see the full picture of how “writing intensive” courses function across programs, departments, and colleges.

To that end, the WAC Committee requests that colleges provide the following items from each of its departments or programs that offers WI courses:

1. A memo from the unit administrator (e.g., department chair, program director) to the WAC committee listing which courses should remain WI/WI* and which should no longer be offered as WI/WI* based on an internal review of WI course offerings; the memo should indicate that, if the WI/WI* designation is to be dropped from one or more courses, students will still be able complete the degree/program and have the appropriate number of WI credits (3 WI credits are required in the major, and 3 additional WI

credits from any WI course in any program, exclusive of English 1100 and 2201, are required for graduation).

2. A chart indicating which WI/WI* courses have been taught in the last five years, when they have been taught (semester and year), how many sections, which of the courses are required for majors/minors, and how many students per section have been enrolled.
3. One sample syllabus per course that the unit will continue to offer as WI/WI* with sample assignment descriptions for each writing assignment, and an explanation of how the course assignments, taken together, continue to meet the five University Writing Outcomes.

****New WI course proposals should go through the regular process and should not be included as part of this program review.****

Since faculty submit copies of their WI and WI* syllabi to the University Writing Program every semester, program staff will provide those materials back to colleges, departments, and programs in order to reduce the work on unit faculty as they review and compile materials.

Timeline

1. Each spring, the WAC Committee will notify colleges if they have WI Course Reviews for their departments/programs due the following fall.
2. Departments/programs responsible for teaching WI/WI* courses should review their current offerings, determine if current offerings are best for meeting the current University Writing Outcomes, and decide which courses they wish to continue offering as WI/WI*. A set of heuristic questions will be provided to assist that process, but the University Writing Program staff is also available to meet with units to assist them as they think through their WI/WI* offerings.
3. Colleges will collect the materials requested above from departments/programs, and provide them to the WAC Committee by the first Monday of October.
4. The WAC Committee will review submitted materials between October and February, and will communicate to programs/departments/colleges any recommendations by March.

Program Review Considerations

The primary goal of the WI Course Review is to provide departments/programs with the opportunity to look at their WI course offerings holistically and to determine if they are efficiently and effectively engaging students in WI courses at the most opportune moments. Students are required to take 3 WI credits in their *major*; as such, programs with large numbers of WI courses may find that they have more courses than they need or than are sustainable, particularly when the university endorses a 25 student cap as a “best practice” for WI courses. Because some programs offer multiple degrees or tracks, however, it’s difficult for a committee like the WAC Committee to determine the right number or configuration of WI courses for any program. Use the following questions to begin asking if your current WI/WI* courses are meeting students’ needs as they move through your program.

- Ideally, undergraduate students would have one WI course per year during their 4 years at ECU. Currently, they take English 1100 (year 1) and English 2201 (year 2). Are your WI course offerings such that students are likely to enroll in a WI course in the major during years 3 and 4? If students won’t likely enroll in a WI course their junior year, do you think it would be better if they did? What course(s) might best meet that goal?
- In what ways, if any, do your WI course offerings provide a scaffolded experience for students in their writing? Do 2000- and 3000-level courses offer “introductory” writing experiences, while 4000-level course provide more “apprentice” or “expertise” level projects?
- Do your current WI course offerings all meet the University Writing Outcomes, adopted in 2014, rather than the “five models” that were previously in effect? If not, is that because these are courses where the outcomes are more difficult to meet? Are there courses where the outcomes seem more appropriate/germane?

Sample Unit Administrator Memo

TO: WAC Committee
FROM: Unit Administrator, Sample Unit
DATE: October 1, 2XXX
SUBJECT: WI Course Review for Sample Unit

After a careful review of the 10 WI courses we currently offer (see chart), Sample Unit plans to continue offering 6 WI courses and, with this memo, requests that the WAC Committee remove WI designation from the following courses:

- Course 1
- Course 2
- Course 3
- Course 4

In Sample Unit, we plan to continue offering the following 4 courses as WI:

- Course 5
- Course 6
- Course 7
- Course 8

RATIONALE: Because Sample Unit offers two degrees (BS in Sample; BA in Sample), our students follow two different tracks to degree completion. For our BS students, Course 5 provides a solid foundation as a 3000-level “Intro to Sample” course; in this course, students learn basic research methodology and write up research projects that demonstrate they are learning key methods of inquiry in Sample. Course 6 is the capstone seminar for the BS in Sample; students are expected to write seminar-styled papers that demonstrate that they are ready for graduate study in Sample or a similar discipline. Our BA students typically enroll in Course 7 and 8 during their junior year; these courses focus on public policy writing related to Sample and are intended to help students think through their possible career options. While students write a lot in their senior capstone course, the writing is more professional in nature (brief reports, sample resumes and cover letters, etc), and we do not feel those writing activities adequately meet the University Writing Outcomes. For the BA students, therefore, we would prefer they do most of their WI course work at the junior level.

The following 2 courses have historically been offered WI* (writing intensive by section) and Sample Unit plans to continue to offer these as WI*.

- Course 9
- Course 10

RATIONALE: When faculty teach study abroad, these courses are more heavily writing intensive than when they are taught as campus-based courses and the faculty teach study abroad would like to maintain the rigorous writing experiences as part of that experience.

Attached to this memo is the chart of WI/WI* courses as requested. On three occasions, Course 2 enrolled significantly more than the 25 student cap that is encouraged for WI courses. This happened because of faculty leave and the needs of students to graduate, but it also helped to see that Course 2 may not be a best option for WI/WI* designation, which contributed to our decision to request removal of WI/WI*. The only other course that enrolled significantly more than 25 students was Course 7, but because that was only one semester, we believe we can find ways to prevent that happening again. At the moment, we do not foresee any problems with keeping WI/WI* courses at 25 or fewer students.

Similarly, find as well a 6 sample syllabuses, one each for Course 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Each syllabus includes sample assignments that are commonly used when faculty teach these courses, and a brief explanation of how faculty see these activities as helping students to meet the University Writing Outcomes.

WI Course Offerings | Five Year Review

Program: Department of Sample

Course (Prefix and #)	WI by section ?	Required for Major?	Students who typically take (e.g., Freshmen, Sophomore, etc.)	Fall 2012 **Incl. # of sections taught & course cap	Spring 2013	Summer 1 or 2 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Summer 1 or 2 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015
Course 1	N	N	Jr, Sr	1 (25)	2 (25)	1 (18)	1(25)	2 (25)	0	1 (25)	1 (25)

Sample Five Year Review Plan

Year 1 – 74 (2015, 2020, 2025 ...)

- Allied Health Science (18)
- College of Business (6)
- College of Education (24)
- College of Nursing (6)
- College of Engineering & Technology (17)

Year 2 - 86 (2016, 2021, 2026 ...)

- HCAS Dept A – G (excluding English)
 - Anthropology (4)
 - Biology (15)
 - Chemistry (13)
 - Economics (8)
 - Foreign Language (21)
 - Geography (10)
 - Geology (6)
 - Great Books/Classics (9)

Year 3 – 85 (2017, 2022, 2027 ...)

- HCAS Dept H – Z
 - History (30)
 - Math (4)
 - Multidisc (2)
 - Philosophy and Religious Studies (28)
 - Physics (1)
 - Political Science (6)
 - Psychology (8)

- Sociology (2)
- Women's Studies (4)

Year 4 – 85 (2018, 2023, 2028 ...)

- College of Fine Arts & Communication (49)
- College of Health and Human Performance (29*)

Year 5 – 84 (2019, 2024, 2029 ...)

- Department of English (61)
 - Honors College (23)
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