

Southern Writing Across the Curriculum Program Pilot Guidelines for Designing and Teaching W-Courses

Pilot: Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020

The Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee (WACC) wants the W-course program to include courses in all disciplines and delivery formats; we particularly want to foster W-courses in such previously under-represented fields as applied arts and social sciences, and the technical, professional, and quantitative sciences. W-courses are not faculty specific. Department chairs may use their discretion in assigning faculty to those courses.

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES DESCRIBE THE SORT OF COURSE THE WACC ENVISAGES, THOUGH ALTERNATIVE MEANS TO THE SAME END WILL ALWAYS BE CONSIDERED.

a. A significant portion of the course is dedicated to either general academic writing skills or disciplinary writing skills.

- General academic writing is comprised of the following tasks:
 - reading comprehension
 - developing an argument/thesis in response to what is read
 - organization
 - grammatical/syntactical knowledge.

Generally, reading comprehension and developing an argument can be taught by a series of comprehension, synthetic, and analytic questions. Organization and grammatical/syntactical skills can be taught via model papers.

- Disciplinary specific writing focuses more on teaching genre conventions—the specific features of writing tasks that characterize a discipline’s writing. Examples of genres are: the lab report in science classes, case notes in human service fields, proposals in business classes, etc.
- Courses that are writing-intensive by their nature (e.g., journalism, technical writing, creative writing) may be approved as W-courses. However, writing in these courses must clearly articulate what writing skills they will teach.
- W-course proposals must summarize which skills students will learn in their classroom, and explanation of why those particular skills are relevant for that level course.

b. The instructor of the course will teach those skills.

- Instructors may communicate their knowledge of writing in their disciplines to their students through a variety of means such as paper comments, conferences, handouts, in-class presentations on writing, and/or online discussions and presentations.
- In addition to formal papers, the writing component may include short, unrevised papers, essay exams, and in-class writings.
- W- course proposals should outline the process of teaching the writing skills summarized in part a.

c. At least one writing assignment in the course should require revision

- "Revision" implies making substantive changes to writing: rethinking the thesis, organization, support, or content, rather than simply correcting surface errors.
- Instructors may encourage revision in a variety of ways, e.g., written comments on drafts, one-on-one conferences, and in-class peer workshops.
- To encourage revision, instructors' comments should suggest changes and explain reasons for the suggestions.
- W-course proposals should indicate clearly the process of revision, and how many assignments will require revision.

d. Written assignments should be a major part of the course grade.

- The WACC suggests that out-of-class papers count for 50% or more of the semester grade, though in certain fields, other percentages may appropriately be applied.
- The weight of the revision should be explicit and should be communicated clearly to the students (e.g., in the syllabus).

Course Outline or Syllabus

The course outline or syllabus must include specific references to the above points a through d. It is highly recommended that the course outline or syllabus explicitly state the writing objectives for the course.

Writing Assignments and Rubrics

At least one sample writing assignment must clearly align with the writing objectives for the course. The rubric for that assignment must assess whether students meet those writing objectives.

Directions for submitting W proposals:

- Complete the W proposal forms that are available on-line at UCF WACC page
- Submit a signed hard copy to the UCF office in EN C216
- Submit an electronic copy to *myerss3@southernct.edu*. Please try to include all supplemental materials (e.g., cover memo, syllabus, and 2-3 sample assignments) in one .doc/.rtf/.pdf document

Directions for proposing new courses as "Ws":

- Submit new course proposal to UCF for review by NMC
- Upon approval, submit W proposal to UCF for review by the WACC

Directions for revised W proposal submissions:

- Submit revised proposal with a new signature page and proposal form
- Include the entire proposal (i.e., not just the revised portions)
- Attach a brief cover memo specifying how the revised proposal addresses the committee's feedback, including references to appropriate page numbers.