

Criteria for Writing-Intensive Courses

1. Each course will focus on the process of writing as a means of learning and effective communication within a specific content area. The course will help students achieve an understanding of the relationship between writing and membership in a particular discipline's intellectual community.
2. Writing will be integrated with other class work.
3. The syllabus for a "W" course will contain two explicit statements:
 - a. that the course fulfills in part the writing requirement for graduation;
 - b. a description of the assignments or procedures by which the course fulfills the criteria for a "W" course.
4. Each course will require five to six formal writing assignments of 800-1000 words each (or, for the semester's work, a comparable number of total pages) and may also require students to do informal writing. The length and types of writing assignments will accommodate the discipline(s) within which the course is being taught. Where appropriate, one or more of the required assignments should develop students' skills in incorporating research into their writing.
5. At least three of the formal assignments must go through a revision process, with drafts to be reviewed by the instructor, peers, and other readers. Comments on drafts must address rhetorical issues and go beyond pointing out surface errors.
6. Significant weight will be given to the student's writing in the calculation of final grades for the course.

Further implementation of Writing-Intensive courses:

- Departments and programs may adapt existing courses as "W" courses or develop new ones.
- Because seniors will already have fulfilled their requirement, enrollment of seniors in "W" courses will be limited.
- Certain departments and programs may require a specific "W" course for the major.
- Some programs and departments may elect to share "W" courses.
- Some departments and programs in whose curriculum writing has always played a central role may offer a number of "W" courses. When multiple sections of a course are offered, one might be designated as "W" and another not.
- "W" courses may also count toward the major and other requirements as appropriate.
- The program will be phased in over a two-year period, adding a minimum of 15 "W" courses each year, for a total of at least 30 sections.
- Use of Teaching Apprentices and peer tutors will be encouraged, in particular of senior majors who are strong writers and who may help mentor new students into the discipline and its writing conventions.
- At the end of each year, faculty who have taught "W" courses will meet to discuss the criteria for courses and the effectiveness of the program.