

Procedures for Approval of WI Courses (December 4, 2007)

1. The applicant should submit the writing intensive (WI) course application to the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee (WACC) at least one week before its scheduled meeting. The application must include the following parts:
 - 1) A cover letter that includes the rationale for the application;
 - 2) The Writing Intensive Course Application Form, with signatures from the program director, department chair, and college dean; and
 - 3) The WI course syllabus, with the following parts highlighted:
 - a. An explicit statement in the section of Course Description of the syllabus that this is a Writing Intensive course;
 - b. Writing-related learning objectives in the section of Major Learning Objectives of the course; and
 - c. Major writing components and their functions to achieve the learning objectives of the course.
2. The applicant or representative should be available to answer questions from the Committee at the meeting when WACC discusses the application and make a decision.
 - 1) If the application needs revising, WACC can suggest modifications and its chair will work with the applicant to address issues of concern. The applicant may choose to revise the application and resubmit it to WACC.
 - 2) If WI status is denied, the applicant is given a written rationale for the decision.
 - 3) Courses approved as WI will be forwarded to the Provost, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Registrar, and the administrators of the colleges and programs that offer the courses. The Registrar will indicate WI courses in the class schedule.
3. The approval of a course as WI does not mean that the course is always WI. Only when the course is taught as approved by WACC can it be listed as a WI course in the class schedule. Improvements on the writing components and adjustments to new challenges are of course encouraged, but any major or substantial change to move away from writing (e.g., a significant reduction of the writing components) may disqualify it as a WI course. In general, the instructor who designed the course as WI teaches it upon the approval from WACC. If this course is to be taught by another instructor, the other instructor must follow the approved WI syllabus and carry out the designated writing activities. The administrator who is in charge of the program should oversee the proper operation of that course being taught as WI.

Guidelines for WI Courses

Rationale: Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is a practical step towards fulfilling the initiatives for educational excellence at the University of St. Francis (USF). WAC's primary goal is to improve the quality of student learning through teaching writing as an integral part of instruction in all subject areas. Writing intensive (WI) courses are explicitly designed to achieve this goal.

1. A WI course designed for a major must meet all of the following criteria:
 - 1) Be a course required by the major;
 - 2) Be at least a 200-level course;
 - 3) Be a non-capstone course¹; and
 - 4) Be a course populated primarily by majors.

In the Rationale section of the application, explain why this course is selected as a WI course required for the major.

2. Core courses or College Writing courses cannot be designated as WI.
3. Writing must be a significant part of the course. The amount of writing, including both formal and informal writing, should be measurable – it can be measured in various ways, e.g., frequency of writing assignments, pages of writing assigned (including drafts, journals, and other informal writing or writing to learn), and proportion of course activities involving writing in relation to other activities both in class (as opposed to lecture, discussion, etc.) and out of class (as opposed to reading, etc.).
4. The course should include frequent informal writing, such as journals, notes, letters to the instructor and/or classmates, informal responses to reading and other learning activities, reports on small-group work, online discussions, oral presentation notes/plans/slides, etc.
5. The course should include at least one long formal written assignment in a genre appropriate to the discipline, such as a report on a research project; and/or several shorter written assignments in a genre appropriate to the discipline, such as lab reports, study/project proposals, clinical logs, reviews of performances, etc.
6. Formal written assignments should include some provisions for students to learn the process of writing in the discipline, such as submission of a succession of drafts rather than a finished product due on a single date, as well as explicit instruction in the process on handouts, directed in-class peer editing, scheduled Writing Center conferences or workshops, tutoring, conferences with the instructor, modeling, etc.
7. None of the above are meant to be absolute requirements, though WACC will keep them all in mind. Special strength in some areas may outweigh weakness in others.

¹ In the case of applying a capstone course for approval as a WI course, the applicant must provide strong rationale and explicitly explain why other courses in the major cannot be designated as WI.