**Writing-Intensive Course**

**Application & Review Planning Document**

**Unit:**

**Course:**

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

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

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

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

* [WAC Academy](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/) or faculty learning community
* [WAC Primer](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/)
* [A WI course proposal workshop](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/)
* [A workshop on other aspects of teaching](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/) (with) writing (e.g., feedback)
* The guide to the WI learning outcomes
* The [video series on the WI learning outcomes](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1Q1cXpwTbYNS7GToLbVp4sKWhINP2-WB)
* Print handouts on [writing-to-learn](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Writing-to-learn.pdf), [writing-as-a-process](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Teaching-Writing-as-a-Process.pdf), or [activities for teaching writing](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Activities-for-Teaching-Writing-in-a-WI-Course.pdf)
* A consultation with WAC Program staff
* Other:

**Checklist: Required materials for WI course application and review:**

* Complete WI planner with
  + Course rationale
  + Course management and sustainability plan
  + Course curriculum map
  + WI criteria self-review checklist
* Course materials including
  + Course syllabus
  + Course schedule
  + Writing assignments

**Course Rationale & Intentionality**

(to be completed in collaboration with the Chair/Director)

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 (no more than 500 words):

* Why is this course best suited to support the development of student writers in the major?
* What role(s) does writing have in this course? How does this role enhance student learning? How do these roles align with the WI outcomes?
* What role does this course have in the major curriculum?
  + How does the unit intend for this course to build on writing competencies students developed before taking this course (in the major and/or Written Communication [lower-level](https://masoncore.gmu.edu/mason-core-course-categories/written-communication-lower-level/) or [upper-level](https://masoncore.gmu.edu/mason-core-course-categories/written-communication-upper-level/))?
  + How does the unit hope this course will prepare students for writing competencies they will need after taking this course (in the major, field, profession, or civic life)?
* Please include any other information you believe important to the unit’s rationale that might not be covered in the above questions.

[Unit course rationale]

**Unit Plan for Professional Development & Sustainability**

(to be completed by the Chair/Director in collaboration with the WI liaison and LAU faculty)

WIs are labor-intensive and challenging courses to teach effectively. As such, the WAC Committee expects units to support faculty in their efforts to successfully and meaningfully teach these courses, including their teaching practices and the conditions that enable effective teaching practices. These efforts are important to the sustainability and success of WI courses. Please describe how your unit currently supports faculty (or hopes to) in their efforts to teach the Writing-intensive course. For ideas, please see this linked resource.

* How is your unit preparing, or providing support for, faculty to teach the WI and the conditions that enable effective teaching? What are your unit’s next steps to enhance the sustainability and success of this course and the faculty who teach it?
* If you don’t currently have a plan, please describe your first steps toward developing one. What supports would be most helpful to enhance the sustainability and success of this course and the faculty who teach it?

[Unit sustainability plan]

**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**

Does your course have 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 receive feedback from a peer on at least one writing assignment?  Note: This can be the same assignment that faculty offer feedback on. |  |  |
| Do the materials demonstrate that students will have sufficient time to revise at least one writing assignment based on faculty AND peer 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 course will include significant instruction (dedicated activities or class sessions that will help students learn how to successfully complete course assignments and how to write in the field)?  **Note:** significant instruction is typically demonstrated in the course schedule and curriculum table below. Course materials might also include a statement on instruction. See [the linked document for suggestions on instructional activities](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Activities-for-Teaching-Writing-in-a-WI-Course.pdf) |  |  |
| **Rationale for “No” responses:** | | |

**WI Student Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Table**

Using the table below, please describe the alignment among the outcome, instruction, and assignment(s) in this course. As a reminder, WI courses are expected to adopt all three outcomes; one assignment may meet more than one learning outcome.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Assignment:** What assignment will you use to prompt student achievement of this outcome? Please name it specifically. | **Explanation:** How does this assignment explicitly meet the learning outcome? | **Instruction:** What specific activities or class sessions will help students learn how to successfully complete this assignment and achieve the outcome? [Suggestions for activities](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Activities-for-Teaching-Writing-in-a-WI-Course.pdf) | **Assessment:** How will you know students have achieved the outcome? What criteria or guiding questions will you prioritize when reviewing student work? |
| **Writing-to-learn:** students will use informal or formal writing in ways that deepen their awareness of the field of study and its subject matter |  |  |  |  |
| **Writing-to-communicate:** students will compose one or more written genres specific to the field of study in order to communicate key ideas tailored to specific audiences and purposes; genres may be academic, public, or professional |  |  |  |  |
| **Writing-as-a-process:** students will draft and revise written works based on feedback they receive from instructors and peers, using strategies appropriate to the genre, audience, and purpose |  |  |  |  |
| **Please offer any additional commentary that you believe will help contextualize the course design and instruction for the Committee (optional).** | | | | |

**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 outcome:** 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 outcome:** 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. 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. [Please see the linked guide for additional ideas about writing instruction](https://wac.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Handout-Activities-for-Teaching-Writing-in-a-WI-Course.pdf).

To learn more about teaching writing, consider joining one of the [WAC Program’s professional development opportunities](https://wac.gmu.edu/workshops-consultations-events/) or reviewing 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.