

## **WE COURSE ARTICULATION**

Policy Sub-Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee

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The following document summarizes standards as found on the “hallmarks” page (<http://www.stetson.edu/other/writing-program/resources/writing-intensive-courses/hallmarks.php>), which was widely circulated when the faculty passed “A Proposal for a Writing Enhanced Curriculum: Revising the Stetson University Writing Requirement.” The purpose of this articulation is to help both course builders in proposing WE courses and the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee in evaluating such proposals. Enforcement of these standards is intended to be at the level of the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee, and that committee may approve exceptions that preserve high academic standards.

### **Goals of Writing Enhanced courses<sup>1</sup>**

The goals of the writing enhanced course are to foster the development of written communication, information fluency, and critical thinking skills. Students who fully engage their learning through writing and writing-based research develop important skills and a degree of content mastery that cannot be readily achieved in traditional teacher-centered courses.

Subsidiary goals include the following:

- To heighten the academic experience for both professor and student
- To strengthen existing writing skills
- To heighten student understanding of discipline-specific conventions
- To help students develop into mature learners by honing skills of critical thinking, speaking, writing and careful reading

### **A Writing Enhanced course requires:**

**1.** 15-25 pages of writing with revisions on at least one major project.

At least some student writing is revised because of instructor feedback. This feedback should invite substantial revision.

**2.** A range of assignments, including low-, medium-, or high-stakes assignments.

A single lengthy term paper, no matter how demanding, is counterproductive to the writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate pedagogy employed in Writing Enhanced courses.

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<sup>1</sup> This closely tracks Megan O'Neill's description as found here: <https://goo.gl/KWVCf5>

Typically, an informal, shorter, low-stakes assignment makes less of a difference to the final grade than does a formal, extended, revised high-stakes assignment.

*Examples of informal, low-stakes assignments:*

Journal entries, logs or “idea” notebooks  
In-class writing exercises, free writes or "one minute" essays  
Blackboard “Discussion Board” posts  
In-class drafting workshops  
Field observation notes  
Peer reviews  
The “minute” essay  
The reading response

*Examples of shorter, medium-stakes assignments*

Correspondence (reflections emailed to you; reading responses emailed to the group)  
Short reports  
Reading summaries and responses  
Reading journal  
Abstracts of readings  
Micro-themes (short essays)  
Proposals  
Critical analyses of readings or disciplinary conventions

*Examples of extended, high-stakes assignments*

Long paper or report  
Literature review  
Technical writing assignment  
Extended proposal, including research projects  
Case studies  
In-class written exams

**3.** At least 50 percent of the course grade should be based on writing assignments.

**4.** Information Fluency.<sup>2</sup> Students are expected to use credible, relevant, and discipline-appropriate sources to support their ideas. Proposals should provide specifics that indicate increasing expectations in upper level courses.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Writing Enhanced Course Proposal form presently requires submitters to “Describe how students will be finding, evaluating, and incorporating outside source material into their written texts.” This Information Fluency requirement was left largely implicit in the “Resources for Writing-Enhanced Courses” documentation as found here: <https://goo.gl/Wr8ieT>. We have surfaced this requirement but also modified it so as to drop the requirement that students find “outside” source materials. Some instructors might have reason to limit students to a curated list of sources.

<sup>3</sup> This description of Information Fluency is based the “Sources and Evidence” rubric dimension as found in the AAC&U’s Written Communication Rubric. See <https://goo.gl/QSRjMd>.