**University Writing Subcommittee Procedures for Proposal Development**

The resources below are meant to support faculty across campus to develop W courses in the disciplines.

1. **W Course Objectives**

The Subcommittee proposes the objectives below to support departmental decisions about W course goals and outcomes. Note these objectives are not the same as outcomes, but they are here to support the link between disciplinary writing and current writing pedagogy. Accordingly, W courses must teach students how to:

* **Apply appropriate disciplinary genres** (e.g.: proposals, abstracts, memos, reports, academic arguments, book reviews, annotated bibliographies, etc.) for meaningful rhetorical purposes and for specific audiences. This includes demonstrating proficiency with the appropriate style and citation guidelines, as well as practicing particular ways of expressing ideas, designing documents, using language, choosing words, and structuring sentences that are native to that discipline.
* **Synthesize academic and/ or disciplinary conversations** which can include evaluating whether and what type of outside information is needed, integrating -- effectively and ethically -- outside sources in support of claims and purposes, and finding and evaluating the quality of a source as well as its argument.
* **Assess the rhetorical situation**, which should focus writers on considerations of audience, context, purpose, and genre (rather than forms of writing), and respond in an appropriate manner, which includes creating a sustained, coherent focus / argument, and explaining a topic in a structured manner.
* **Use clear and effective sentences and language** that build a strong *ethos* (authority) for the writer, that represent specific disciplinary knowledge, and that include the ability to edit drafts successfully.

The University Writing Subcommittee may choose to evaluate student writing according to these objectives as needed. For example, to assess student writing on campus, the UWS may request student work from a random sampling of W courses and evaluate them in the context of these objectives.

1. **Support for Teaching and Designing W Courses**

The university has a Writing Across the Curriculum coordinator who is available to assist and consult with faculty in the creation and development of a W course proposal and W courses.

The WAC coordinator is also available to support the teaching of writing across campus. For more information, please see the WAC website at <http://fresnostate.edu/academics/wac/>.

1. **Criteria for Approving New and Evaluating Current W Courses**

The committee encourages faculty across the university to create W courses in their disciplines and recognizes the time and resources needed to develop these courses. Administrators are encouraged to provide the resources necessary to create and assess these courses, e.g. assigned time, professional development funds, or stipends. Research shows that writing is a key opportunity for students to become practitioners of their own disciplines and learn the conversations, orientations, and practices that are specific to disciplinary knowledge.

1. New course proposals should follow the university guidelines.
2. New course proposals and current courses must demonstrate that they meet all W course requirements.
3. New and current courses must include two additional items beyond university requirements for the committee’s review and approval:
   1. A justification that links this writing course to the discipline.
   2. A short overview of all writing assignments that includes 1) the required word count; 2) the process (e.g., one draft, multiple drafts, peer review, teacher comments, etc.); 3) assessment criteria; and 4) where and how the writing assignments are covered in the schedule.
4. In general, the University Writing Subcommittee wants to work with faculty to create strong W courses within the guidelines. To assist faculty in developing courses, we provide below some criteria we use to evaluate new and current courses include (review of courses is not limited to these criteria only):
   1. Does the course clearly meet the W course requirements?
   2. Is the course clearly grounded in writing pedagogy?
   3. Is the writing pedagogy clearly appropriate to the course? For example, does the online course use best practices in online writing instruction?
   4. Do the course description, the goals and outcomes, and the course schedule clearly demonstrate attention to the teaching of writing?
   5. Does the course clearly include a textbook that focuses on the teaching of all aspects of writing (e.g., how to make writerly decisions about genres, incorporation of evidence, use of key elements as well as editing and style?)
   6. Do the writing project assignments get students to make meaning (instead of only repeating what they recently read or learned in class) and engage in writerly decision-making (e.g., considering their audience, their purpose, etc.?)
   7. Is it clear which writing project assignments students will receive feedback? Is it clear that the feedback will need to be used before the final draft is submitted?
   8. Does the course proposal include the criteria for evaluating student writing and does that criteria include both substance and form?
   9. Does the course grading clearly value the written components of the course for the purpose of students being able to pass the class?
5. If the University Writing Subcommittee rejects a proposal, written reasons will be provided.
6. Overall, the Subcommittee wants to work with faculty during review and to get courses approved. We will support faculty proposal development and syllabus revision through multiple iterations if necessary as well as point faculty toward resources to help develop and/or revise these courses.