**Writing-Intensive Course**

**Application & Review Planning Document**

**Unit:**

**Course:**

**Multiple sections (Y/N):**

**Unit personnel responsible for administration of the course:**

**Email address(es) of personnel identified above:**

**Please check all of the resources that those involved in the development of this planner consulted to learn more about the WI outcomes and teaching with writing?**

* A faculty learning community on Writing-intensive course design
* A WI course proposal workshop
* A workshop on other aspects of teaching with writing (e.g., feedback)
* The guide to the WI learning outcomes
* The video series on the WI learning outcomes
* A consultation with WAC Program staff
* Other:

**Course Summary:** In two sentences, please describe why this course fulfills the role and purposes of a WI course.

**Opening Narrative**

Please address the unit’s rationale for obtaining the WI attribute for this course and describe how this course fulfills the role and purposes of a WI course. In writing this narrative, units should consider the following questions to communicate their intentions for seeking or retaining the WI attribute:

* Why is this course best suited to facilitate the writing development of students in the major?
* How does this course build on writing competencies students have developed in the major and in general education writing courses taken prior to this course?
* How will this course prepare students for writing competencies they will need in the major, field, or profession after taking this course?
* How frequently is the course offered, and how frequently does it fulfill the WI requirement for students (or how does the unit anticipate this frequency if applying for a new WI attribute)?
* (If the course has multiple sections) Identify the elements of the course that will be consistent across all sections and indicates this as a WI course. If there is a common design or assignment, describe that here.

[unit narrative]

**Self-review Checklist**

Please use the following checklists to ensure that the course application or review portfolio is complete and demonstrates the WI course requirements. Make sure to answer each column and identify the document(s) and page number(s) where evidence of these criteria can be found, as prompted. For any “No” responses, please provide a rationale in the boxes at the end of each table.

**Unit Curricular Requirements**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Yes / No\*** |
| Is the course enrollment capped at 35 students per section or lower?  Note: The Committee strongly recommends caps no higher than 25 in order to maintain manageable teaching and learning conditions. |  |
| Is the course offered at the 300-level or above? |  |
| Does the unit require that students take this course as part of a major degree program?  If no, please identify the other WI courses the unit offers that students can take in order to satisfy the WI requirement. |  |
| **Rationale for “No” responses:** | |

**Course Pedagogical Requirements**

Multiple sections? If yes, and there is a SINGLE design consistent across all sections, please submit only one copy of materials. If there are INSTRUCTOR-SPECIFIC designs and materials (e.g., syllabi and assignments), please submit TWO example sets of course materials.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Yes / No\*** | **Document(s) & Page #(s)** |
| Does the [syllabus explicitly inform](https://wac.gmu.edu/writing-intensive-courses/wi-course-approval-review/wi-syllabus-statement/) students that the course is Writing-intensive? |  |  |
| Does the course include each of the Writing-to-learn, Writing-to-communicate, and Writing process outcomes [copied verbatim](https://wac.gmu.edu/writing-intensive-courses/wi-learning-outcomes/) onto the syllabus? |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that students are expected to write at least 3500 words across 2 or more assignments? |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that the writing assignments constitute a substantial portion of the final grade (30% or higher)? |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that the instructor(s) will offer feedback on student writing assignments?  Note: this is typically demonstrated in the course schedule, assignment descriptions, and/or a statement about feedback in the course. |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that students will have sufficient time to revise at least one writing assignment based on faculty feedback (at least one week between receiving feedback and submitting revisions)?  Note: this is typically demonstrated in the course schedule and assignment descriptions. |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that the instructor(s) will provide significant instruction on how to successfully compose the writing assignments in the course?  Note: this is typically demonstrated in the course schedule and curriculum table below. Course materials might also include a statement on instruction. |  |  |
| **Rationale for “No” responses:** | | |

**WI Student Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Table**

The WAC Committee developed the table on the next page to help units design their courses and communicate those designs to WAC Committee members during course reviews. In using this table, make sure to describe the instruction and assignments that align with each outcome. As a reminder, WI courses are required to adopt **one outcome from each section** (writing-to-learn, writing-to-communicate, and writing-as-a-process):

For more information about alignment between instruction, assignments, and outcomes, please refer to the appendix at the end of this document.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Alignment:** Please describe the assignment(s) & instruction aligned with each outcome you have selected for your course.  **Rationale:** Please also include a brief rationale explaining how the alignment among the outcome, instruction, and assignment(s) supports student writing development in the major. |
| **Writing-to-learn:** |  |
| **Writing-to-communicate:** |  |
| **Writing-as-a-process:** |  |
| **Please offer any additional commentary that you believe will help contextualize the course design and instruction for the Committee.** | |

**Professional Development Plan:** The WAC Committee expects faculty who will be teaching WI courses to participate in continuous professional development focused on writing instruction. The WAC Committee also strongly encourages units to provide the support faculty need in order to meaningfully participate in this type of work. Please describe your unit’s plan for continuous professional development related to writing instruction. This plan may include a combination of unit, college and university-wide, or professional association sponsored events and initiatives. Some examples may include attendance at workshops, participating in a learning community or reading group, and instructor or unit led inquiry into teaching practice (e.g, SoTL). The WAC Program offers several options and resources for faculty to learn more about writing and writing-integrated instruction. Please see its [website](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/) for more details.

**Appendix**

**On assignments:** Writing assignments can take many forms but should align with the outcome(s) they intend to assess. The following offers some suggestions to help you consider this alignment.

* **Process outcome:** Assignments in this category should help students produce texts. Appropriate assignments for this outcome include outlines, drafts, cluster diagrams, synthesis matrices, or writing and revision plans.
* **Writing-to-learn outcomes:** Assignments in this category should help students deepen their awareness and knowledge of course content. Exploratory, expressive, and note-taking texts like journals, reading annotations, lab notebooks, field notes, one-minute papers, or meaningful paragraphs are all appropriate forms of writing that align with this outcome.
* **Writing-to-communicate outcomes:** Assignments in this category should aim to develop students’ knowledge of and facility with disciplinary, professional, or field-specific forms of communication. While many types of assignments might fulfill this aim, it is important to keep in mind that the kind of writing assigned should reflect the kinds of thinking and communicating that are expected. For example, a research report might work well to communicate the production or verification of knowledge within a disciplinary community, but it isn’t effective at sharing the implications of that knowledge to an audience outside of a disciplinary community. For that purpose, an op-ed might work better. Below is list of a few possible communicative purposes that can motivate a particular assignment; this is not an exhaustive list:
  + Explore complex problems that have more than one potential solution (ex.: project proposal)
  + Perform original research and defend research approach (ex.: poster presentation)
  + Practice critical scholarship (ex.: book review)
  + Perform critical reflection (ex.: vision statement)
  + Take and defend a position on an issue (ex.: op-ed)
  + Interpret data and evidence to justify conclusions (ex.: policy report)

**On instruction:** Like assignments, instruction can also take many forms, but typically the instruction in a WI course is informed by the notions of apprenticeship and transparency. That is, instructors mentor students into the specific writing practices of their fields by modeling and making visible those tacit practices, sharing exemplars, observing performances, and providing timely feedback that informs subsequent performances. To learn more about teaching writing, consider reviewing the WAC Program’s Guide to Teaching the WI Learning Outcomes and Bean & Melzer’s *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*, which is [available in digital form through the library](https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/1giah39/alma9947313536904105). The WAC Program also has a limited number of printed copies available; please [email us](mailto:wac@gmu.edu) if you would like to borrow a copy.