

Guidelines for Writing Intensive (WI) Courses

(for more information and for WI proposal forms, contact Davin Kubota at 734-9170 or at davink@hawaii.edu)

What is a Writing Intensive (WI) Course?

The WI program is based on the following assumptions:

1. Writing is a way of learning; what students learn through writing they are more likely to understand and remember.
2. Students do not master writing in a one-semester writing course like English100; their writing abilities develop with instruction and practice throughout their academic careers.
3. The forms of good writing in college vary from discipline to discipline; instructors in disciplines other than English need to help students master discipline specific forms of writing.
4. Students improve as writers not just from completing writing assignments. but even more from instruction and guidance while working on the assignments.

The following are required for WI courses. Both your WI Proposals and your syllabus should include the highlighted information in some form (you may adapt the wording for your course syllabus).

1. The course is transfer-level (ie. at the 100 or 200-level) and is not a Foundations course. Note: Foundations courses do not qualify for WI designation.
2. Writing is used to promote understanding of the course materials.
3. **Students complete the equivalent of at least 16-typed pages of text (approximately 4,000 words).** While some informal, ungraded writing may be assigned, the majority of writing should be formal and polished. Drafts and in-class exams do not count toward the 4,000 word minimum.
4. Writing plays a major role in determining the grade for the course: the instructor emphasizes that writing is an important tool for remembering, analyzing, and communicating knowledge in his or her discipline. **(It is strongly recommended that at least 40% of the final grade should be based on the student's ability to express him/herself in writing about the course content; students who do not complete the assigned writing should not be allowed to pass the course. If however, writing counts for less than 40% of the course grade, the course syllabus must state that students must satisfactorily complete all writing assignments to pass the course with a "D" or better.)**
5. **Students get guidance and feedback during the writing process and before the final draft is due.** Guidance and feedback to the student may take a variety of forms--short lectures and handouts on writing in the discipline, class discussion of writing samples, writing demonstrations using the blackboard or overhead projector, individual conferences, small group workshops, comments on outlines or rough drafts, etc.

6. The instructor informally monitors the effectiveness of the writing component in the course during the semester and discusses any difficulties with the WI coordinator; at the end the semester, the instructor asks students for comments on the writing component and considers the comments before offering the course as WI again.

Class Size and Enrollment Requirement

Writing Intensive courses are limited to 20 students. Students must have completed ENG 100, ESL 100, or ENG 160 with a "C" or better before enrolling in a WI course. Students who do not meet this requirement are asked to withdraw on the first day of class.

How WI Courses Will Be Selected

1. The WAC coordinator will review a proposal to ensure the course meets the Writing Intensive hallmarks (See below for Writing Intensive Hallmarks).
2. Department chairs, with input from faculty members, will prioritize applications based on department resources and student needs.
3. Considering the recommendations of the WAC coordinators and the department chairs, the Dean of Instruction will make the final selection of courses to be offered as Writing Intensive. Priority will be given to courses which fulfill general education and area requirements for the AA degree.

Writing Intensive Hallmarks and Explanatory Notes from UH-Manoa website at

<http://www.mwp.hawaii.edu/wi-hallmarks.htm> . You may want to include the WI Hallmarks also in your syllabus if you are teaching a WI section:

Hallmarks of Writing Intensive Classes

1. The class uses writing to promote the learning of course materials.
2. The class provides interaction between the instructor and students while students do assigned writing.
3. Written assignments contribute significantly to each student's course grade.
4. The class requires students to do a substantial amount of writing—a minimum of 4,000 words, or about 16 pages.
5. To allow for meaningful professor–student interaction on each student's writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.

Explanatory notes from UH–Manoa Gen Ed/ Focus website.

- * Instructors assign formal and informal writing, both in class and out, to increase students' understanding of course material as well as to improve writing skills.
- * Types of interaction will vary. For example, a professor who requires the completion of one long essay may review sections of the essay, write comments on drafts, and be

available for conferences. The professor who requires several short papers may demonstrate techniques for drafting and revising in the classroom, give guidance during the composition of the papers, and consult with students after they complete their papers.

- * **Only students who satisfactorily complete the writing assignments should be allowed to pass the course with a "D" or better.** Thus, the Board recommends that writing assignments count for at least 40% of the course grade. Alternatively, the Board recommends that if writing assignments count less than 40%, the course instructor state explicitly on the syllabus that "students must adequately complete all writing assignments to pass the course with a 'D' or better. Students who do not complete all writing assignments will get a D- or an F and will not earn W Focus credit."
- * The types of writing assigned will vary and may include formal and "informal" (writing that is not revised) writing. Depending on the course content, students may write analytic essays, critical reviews, journals, lab reports, research reports, reaction papers, etc.

Teacher Resources

Resources are available at the Manoa Writing Program website at <http://www.mwp.hawaii.edu/resources.htm>