

Writing Intensive (WI) Course Development Guide

A guide to assist faculty seeking guidelines, suggestions, and examples for developing Writing Intensive (WI) courses



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# Important Criteria for WI Courses

When designing your WI course, please ensure it meets **all** the following criteria:

* must be upper division;
* must be at least three units;
* must have 35 or fewer students;
* students must write at least 5,000 words throughout the semester;
* writing assignments must make up at least two-thirds of the final grade;
* must provide opportunities for invention, drafting, and revision;
* instructor must provide feedback by the end of the third week;
* instructor must provide feedback on multiple occasions throughout the semester; and
* all six Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) learning outcomes must be addressed throughout the semester:

1. Employ a process that includes invention, drafting, and revision;
2. Use conventions appropriate for particular audiences;
3. Express and synthesize their own and others’ ideas;
4. Demonstrate comprehension of texts by developing accurate summaries, reasoned analyses, and responses;
5. Evaluate and incorporate source materials as appropriate to a given task; and
6. Apply the conventions of standard written English.

Please note: although WI courses are no longer GE Capstone courses, the GE Guidelines originally created for WI courses remain in place.

# WI Course Approval Stages

Once you have developed your WI course and have completed the *Application Form for the Initial Approval of WI Courses by the GWAR Committee,* the application must go through the following stages of review and approval:

WI courses:

1. Department curriculum committee review

2. College curriculum committee review

3. GWAR committee review of WI requirements (GWAR Form)

4. CEPC approval of GWAR committee’s recommendations, as a supplement/summary

WI courses that also satisfy GE requirements:

1. Department curriculum committee review

2. College curriculum committee review

3. GWAR committee review of WI requirements (GWAR Form) and concurrent GEGC

review of GE requirements (GE Form)

4. CEPC approval of GWAR committee’s and GEGC’s recommendations, as a

supplement/summary

# Examples and Suggestions for Developing WI Courses

The following pages are examples and suggestions meant to support you in developing your WI course and in completing the *Application Form for the Initial Approval of WI Courses by the GWAR Committee.* The examples provided are based on WI courses currently offered in various colleges at CSULB and include the following three required sections of the GWAR application form:

* WI Justification
* Course Assessment
* Outline of Writing Processes by Week

## **College of Education (CED):**

## **Example Based onLST400 – Language Arts Capstone**

**WI Justification**

Liberal Studies 400 is a Writing Intensive course because it meets all of the criteria: it is upper division, 3 credits, and each section can be no larger than 35 students. Through the Digital Essay and Literacy Position Statement, students have an opportunity to compose and revise texts (engaging processes of Inventing, Drafting, and Revising), and these writing assignments and associated processes count for 70% of their final grade (more than the 2/3 minimum required to be a WI course). These writing projects total more than the required 5,000 words over the course of the semester, and students receive feedback on their initial writing project, the Digital Essay, by week 3. Further, opportunities for feedback and revision are integrated throughout the course. In the course, there is an ongoing focus on writing for particular audiences, expressing one’s own ideas as well as synthesizing these with others’ ideas, and the Written Reading Responses, Visual Rhetoric close reading assignment, Digital Literacy Project & Presentation, and Silent Reading Portfolio allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of texts by developing summaries, analyses, presentations, and responses that are assessed by the instructor. In their multiple writing projects, students evaluate and incorporate source materials (e.g., peer-reviewed articles, essays on literacy practices, digital compositions) as appropriate for their written assignments (e.g., the Literacy position statement), and students learn to apply the conventions of Standard Written English.

**Course Assessment**

GWAR learning outcomes: 1. Employ a process that includes invention, drafting, and revision; 2. Use conventions appropriate for particular audiences; 3. Express and synthesize their own and others’ ideas; 4. Demonstrate comprehension of texts by developing accurate summaries, reasoned analyses, and responses; 5. Evaluate and incorporate source materials as appropriate to a given task; and 6. Apply the conventions of standard written English.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title of Assignment** | **Short Description of Assignment** | **GWAR Learning Outcome(s) Covered**  **(e.g., 1, 3)** | **Approximate Word Count** | **% of Final Grade** |
| Written Reading Responses | Students bring a typed response to all articles read for class. | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 200 words each week, 2,800 total | 5% |
| Digital essay | Students investigate one problem or issue within the field of literacy and compose a 3-5 minute video that addresses the problem. The purpose of this assignment is to expose students to the literacies involved in multimodal, digital composition. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 1,500 words | 30% |
| Digital Literacy Project & Presentation (in class) | Students work with a group of peers to create an interactive presentation. The purpose is to help students learn more about standards and course texts and take teaching and leadership roles in class. | 2, 5 | n/a | 10% |
| Literature Circles | Students read and discuss the basic elements of writing (theme, characters, setting, plot, symbolism, etc.) as well as the historical, social, and cultural background for a work in literature circle groups. | 3, 5 | n/a | 5% |
| Visual Rhetoric close reading | Students will compose a 1-page journal that offers a close reading of a single page from a work. | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 250 | 5% |
| Silent Reading Portfolio | Every day after silent reading students will be asked to complete a 2-5 minute free-write on what they are reading. | 3 | 100 word per week, 1,400 total | 5% |
| Literacy position statement (Signature Assignment) | This signature assignment is an academic essay about students’ literacy position statements. The purpose of the literacy position statement is to demonstrate students’ familiarity with course materials and proficiency in writing a thesis-driven essay. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 1,750-2,500 | 40% |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | \*Total: 7,700+ | \*Total: 100% |

\*Total word count must be at least 5,000 and total % of final grade must be at least 67%.

\*Exams and quizzes, if feedback and revision are involved, can be included in this table. However, exams and quizzes that do not involve feedback and revision of writing should not be counted toward the 5,000-word goal.

**Outline of Writing Processes by Week**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week #** | **Title of Assignment** | **Student opportunities for invention (I), drafting (D), and revision (R)**  **(Please indicate I, D, and/or R.)** | **Instructor feedback (F)** |
| 1 | Silent Reading free-write | I |  |
| 2 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Digital essay | I, D |  |
| 3 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Digital essay | I, D | Digital Essay emerging draft (F) |
| First instructor feedback must be provided to students by the end of Week 3. | | | |
| 4 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Digital essay | R | Digital Essay draft (F) |
| 5 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Digital Literacy Project & Presentation | I |  |
| 6 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Digital Literacy Project & Presentation | I | Digital Literacy Project (F) |
| 7 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literature Circles | I |  |
| 8 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literature Circles |  | Written Reading Responses (F) |
| 9 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Visual Rhetoric close reading | I, D | Visual Rhetoric close reading (F) |
| 10 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | I, D |  |
| 11 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | I, D, R | Literacy position statement draft (F) |
| 12 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | I, D, R |  |
| 13 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | R |  |
| 14 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | R |  |
| 15 | Silent Reading free-write, Written Reading Responses, Literacy position statement | R | Literacy position statement (F) |
| 16 | Conclusion to the course |  |  |

## 

## **College of Health & Human Services (CHHS):**

## **Example Based on GERN 400 – Perspectives on Gerontology**

**WI Justification**

Gerontology 400 is a Writing Intensive course because it meets all of the criteria: it is upper division, 3 credits, and each section can be no larger than 35 students. Through the Reaction Paper, Life Review paper (parts 1 & 2), and Discussion Board reflections, students have an opportunity to compose and revise texts (engaging processes of Inventing, Drafting, and Revising), and these writing assignments and associated processes count for 75% of their final grade (more than the 2/3 required to be a WI course). These writing projects total more than the required 5,000 words over the course of the semester, and students receive feedback on their initial writing project, the Reaction paper, by week 3. Further, opportunities for feedback and revision are integrated throughout the course. In the course, there is an ongoing focus on writing for particular audiences, expressing one’s own ideas as well as synthesizing these with others’ ideas, and the Discussion Board reflections allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of texts by developing summaries, analyses, and responses that are assessed by the instructor. In their multiple writing projects, students evaluate and incorporate source materials (e.g., peer-reviewed articles) as appropriate for their written assignments (e.g., the Life Review paper), and students learn to apply the conventions of Standard Written English.

# Course Assessment

GWAR learning outcomes: 1. Employ a process that includes invention, drafting, and revision; 2. Use conventions appropriate for particular audiences; 3. Express and synthesize their own and others’ ideas; 4. Demonstrate comprehension of texts by developing accurate summaries, reasoned analyses, and responses; 5. Evaluate and incorporate source materials as appropriate to a given task; and 6. Apply the conventions of standard written English.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title of Assignment** | **Short Description of Assignment** | **GWAR Learning Outcome(s) Covered**  **(e.g., 1, 3)** | **Approximate Word Count** | **% of Final Grade** |
| Discussion Board Module Reflections | Six module reflections throughout the semester; topics include:   1. Introduction (at least 2 paragraphs) 2. Mental and physical health (2 to 3 pages) 3. Caregiving (2 to 3 pages) 4. End of life (2 to 3 pages) 5. Financial preparation (2 to 3 pages) 6. Housing (2 to 3 pages)   For each reflection, students will cite at least two outside sources. | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 3,000-4,500 | 30% |
| Reaction Paper | Students choose a controversial topic related to gerontology and argue for and against it. Students must support their arguments. (3 to 4 pages) | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 800-1,100 | 10% |
| Submission 1 of Life Review Paper | Students write a proposal on what they intend to write for their Life Review Paper. | 1, 2, 3, 6 | 400 | 5% |
| Service  Learning Journals | Students describe their service-learning assignments and relate it to class concepts. Students will cite at least two inside sources for each journal. | 2, 3, 5, 6 | 1,500-2,000 | 15% |
| Submission 2 of Life Review Paper | Students submit final version of the 8-page double-spaced paper, for which students will interview an older adult and connect the conversation with class concepts. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 2,000 | 15% |
|  |  |  | \*Total:  7,700-10,000 | \*Total: 75% |

\*Total word count must be at least 5,000 and total % of final grade must be at least 67%.

\*Exams and quizzes, if feedback and revision involved, can be included in this table. However,

exams and quizzes that do not involve feedback and revision of writing should not be counted toward the 5,000-word goal.

**Outline of Writing Processes by Week**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week #** | **Title of Assignment** | **Student opportunities for invention (I), drafting (D), and revision (R)**  **(Please indicate I, D, and/or R.)** | **Instructor feedback (F)** |
| 1 | Discussion Board Reflection (DBR) 1 | I |  |
| 2 |  |  | DBR 1 (F) |
| 3 | Reaction Paper | I, D |  |
| First instructor feedback must be provided to students by the end of Week 3. | | | |
| 4 | Reaction Paper | R | Reaction Paper (F) |
| 5 | DBR 2 | I | Reaction Paper (F) |
| 6 | DBR 3 | I | DBR 2 (F) |
| 7 | DBR 4 | I | DBR 3 (F) |
| 8 |  |  | DBR 4 (F) |
| 9 | DBR 5 | I |  |
| 10 | Life Review Paper (LRP)  Part 1 | I, D | DBR 5 (F) |
| 11 | DBR 6 | I | LRP Part 1 (F) |
| 12 | LRP Part 1 Final Draft | R | DBR 6 (F) |
| 13 |  |  | LRP Part 1 Final (F) |
| 14 | LRP Part 2 | I, D |  |
| 15 | Service Learning Journals | I, D | LRP Part 2 (F) |
| 16 | LRP Part 2 Final Draft | R | LRP Part 2 Final (F) |

## **College of Liberal Arts (CLA):**

## **Example Based on LING 472 – Language and Social Justice**

# WI Justification

LING 472 is a Writing Intensive course because it meets all of the criteria: it is upper division, 3 credits, and enrollment in each section can be no larger than 35 students. Through the various assignments in this course (Responses to Reading Comprehension Questions, two Short Writing Assignments, two Papers on Linguistic Justice and Injustice, and Peer-Review Activities), students are given multiple opportunities to invent, draft, and revise texts. These writing assignments and associated processes count for 85% of the final grade (more than the 2/3 required to be a WI course) and total more than the required 5,000 words over the course of the semester (i.e., approximately 5,650-7,000 words). Further, opportunities for feedback and revision are integrated throughout the course, and students receive feedback on their initial writing assignment (i.e., Short Writing Assignment #1) by week 3. In the course, there is an ongoing focus on writing for particular audiences and expressing one’s own ideas as well as synthesizing these with others’ ideas. Moreover, assignments such as Responses to Reading Comprehension Questions and the Linguistic Injustice Paper allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of texts by developing summaries, analyses, and responses that are assessed by the instructor. In their multiple writing assignments, and in particular the Linguistic Injustice and Justice Papers, students evaluate and incorporate source materials and learn to apply the conventions of Standard Written English.

# Course Assessment

GWAR learning outcomes: 1. Employ a process that includes invention, drafting, and revision; 2. Use conventions appropriate for particular audiences; 3. Express and synthesize their own and others’ ideas; 4. Demonstrate comprehension of texts by developing accurate summaries, reasoned analyses, and responses; 5. Evaluate and incorporate source materials as appropriate to a given task; and 6. Apply the conventions of standard written English.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title of Assignment** | **Short Description of Assignment** | **GWAR Learning Outcome(s) Covered**  **(e.g., 1, 3)** | **Approximate Word Count** | **% of Final Grade** |
| Responses to Reading Comprehension  Questions | Throughout the semester, students will submit responses to three comprehension questions for each assigned reading. | 3, 4, 6 | 15 x 100 words =  1,500 | 15% |
| Short Writing Assignments | Students will complete two short writing assignments (2-3 pages) that are designed to help them work through and/or reflect on the course topics. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 | 2 x (500-750 words) =  1,000-1,500 | 20% |
| “Injustice” Paper | Students will write a paper (6-8 pages) in which they will analyze a linguistic injustice of their choosing. They will summarize multiple perspectives on the issue, outline what is at stake, and research one actual/proposed intervention into the issue. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 1,500-2,000 | 20% |
| “Justice” Paper + Peer Review | Students will write a paper (5-6 pages) in which they will design (and possibly execute) an action project to intervene in a situation of linguistic injustice. They will also engage in in-class peer review designed to strengthen their project, after which they will submit a reflection piece. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 1,250-1,500 | 20% |
| In-class Write-around Activity | Students will respond in writing, in real time, to each other’s writing. Each student will need to bring a piece of original writing to begin this session. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 | 400-500 | 10% |
|  |  |  | \*Total:  5,650-7,000 | \*Total:  85% |

\*Total word count must be at least 5,000 and total % of final grade must be at least 67%.

\*Exams and quizzes, if feedback and revision involved, can be included in this table. However,

exams and quizzes that do not involve feedback and revision of writing should not be counted toward the 5,000-word goal.

**Outline of Writing Processes by Week**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week #** | **Title of Assignment** | **Student opportunities for invention (I), drafting (D), and revision (R)**  **(Please indicate I, D, and/or R.)** | **Instructor feedback (F)** |
| 1 | Response to Reading Comprehension Questions (RRCQ) | I |  |
| 2 | Short Writing Assignment #1 (SWA1),  RRCQ | I, D  I |  |
| 3 | RRCQ | I | SWA1 (F) |
| First instructor feedback must be provided to students by the end of Week 3. | | | |
| 4 | RRCQ | I |  |
| 5 | RRCQ | I |  |
| 6 | Short Writing Assignment #2 (SWA2),  RRCQ | I, D  I |  |
| 7 | RRCQ | I | SWA2 (F) |
| 8 | RRCQ | I |  |
| 9 | Injustice Paper (IP) Outline,  RRCQ | I  I |  |
| 10 | RRCQ | I | IP Outline (F) |
| 11 | RRCQ | I |  |
| 12 | Injustice Paper (IP) Final Draft,  RRCQ | I, D, R  I |  |
| 13 | RRCQ | I | IP Final (F) |
| 14 | Justice Paper (JP) First Draft,  RRCQ | I, D  I |  |
| 15 | Justice Paper (JP) Peer review,  RRCQ | R  I | JP First Draft (F) |
| 16 | Write-around Activity,  Justice Paper (JP) Final | I, D  I, D |  |

## **College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics (CNSM):**

## **Example Based on BIOL 447 – Molecular Plant Physiology**

# WI Justification

BIOL 447 Molecular Plant Physiology is a Writing Intensive course because it meets all the criteria: it is upper division, 3 credits, and can be no larger than 35 students. Students have an opportunity to compose and revise writing assignments (engaging in the processes of Inventing, Drafting, and/or Revising), and these writing assignments and associated processes account for 82% of their final grade (more than the 2/3 required to be a WI course). These writing projects total more than the required 5,000 words for the course, and students receive feedback on their Lecture Questions on a weekly basis, beginning in week 1. Other opportunities for feedback and revision are integrated throughout the course. In the course, there is an ongoing focus on writing for particular audiences, expressing one’s own ideas as well as synthesizing these with others’ ideas, and the weekly Lecture Questions allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of scientific articles by developing summaries, analyses, and responses that are assessed by the instructor. In their multiple writing projects, students evaluate and incorporate source materials (e.g., peer-reviewed articles) as appropriate for their written assignments (e.g., Final Paper), and students learn to apply the conventions of Standard Written English for scientific audiences.

# Course Assessment

GWAR learning outcomes: 1. Employ a process that includes invention, drafting, and revision; 2. Use conventions appropriate for particular audiences; 3. Express and synthesize their own and others’ ideas; 4. Demonstrate comprehension of texts by developing accurate summaries, reasoned analyses, and responses; 5. Evaluate and incorporate source materials as appropriate to a given task; and 6. Apply the conventions of standard written English.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title of Assignment** | **Short Description of Assignment** | **GWAR Learning Outcome(s) Covered**  **(e.g., 1, 3)** | **Approximate Word Count** | **% of Final Grade** |
| Weekly Lecture Questions (LQs) | Students will work in small teams to answer questions posed after Monday lectures along with additional synthesis questions (8 LQs). | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 800-1,600  (100-200 words per LQ) | 21.6% |
| Weekly Writing Assignments (WWAs) | Short written assignments will be designed to improve scientific writing skills (12 WWAs). | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 3,600-4,800  (300-400 words per WWA) | 54% |
| Final Paper | Students will have to write a final paper on a topic related to the course. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | 600+ | 6.4% |
|  |  |  | \*Total:  5,000-7,000 | \*Total: 82% |

\*Total word count must be at least 5,000 and total % of final grade must be at least 67%.

\*Exams and quizzes, if feedback and revision involved, can be included in this table. However,

exams and quizzes that do not involve feedback and revision of writing should not be counted

toward the 5,000-word goal.

**Outline of Writing Processes by Week**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week #** | **Title of Assignment** | **Student opportunities for invention (I), drafting (D), and revision (R)**  **(Please indicate I, D, and/or R.)** | **Instructor feedback (F)** |
| 1 | WWA 1 (Transgenic Plants, Sustainability and GMOs: NGR5 1o literature part 1) | I |  |
| 2 | WWA 2 (NGR5 1o literature part 2), LQ 1 | I | WWA 1 (F) |
| 3 | WWA 3 (Plant Genomes/Genome Stability/Pol V), LQ 2 | I, D | WWA 2 (F) |
| First instructor feedback must be provided to students by the end of Week 3. | | | |
| 4 | WWA 4 (Water Potential, Roots) | I, D, R | WWA 3 (F) |
| 5 | WWA 5 (Xylem, Transpiration, Stomata), LQ 3 | I, D, R | WWA 4 (F) |
| 6 | WWA 6 (Phloem) | I, D, R | WWA 5 (F) |
| 7 | LQ 4 | I, D, R | WWA 6 (F) |
| 8 | WWA 7 (Hormones II, Hormone Crosstalk) | I |  |
| 9 | WWA 8 (Meristem, Root and Leaf Development), LQ 5 | I , D, R | WWA 7 (F) |
| 10 | WWA 9 (Regulation of Flowering and Flower Development part I) | I, D, R | WWA 8 (F) |
| 11 | WWA 10 (Regulation of Flowering & Flower Development part II), LQ 6 | I , D, R | WWA 9 (F) |
| 12 | WWA 11 (Photomorphogenesis I, Phytochrome) | I, D, R | WWA 10 (F) |
| 13 | WWA 12 (Photomorphogenesis II, Cryptochrome and UV-B), LQ 7 | I, D, R | WWA 11 (F) |
| 14 | First Draft Paper | I, D, R | WWA 12 (F) |
| 15 | First Draft Paper,  LQ 8 | D, R  I | First Draft Paper (F) |
| 16 | Final Paper | R | Final Paper (F) |