

Guidelines for Writing Proficiency (WP) Courses

A. Objectives:

1. To assess and improve students' ability to write effectively.
2. To help students recognize that writing is essential across the curriculum in general and within each discipline in particular and will be essential throughout their careers, whatever their chosen fields.
3. To help faculty throughout the University develop their abilities in assessing student writing and helping students improve their writing.

B. Criteria:

Note: Materials provided to the University Writing Committee (UWC) for course approval must address all criteria.

1. WP courses will have curricular content – i.e., they will not be just “writing courses.” This will enable students to learn how people in the discipline communicate with each other and what written forms they use.
2. WP courses will integrate writing with the rest of the course, both in content and pedagogy. This will demonstrate to students the inter-relatedness of the study of a discipline and writing about the discipline.
3. WP courses will provide meaningful assessment of and developmental feedback on writing. The course will incorporate opportunities for the students to engage in dialogues (written and/or personal) with the instructor and, as appropriate, other students in the course concerning the effectiveness and appropriateness of the written work the student does in the course.

C. Organization:

1. Each WP course will meet these criteria in a discipline-specific appropriate manner, and the syllabus for the course should specifically address each criterion.
2. A WP course will have a class size maximum of 25 students (C-4 factor is recommended for courses which seek WP approval).
3. WP courses should normally be “regular” upper division courses in the curriculum.
4. WP courses should be required or elective courses in the major.

A passing score on the Writing Proficiency Screening Test (WPST) is a prerequisite to all WP courses.