

A Proposal for Revising the Writing Requirement at Stetson University

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Presented by the WEC Task Force: Eric Kurlander (Chair, History);
Chris Tobler (Chair, Finance); Kirsten Work (Chair, Biology);
Jane Christeson (Music); Maggie Herb (Director, Writing Center);
Chair, Megan O'Neill (Director, Writing Program)

This proposal suggests revising the current General Education writing requirement to a practice that reflects the best current thinking in the field about skill acquisition and development. Ambitious and research-based, the proposal argues for a three pronged approach to the writing requirement: targeting and coordinating specific sites of writing instruction in the curriculum; enhancing student-centered support; and investing substantially in faculty development and support for writing. Enhancing writing instruction at Stetson in this way will provide all students with heightened, effective, sequential writing experiences that coordinate and connect the learning and writing already done in general education and in majors. By replacing the single-course ENGL 101 Writing requirement with a combination of carefully chosen writing intensive courses, the writing curriculum at Stetson will produce stronger writers whose skills have been shaped and developed by a variety of writing experiences. The model we propose is neither a Writing Across the Curriculum program nor a Writing in the Disciplines program but, instead, a model that combines the most effective elements of each: it is a proposal to heighten every student's learning.

What the Research Says about Writing Instruction

The Inoculation Myth.

Since the 1980s, research in writing studies has described the traditional first year composition writing requirement as “inoculation,” a term suggesting that a single formal exposure to writing instruction is sufficient to meet the needs of a wide variety of academic and professional expectations. Such a requirement presumes that the skills taught in first year writing courses transfer with little trouble to the increasingly complex multidisciplinary writing tasks and situations students typically encounter as they progress through their four years at college.

Although it's comforting to think that a single writing course is sufficient to equip students for these demands, we know that writing and literacy skills develop unevenly as a result of student aptitudes, prior learning experiences, and exposure to different writing situations (Bruner, 1960); thus, the first year composition requirement is often insufficient. Research in the fields of learning, critical thinking, and writing shows clearly that in order to flourish, student writing skills require sequenced attention; expert guidance; systematic reinforcement in a variety of situations; and conscious attention to transfer of skills. (See Bazerman, 1995; Beaufort, 1999, 2007; Carroll, 2002; Ambrose, 2010; Wardle/Downs, 2010; Moore, 2012; Adler-Kassner, 2012.) This proposal offers a model consistent with our understanding that writing skills develop to their fullest when they are taught over time with guidance and reinforcement from a variety of teachers.

Effectiveness of High Impact Learning Practices.

Study after study has demonstrated that students retain writing skills better and develop written flexibility more easily when their instructors employ high impact learning practices such as the ones Stetson committed to with the adoption of the LEAP general education curriculum. (See AAC&U, <http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm>). These practices—particularly the writing intensive course—come more easily to faculty at small institutions dedicated to liberal learning because these faculty tend to already be invested in one-on-one, mentored, experience-based teaching. (See Gladstein and Regaignon, 2012) Although Stetson has thought forward in prioritizing writing intensive instruction in the FSEM and JSEM, the University still retains the outmoded model of an explicit, one-course writing requirement. These mismatched components reflect a 19th century institutional attitude toward writing instruction: innovative in some respects but still fundamentally an inoculation mode.

Moreover, our current map of required exposure to writing instruction (ENGL 101, First Year Seminar, Junior Seminar, Senior capstone) is insufficient to meet the needs of a student population that will be faced with increasingly complex literacy and writing tasks in their careers: although our general education learning goals aim to prepare students for life during and after college, Stetson’s writing requirement currently does not consistently encourage or foster the links between writing/learning in general education and mastery of disciplinary areas. We can take advantage of our existing interdisciplinary interests to leverage gains in majors, disciplines, general education, and our innovative interdisciplinary programs. This proposal suggests that the inherent but implicit connections between Stetson’s general education and disciplinary concentrations can be made visible and enhanced by increasing general education writing and coordinating it with explicit disciplinary writing requirements.

Writing: A Ticket to Work

While few of us consider the point of an education in the liberal tradition to be purely utilitarian, we know that communication skills, particularly writing and speaking, are essential for job finding and job keeping. Studies and reports on the value of writing to an employer are cited with increasing frequency, all of which confirm the 2004 report compiled by the National Commission on Writing for America’s Families, Schools, and Colleges. That report cites employer data from a range of businesses and reminds business leaders that writing

consists of the ability to say things correctly, to say them well, and to say them in a way that makes sense (i.e., grammar, rhetoric, and logic). . . . business writing, at its best, requires effective communication about work that is frequently complex and intellectually demanding. Skill in such communication is not developed by a few school hours here and there devoted to writing. *Developing the kinds of thoughtful writers needed in business, and elsewhere in the nation’s life, will require educators to understand writing as an activity calling for extended preparation across subject matters—from kindergarten through college.* (2004; emphasis added)

The Small School Model of Writing Instruction.

A recent survey of over 100 small colleges and universities in the United States (“small” defined as 1,000 – 3,500 students) revealed that nearly 85% prioritize writing by requiring guided and mentored writing experiences throughout the four years of an education. These schools have explicitly rejected the inoculation method as ineffective, and very few require a stand-alone first year writing course, replacing

that limited educational experience with a sequence of courses in core areas and disciplinary concentrations. (See Gladstein and Regaignon, 2012.)

More specifically, research into several comparison and aspirational schools (including Swarthmore, Elon, Puget Sound, Bowdoin, Drake, Furman, and Valparaiso) indicates a pattern that incorporates multiple writing experiences in multiple academic areas. None of these schools require a first year English course, but most of them do require an explicitly writing-intensive first year experience often called the First Year Writing Seminar. Instead, these schools foster a Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines (WAC/WID) approach across important academic areas such as general education, mission-statement centered initiatives, and targeted disciplinary and interdisciplinary experiences. Stetson, too, considers these initiatives to be critical to our success, and we believe that connecting our students' learning to their writing experiences is one of the exemplars of a Stetson education. Strikingly, Stetson already requires writing in a number of critically important courses: the FSEM and JSEM experiences reflect our commitment to writing in the learning process—but they are not yet considered a part of the Gen Ed writing requirement. This proposal, then, suggests that we make our values explicit by requiring the multiple-course model.

Consistent with the views held by writing studies scholars, virtually every report on the valuable employee, and a considerable majority of small colleges and universities dedicated to liberal learning, we propose revising our current writing requirement. This rethinking should result in a model that encompasses the elements of distinction already extant on campus and synchronizes these pockets of excellence to ensure that every student experiences sequenced, planned writing instruction. This model will put Stetson University into the ranks of the nationally recognized small school writing programs and will, in addition, position undergraduate writing to match the national ranking of Stetson's Law College and its legal writing program.

In short, the proposal updates our writing instruction, distributes writing instruction both horizontally and vertically, and targets student learning consistent with the best current research.

The Proposed Writing Requirement

We propose a writing requirement of a minimum of five writing-intensive courses coordinated across General Education and work in the major, with its culmination in senior project/mastery level writing. (Because senior research/capstone/mastery level courses are not comparable across the University, the model being proposed here does not include them but rather sees them as the ultimate demonstration of a Stetson education. The course structure being proposed enables consistent strong performance in those capstone courses. However, the flexibility built into course distribution allows departmental discretion in designating senior research courses in A&S as WI.) In this writing-enhanced plan, students take WI courses that are focused more carefully in key elements of the Stetson education, with respect for student agency and with specific attention to a “writing in the discipline” course offered in majors and interdisciplinary programs. Deepening the learning in General Education courses via writing further translates to a more cohesive connection between Gen Ed and work in the major, where experts in their fields offer the benefits of their experiences and their training to students following those paths.

Overview of the 5-Course Model



General Education. Enhancing General Education courses by means of additional attention to writing instruction extends the emphasis we already practice in the critical interdisciplinary FSEM/JSEM structure. Because not all Stetson students take both seminars, the *proposal takes advantage of the written work done in a student's General Education coursework.* Most students would take FSEM/JSEM; others would be able to choose a History, Creative Arts, or other WI course in a Gen Ed area. Closing the gap in this way will reinforce student abilities at written communication in our core knowledge areas and personal/social responsibility courses.

In the Discipline. A course in disciplinary or professional writing methods allows students a concentrated opportunity to learn and practice the specific skill sets of a field under the guidance of the experts in that field. In the proposed model, students would be required to take at least one course *designated by the department* as a methods or disciplinary writing course. Stetson already identifies several kinds of disciplinary writing courses—for example, PSYC 203, BIOL 497, ENGL 241, and BADM 205. This model proposes a requirement of *at least one* explicit methods or workplace-writing course for each major, with a WI designation to coordinate and make visible our emphasis on preparing students for the challenges they will encounter as they take their Stetson educations on the road.

Plus Two. Finally, this model encourages student agency—one of Stetson's preferred models of relationship—in the development of their skill at written communication. Because students do not learn to order, instead developing mastery at different times and speeds, and because students have unique needs and interests, the proposed model allows students *to choose two additional WI courses that match their needs and interests:* in their chosen field, in an elective, or in a General Education course. Some programs and majors would also be able to use this “plus one” as an additional disciplinary writing option. The advantage of the additional two WI courses is, primarily, that each additional writing experience leverages additional gains in writing flexibility; further, the additional two courses allow for greater, broader, and deeper learning for all our students with comparatively little additional investment for course planning.

The **advantages** of this flexible structure are several. Although Business, Music, and Arts & Science share most elements of the Gen Ed curriculum, students in each of these degree areas take slightly different pathways, which this 5-course requirement easily supports. In addition, the **distribution of the “plus two”** could meet a specific degree requirement for students whose course path is already tightly programmed or does not allow for electives.

What is a Writing Intensive Course?

Put simply, a writing-intensive course is a course that uses writing to help students learn. A course is WI not because of the number of pages assigned, but because it helps students develop a successful writing process in three ways:

(1) Specify the goals of a writing project to help students better understand what they are being asked to do and why.

(2) Require students to produce a written project through a sequence of related assignments to allow time for student to learn and master different elements of the assignment, and to provide time for faculty to properly and effectively mentor students through stages of learning.

(3) Require revisions and provide feedback to foster habits of thoughtful reflection on the subject and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and development

Stetson established guidelines for WI designation in 2009, and they are the foundation on which all of our WI courses—now more than 50 across A&S, Music, and Business--have been approved. The literature in the field supports and endorses how Stetson has implemented these high impact learning practices:

- **Class size.** Following national best practices, which point out that additional faculty investment of time in student writing is best achieved with a smaller class, Stetson assigns lower course caps to WI courses. Currently, WI courses are capped between 18 and 22.
- **Types of assignments.** Writing should be spread throughout the course in a sequence of related assignments rather than concentrated in a large term paper. A lengthy term paper, no matter how demanding, is counterproductive to the writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate pedagogy employed in WI courses. Assignments are generally a combination of low-stakes, medium-stakes, and high-stakes writing.
- **Amount of writing.** The total page count is not as important as the writing process that students complete. Typically, each student in a writing intensive course may produce about 15-25 pages of writing, but again, it's the process and not the quantity that will result in student learning.
- **Revision.** In a writing intensive course, at least some student writing is revised as a result of peer and instructor feedback and resubmitted in a final form. Instructors and students should both understand that feedback and revision must involve more than pointing out and/or correcting surface errors.
- **The weight of writing in the final grade.** In a WI course, grades on written work make up a significant percentage of the course grade (50% if not more). In the WI course, the writing reveals the learning; therefore, the final grade should be calculated accordingly.
- **Assignment-related instruction and evaluation of papers.** Faculty in WI courses can help students learn through writing by means of a combination of the following: inclass draft workshops; collaborative projects; hands-on, directed lessons on research techniques; a sequence of writing assignments; feedback on drafts that focuses on development rather than only editing.

Making a Course Writing Intensive: Some Effective Teaching Techniques

The Staged Approach	The Repeated Assignment	Low, Medium, High Stakes
<p>The “staging” technique allows faculty to assign and give guidance on individual project elements (introductions, literature or research reviews, methods, discussions, analyses) over the course of a semester, with the entire project coming together at the end.</p> <p>Students thus get targeted feedback on the components of an assignment, enabling a better product at the end.</p> <p>For the professor, the staged approach enables a sensible distribution of grading time over the semester as well as the opportunity to target essential components.</p>	<p>In this technique, the professor assigns the same kind of writing (news article, executive summary, or historical overview) several times over the course of the semester.</p> <p>Students thus get several opportunities at mastering that specific form’s needs and expectations, learning what to do differently the next time.</p> <p>Faculty using this model can continually work on the requirements for that specific kind of assignment so that students build confidence in their abilities without having to learn several new forms.</p>	<p>In this approach, faculty assign writing with explicit understanding that some assignments will not “count” as much as others. Low stakes assignments build to medium and ultimately to high stakes projects, which carry a larger proportion of the grade.</p> <p>Scaffolding assignments this way ensures content coverage and mastery prior to formal, summative evaluation.</p> <p>Because little grade weight is put on the initial steps, faculty using this model save time while maximizing student learning.</p>

What Will This Take? Addressing Some Concerns

University Concerns:

- Class sizes. This is the biggest concern voiced by faculty, and it is shared by the task force behind this proposal. Stetson typically caps WI courses at lower numbers than non-WI courses. While we recommend that the University General Education Committee determine the appropriate course cap for all WI courses, we suggest a cap absolutely no higher than 22 students. Institutional Research has provided data indicating that increased class sizes to “buy” a sufficient number of smaller classes will not be necessary.

To determine the number of WI classes needed per year, we use these assumptions:

- students will use the FSEM and JSEM as two of their WI courses,
- the student body will reach 3100 as projected by Institutional Research,
- students will complete the 5 WI courses within 4 years, and
- FSEM and JSEM will be capped at 16 and other WI courses will be capped at 22.

We already offer FSEMs and JSEMs for every student who is required to take them, so this writing proposal will not increase the need for those classes. To provide enough other WI courses, we would need approximately 106 WI courses per year. Stetson already schedules 50-55 WI courses each year (exclusive of FSEM and JSEM), and the additional 45-50 WI courses would not be difficult to find. We recommend that faculty consider some of the many courses (approximately 350 at the 100-300 level) already capped at 15-25 students as potential WI courses. In addition, while the English Department sections of ENGL 101 would go away, the English faculty have plans to create WI courses at the 100 and 200 level. Following these guidelines, we should not have any need to increase the class size of non-WI courses.

- Coordination of WI courses both horizontally and vertically across the curriculum will be necessary to provide students with sufficient choice in electives. That coordination should be a University level effort and will happen in a partnership between Institutional Research, Registrar, and Advising.
- Because FSEM and JSEM are likely to be cornerstone writing-enriched courses, additional consistency and quality measures will be necessary as part of a regular reconsideration of course offerings in these areas. These measures will not impinge on faculty autonomy, and they should enhance learning and learning outcomes considerably.
- Assessment methods will have to be developed so that we know our efforts are successful.
- Because students in this model of writing instruction will need additional support, we plan a distinctive, University-level initiative to embed Writing Fellows in some courses.
- Assuming the proposal is approved by the end of 2013-14, we will take the 2014-15 year to investigate and enhance the necessary number of WI courses, plan for the handling of transfer students, start training Writing Fellows, and invest in faculty initiatives.

Department/College/School Issues:

- Additional Gen Ed courses will need WI designations. Although the designations are approved through the University General Education Committee, Colleges and Schools will need to think about how their students' degree programs coordinate with University Gen Ed.
- Many majors and programs already have courses in disciplinary writing. Those programs that do not will be asked to identify and designate a course that includes significant disciplinary writing or that targets writing in the workplace. Some departments may need to create new courses. Other departments may need to think carefully about what role writing plays in the mastery of the given field.
- Assuming the proposal is approved by the end of 2013-14, we will take the 2014-15 year to think through the appropriate pedagogical approaches to disciplinary or methods courses, rely on UGEC to help faculty decide critical curriculum questions, and continue divisional planning and scheduling.

Faculty Questions:

- Not everyone will have to teach a WI course. Although every department and program will need a designated course for writing in that discipline or profession, department chairs and program directors can ensure that the teaching expectation is handled equitably.
- Some faculty are concerned that they will be expected to “teach grammar” in a WI course. This is an unfortunate misperception. While grammar and other surface concerns are the easiest problems to spot in student writing, they are not the most important features of writing effectiveness. *Teaching writing is teaching students to think more clearly and analytically on the page.* If all faculty take more responsibility for holding students accountable for accuracy and correctness, then none of us will bear the entire burden.
- Assuming the proposal is approved by the end of 2013-14, we will take the 2014-15 year to invest substantially in our teaching faculty—workshops, nationally recognized speakers, and local experts from across our disciplines will form the inaugural year of preparation. All faculty in WI course assignments will have the opportunity to attend, learn, and reflect on best practices, so that each WI teacher feels comfortable when the new curriculum begins in 2015-2016.

Concurrent Enhanced Faculty Development Program

To maintain our efforts and to keep the quality high, we plan an ongoing, regular series of faculty development offerings, a series that will most likely be eventually connected to and coordinated through the Stetson Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence.

Because ongoing faculty involvement and engagement is critical in delivery of writing instruction, the proposal includes a proactive, regularized program to meet those

needs: responding to student writing, teaching for transfer of concepts and skills, strategies for sequencing assignments, and ongoing discussion and development of writing intensive courses. Regular workshops, both short and long, will offer faculty hands-on, practical solutions for incorporating writing into their teaching; regular gatherings will discuss the nature and quality of writing-intensive courses; and frequent opportunities for interaction with student writing will form the majority of the Writing Enhancement Support Program. Resident experts, invited speakers, and workshop leaders will form a corps of support structures for faculty to continue to grow in their fields and as part of Stetson's body of teacher/scholars.

Student-Centered Instructional Support: The Writing Fellows Program

In a writing-enhanced curriculum, student-centered support will be critical. As faculty develop, practice, and implement writing intensive strategies in Gen Ed and disciplinary writing courses, students too will need additional support. The Writing Center, as the primary resource for student writing at Stetson, will develop a **Writing Fellows program**, a flexible approach to tutoring that can be tailored to suit individual faculty and course needs. Writing Fellows are advanced students who are "assigned" to specific courses to support writing instruction. Faculty and Fellows work collaboratively on the goals and stages of writing assignments and feedback/support. Fellows might be drawn from students who have already completed the work of the given course. They are not TAs, but they provide guidance for students working on writing tasks related to the course. Fellows can be embedded in the classrooms in a variety of ways; Fellows can meet with groups of students, individually or as a gathering, outside of class. Fellows will be trained and compensated for this work. A Fellows program would be coordinated through the Writing Center and would be under the guidance of the Writing Center director. BIOL and Math courses already employ this model, which research shows is highly effective. (See Brown, Tufts, Barnard, DePaul; among our peer schools, Williams and Bowdoin also offer successful Writing Fellows Programs.)

Additional Questions and Answers

A. Why is this proposal necessary?

For a number of reasons, the existing Writing requirement—a single course, most often ENGL 101—is problematic. Essential learning principles tell us that repeated experiences teach us more effectively than a single exposure to a set of skills or concepts. To explicitly require only one course for the Writing requirement flatly contradicts what we know about learning, and it's past time to correct that. Now, when so many areas are undergoing curriculum revision, seems an opportune moment.

As to why this proposed requirement would be better: in connection with our understanding of how students acquire and retain skills, assessment results demonstrate that students leaving their FSEM meet the University's writing goals in markedly higher numbers than students exiting their ENGL 101 course. The General Education Assessment Committee has seen these results confirmed in two rounds of writing assessment, suggesting that established research in skills acquisition and writing assessment holds true at Stetson: when students learn writing skills in the context of a knowledge goal, they learn faster, retain at a higher rate, and transfer those skills more easily to the next writing challenge. The proposal thus capitalizes on our assessment results without requiring massive restructuring of any area.

It's critical to understand that ENGL 101 itself is not attached to any content area. While writing studies is a disciplinary area just like economics or marketing, ENGL 101 is not taught as an introduction to any discipline—nor can it be, given the structure, staffing, and goals of the English Department. Because ENGL 101 is taught without a frame of disciplinary reference other than “writing”—a required skill that like critical thinking cuts across all fields and disciplines—it can provide only a kind of conceptual framework in its discussions of organization, claim and support, the central thesis, and so forth. Such a decontextualized course experience, while no doubt useful for a few students, is not the most effective use of a valuable unit course, the faculty who teach it, or the time of the students who must take it. Thus the proposal recommends that ENGL 101 be dissolved and that the vital act of learning to write be more overtly attached to disciplinary and other content goals, where communicative skills are best learned and retained.

Finally, it's important to note that although our formal requirement is currently a single course, the reality is that a great many faculty are already contributing to student learning via writing in other required courses. FSEM, JSEM, and all the WI-designated courses—all 58 of which are required courses in various majors, minors, and programs—help students master material but do so without recognition of their role in the University's writing expectations. In addition, the many other courses currently being taught with WI pedagogy but without WI designation are not getting the support of the smaller class size that such a pedagogy requires. These practices do not serve either students or their faculty and in fact may impede learning. The new requirement therefore makes the work we *actually* do visible, connecting our varied requirements and allowing for a transparent and communal commitment to learning.

B. What does this mean for “the writing requirement”?

In effect, the “one course” writing requirement will vanish, to be replaced with a multi-course “embedded” model. Many, if not most, of the nation's best small colleges follow this model, whose success in those colleges and universities has been thoroughly documented.

Because writing instruction will be woven into courses students already take and will be used to enhance teaching and learning, students will not have to take an extra course, as most currently do, to fulfill the writing requirement. This will free up one Gen Ed requirement, taking the number of courses most students are expected to complete from 10 to 9.

Tracking student completion will require coordination with the Registrar to ensure that Banner and Degree Audit are up to the task; we don't anticipate substantial problems with the software.

C. What will happen to ENGL 101?

Because the writing instruction at Stetson will be carefully distributed across Gen Ed and coordinated with work in the major, ENGL 101 Writing & Rhetoric can be removed from the Foundation requirements of the Gen Ed curriculum. It will not be replaced with any single course requirement; thus, Gen Ed requirements for most students will be reduced from 10 courses to 9. Because practice in writing will be expected at several points throughout the Stetson curriculum, rather than in one "gen ed writing course," the question of "double dipping" will be moot.

D. Will the English Department still teach first year WI courses?

Yes. If this proposal is approved, English and Creative Writing, along with other departments and programs, have agreed to offer an array of WI courses at the 100 and 200 level. Several courses at the 200 level are already offered in English, and more—in Creative Writing—have already been approved for WI. And for those students in need of remedial or developmental writing instruction, the English Department faculty agreed to offer a new version of its traditional ENGL 100 College Writing course, a pre-college level writing course. This course will be revised—in essence combining the benefits of ENGL 100 and ENGL 109—to meet the needs of students just entering as well as those students who, a year or two in, realize they need additional formal writing instruction.

E. When will this new requirement go into effect?

Presuming approval of the plan in 2013-14, we would spend 2014-15 laying additional groundwork and making plans for implementation. The curriculum would go into effect in 2015-16.

F. Is this part of the General Education program or is it a departmental thing?

It's both. Writing skills taught in Gen Ed courses, which enhance interdisciplinary and/or integrative thinking and communication, will form a framework of writing practice in concert with courses in the major, where students learn the craft of writing in a specific discipline or for a specific audience and set of needs. Planning effective writing instruction in this way allows Gen Ed and major to enhance and reinforce each other's efforts in a coordinated, conscious way, and students will then benefit from what is, effectively, a four year writing syllabus. As a result, we should see Stetson's graduates writing with increased, consistent excellence.

G. How will writing courses in majors and departments be developed?

Many, if not most, departments and programs already offer a course in research methods or writing in the discipline. Although some of those courses are already visible with WI

designations--for example, PSYC 203, BIOL 497, ENGL 241, BADM 205-- more will need to be designated. Department/program chairs will work with their faculty to determine the proper course(s) or, perhaps, create a course if none exists. A few programs or majors, for instance in performance or creative arts, may need to consider what kinds of writing are appropriate for students majoring there.

H. Will WI courses still keep a cap of 16-22?

The short answer is yes. (The longer answer appears on **page 7** of this proposal.) Institutional Research has confirmed that given a projected student body of 3100, providing the required number of WI courses can be done while maintaining a course cap of between 16-22 students.

I. Will everyone have to teach a WI course?

Although it would obviously benefit a learning community for all its faculty to be comfortable using high impact learning strategies, which include writing-intensive pedagogy, the logistics suggest that not every faculty member will need to offer a WI course. However, because the pedagogy is very effective at helping students learn and teachers to teach, faculty are strongly encouraged to consider finding ways to implement more attention to student writing in all courses.

J. What about the ongoing faculty development efforts? Will faculty be required to attend?

The faculty development efforts will include a range of learning options for our teaching faculty: workshops offered by nationally known scholars in writing and teaching; hands-on briefer sessions centered on sharing effective techniques already in practice on the DeLand campus; faculty seminars intended to underscore writing, learning, teaching, and the transfer of skills. A robust series of offerings will presumably attract a wide range of faculty.

Presumably, faculty who are new to WI pedagogies would be strongly encouraged to attend; our collective passions for learning and teaching are already strong, and there should be natural interest in new techniques and strategies. Faculty already familiar with the process would be welcome to join for refresher purposes or for mentoring purposes.

K. How will we know whether this enhanced curriculum is working?

Assessment plans will be developed along the lines of our current, highly effective assessment methods; those plans will offer the chance for gen ed and major to work together to coordinate for highest effectiveness.

Assessment of writing-enhanced curricula is different from writing assessment as we currently practice it, but it is not more complicated, and in many ways, it will enhance faculty and departmental autonomy over the writing instruction done in their courses. Like any sound assessment program, assessing writing is a team effort: groups of faculty will be involved, as they are currently, in identifying outcomes at specific points of the curriculum; deciding what evidence will need to be collected to measure student success at meeting those outcomes; and then collecting and examining that evidence.

Closing the loop in the new program will be the same as it is now: faculty groups will gather to discuss and reflect on the results of the assessment, revising as they collectively see fit.

While GEAC will continue to orchestrate Gen Ed assessments, departments and programs will assess the success of their own students. All faculty-driven assessment bodies—GEAC and Major/Program Directors--will coordinate results, and the subsequent data will reveal the effect of our collective efforts at giving students an extraordinary education.

L. What about students who need a lot of work on their writing?

To support Stetson's weakest writers, the English Department has agreed, if the proposal is approved, to continue offering a course similar to the current ENGL 100, which is most often taught as a developmental or remedial course. The Writing Center has been expanding for several years and in its new location in the Library has offered outstanding support. That support will naturally continue.

In addition to these efforts, the Writing Center will begin training tutors to embed in some courses requiring extensive writing: known as Writing Fellows, these students will be resources for the class's teacher and students alike. Although these students are not teaching assistants, they will be able to provide substantial support for students and can work with faculty on, for example, developing writing assignments and running class workshops.

M. Who will oversee and coordinate the initiative?

The writing curriculum at Stetson should always be a joint, coordinated effort, and the best configuration to ensure that writing instruction remains vital and forward-thinking is a team of interested, invested, motivated faculty. Presumably, a committee or council will form, with input from the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees.

Ahead of that, the Task Force anticipates the implementation of this plan in two stages, with two groups of invested faculty: first, curriculum planning and approval (with support from the Task Force), and second, programming and logistical detail management (guided by a second faculty group, with input from critical personnel in IR, the Registrar's office, and Advising). Some key members of the Task Force will be part of both groups, presumably including the Writing Program Director and the Writing Center Director. Once the curriculum is approved and implemented, the work of guiding, supporting, and maintaining the quality of Stetson's writing curriculum will be the task of a faculty group, headed (at least initially) by the Writing Program Director with reliance on disciplinary faculty, members of GEAC and UGEC, and various other stakeholders.

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