

Writing-Enhanced Course Program

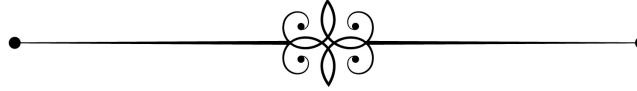


Guidebook

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Directors and Websites

Program Directors

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Pleasantville

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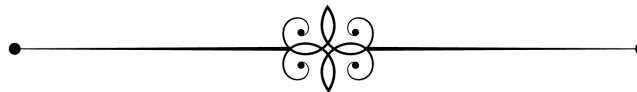
Websites

Writing-Enhanced Course Website

<https://www.pace.edu/dyson/about-dyson/writing-enhanced-courses-wec>

Writing Center Website

<https://www.pace.edu/learning-commons>



Program Overview and Criteria

Overview of WEC Program

WEC faculty in the Dyson and Lubin schools receive a \$300 stipend per semester in which they teach at least one WEC course. Stipend requests are submitted by the English Department Staff Assistant in Pleasantville, and by the professor's respective department staff assistant in NYC.

To apply, faculty should:

1. Contact your campus WEC [directors](#) for a training workshop or consultation.
2. Complete a WEC application approved by your department chair.
3. Submit WEC materials, including application, syllabus, assignment sheets, and rubrics, to your campus WEC director for support, feedback, and approval.

WEC approval must be granted at least one month prior to the start of the course.

Criteria for Writing-Enhanced Courses

1. All WE courses must include the [WEC statement on syllabi](#).
2. WE courses must include the [Writing Center statement on syllabi](#).
3. Courses have a recommended cap of 20 students, with a maximum cap of 25.
4. A considerable portion (around at least 50%) of the course grade must extend from writing assignments.
5. Courses must include a combination of high- and low-stakes writing (see details below).
6. All writing assignments must have a detailed assignment sheet, complete with expectations (using rubrics), goals, and requirements.
7. Instructors must give feedback on writing assignments (see details below). Grades should only be assigned to final products—not to drafts.

Writing as a Process

Although all writers have a process that they (often without realizing it) follow, this process might vary considerably according to the individual.

As instructors, we encourage students to become aware of the writing processes that work best for them, developing what writing experts refer to as “declarative” knowledge about writing.

Types of Writing Assignments

High-Stakes Writing: “Formal” writing that requires students to engage in multiple aspects/stages of the writing process.

Low-Stakes Writing: “Informal” writing that asks students to write to learn, versus writing to show mastery (e.g. responses, journals, etc.).

Responding to Writing

Workshopping

Collaborative groups of roughly three student-writers who are actively engaged in critical dialogue regarding the writing of their peers.

Like any component of the course, peer revision requires preparation and modeling, ensuring students are aware of what is to transpire when in groups.

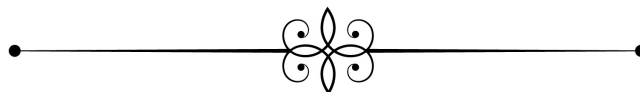
Instructor Feedback

Higher-Order Concerns (HOCs): Instructor feedback on early drafts should focus attention more on the following (depending on the discipline/genre): thesis, topic sentences/transitions, meeting the assignment, critical thinking, cohesion, organization, development, and appropriate use of sources.

Lower-Order Concerns (LOCs): Later drafts or in-class workshops can teach students how to edit for the following: syntax, grammar, word usage, spelling, formatting of citations.

When constructing a rubric, attention and value should be placed on HOCs, with LOCs accounting for a (much) smaller portion of the grade.

Please note that all of this information must be clearly articulated in the course syllabus.



Application for Writing-Enhanced Course Core Credit

Updated August 2023

Please attach a syllabus and separate application sheet for each writing enhanced course.

Submitted By: _____

Date: _____

Course Number	Course Title	Semester When Course Will Be Taught

Questionnaire

How does this course meet the following Writing-Enhanced Course Criteria (please refer to the Writing-Enhanced Course Criteria Document for more information)? Briefly explain.

Which of the following faculty development options have you participated in or will you participate in while developing your first Writing-Enhanced Course? Please check all that apply and note the semester of your participation.

Workshops and meetings with WEC director(s) during the semester:

Meeting with WEC director(s) during the semester:

- Department meeting consultation (faculty development session with WEC director[s]):

Additional comments?:

Requirement Checklist

- Syllabus includes the WEC statement
- Syllabus includes the Writing Support Services statement
- Course enrollment is limited to the recommended cap of 20 students (with a maximum of 25 students)
- A considerable portion (aim for at least 50%) of the course grade should extend from writing assignments
- Course uses a combination of high- and low-stakes writing
- Course materials include detailed assignment sheets, complete with expectations, goals, and requirements
- Instructor will provide feedback on writing assignments

Department Chair (Signature): _____

Date: _____

Please attach a syllabus and submit to:

NYC WEC Director:

Meaghan Brewer, Dept. of English, NYC
mbrewer2@pace.edu

PLV WEC Director:

Vyshali Manivannan, Dept. of Writing and Cultural Studies, PLV
vmanivannan@pace.edu

Required Syllabus Statements

Writing-Enhanced Course Statement:

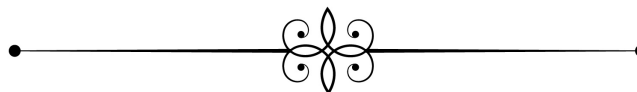
This class has been designated as writing-enhanced, a course in which writing and revision are central to learning content and achieving course goals. Students will receive detailed written handouts for each writing assignment, specifying grading criteria and clearly setting forth expectations. Writing will be thought of as a process whereby students generate ideas, receive feedback, and then revise. Students will practice their writing through a combination of low stakes, informal writing and more formal assignments. Students will receive instructor-generated feedback for revision on at least one writing assignment prior to a second submission and subsequent grading. Final drafts will be evaluated based on evaluative criteria from a checklist or rubric.

Writing Support at the Learning Commons

Writing support is available for all students at Pace University. We offer confidential one-to-one appointments (in person or online), group sessions, and drop-in sessions free of charge. Students can bring writing from all disciplines and at all stages of the writing process, from outlines to completed drafts. Students are encouraged to bring all types of writing, including resumes, internship and graduate school applications, and personal creative work. We are dedicated to developing independent learners through purposeful interactions with trained, well-qualified peer and professional staff.

For more information about writing services and current hours of operation, please visit pace.edu/learning-commons; To schedule an appointment using TracCloud, please visit <https://www.pace.edu/learning-commons/services-current-students/drop-or-schedule-appointment>.

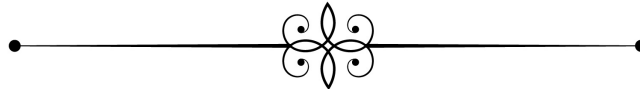
Questions? Please email LC_PLV@pace.edu or LC_NYC@pace.edu, or visit Mortola Library, 3rd floor (PLV) or 15 Beekman, 7th floor (NYC). Faculty can also reach out directly to Grant Crawford in NYC (gcrawford@pace.edu) or Alicia Clark-Barnes in PLV (aclarkbarnes@pace.edu).



Why Assign Writing?

Return to these questions regularly to remind yourself why you're teaching a WE course.

1. What purpose(s) do writing assignments serve?
2. What do you hope your students will gain through the completion of writing assignments in your course?



“Strangers in a Strange Land”: Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines

One of the purposes of having students continue to write beyond the core writing courses is that students can write to learn more about their discipline. It gives them access to disciplinary norms and familiarizes them with the discourse community within which they are writing. Writing becomes more than simply an activity to earn a grade or fulfill an assignment. It has the social purpose of communicating to other scholars, stakeholders, or members of the community.

Unfortunately, many students struggle when they begin to take classes in their major or courses that incorporate a large amount of writing because they are unfamiliar with the new discourse community that they are entering. Instructors often assume a level of familiarity with discourse norms that students have not yet acquired.

In the Writing-Enhanced courses, we want to make such knowledge explicit and make our evaluation of it transparent. Doing this gives students footholds onto the knowledge and skills they need to be building and offers ways of improving their writing and thinking.

Writing as a Process

According to Janet Emig (1977), writing is a mode of learning, “the deliberate structuring of the web of meaning” (p. 127). Through the process of writing, we are

forced to articulate hypotheses, clarify ideas, and make abstract thoughts more concrete. In this sense, writing serves learning.

Informal Writing

Writing to Learn

Writing to learn involves giving students many opportunities to explain things for themselves; thinking on paper; learning as discovery; writing as a way of objectifying thought. Students need the opportunity to explore their ideas in writing, to engage in critical thinking before the final writing product is due. Along the way, writers need to ask themselves, “How do I know what I think until I say what I mean?”

Ways to Incorporate Writing into Class Discussions

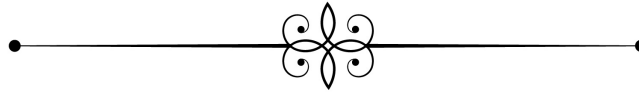
From John Bean, *Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*.

1. Students write at the beginning of class to review material from a previous class or to begin focusing on the topic of the day.
2. Students write in the middle of class to refocus a discussion that has become dry or heated. This allows students to identify things to discuss, or to think about why they disagree with others on the topic.
3. Students write during class to articulate questions or think about why they are confused about the topic.
4. Students write at the end of class to summarize what was covered during class, what they learned, or what questions still remain.

Informal Writing Activities to do Outside Class

5. Open-ended journals—write a certain number of pages per week about the course.
6. Guided journals—students respond to specific questions.
7. Double-entry notebooks—students make observations about texts and reflect on their observations; they talk back to text.
8. Contemporary issues journals—connect course content to real-world concerns.

9. Exam preparation journals—make a list of essay questions from which exam questions will be taken; students work out answers to questions.
10. Students respond to questions about a reading.
11. Summary – students summarize a text they will be using in a paper.



Revision and Feedback

Revising allows time for the composing process to work. In addition to informal writing to start the process, students need enough time to write several drafts before the final paper is due. Students can share some of these drafts with each other—to give both readers and writers a sense of each other’s ideas and capabilities. Professors can give feedback in different ways: a short conference with each writer in the draft stage, written comments before the final draft, class discussion of models, classroom response, mini-exercises, and editing workshops.

Using Peer Feedback for Revision and Feedback

Peer feedback (also called peer review and peer response), includes class activities where students read, critique, and comment on each other’s written drafts. Peer feedback is beneficial for both students and teachers. The bulleted lists below come from di Gennaro (2002/2003).¹

Benefits of peer feedback include:

- Helps integrate writing with the course content
- Helps students understand the importance of audience
- Encourages students to engage in the writing process
- Encourages students to hand in better, revised papers
- Provides students with a variety of models and responses
- Helps students develop abilities to critique something constructively
- Promotes self-assessment habits and independence
- Raises students’ awareness of their individual strengths and weaknesses.

¹ di Gennaro, K. (2002/2003, Winter) Successfully implementing peer reviews in writing classes. *Idiom*, 32(4). New York State TESOL.

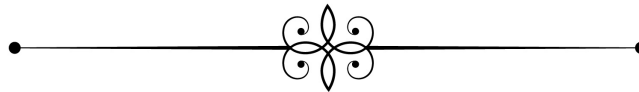
- Gives students a sense of responsibility and ownership
- Makes teaching and learning goals transparent
- Helps align writing assignments with assessment criteria
- Reduces the “paper load” for the teacher

Students’ observations of the value of peer feedback:

Peer reviews help us to...

- Know if the reader can understand what we want to say
- Identify areas that need more development
- Identify areas that are off topic
- Get more ideas to add in the next draft
- Correct a few grammar mistakes
- Revise before handing in our papers

▶ No One Writes Alone: Peer Review in the Classroom - A Guide For Students from MIT Comparative Media Studies/Writing is a useful guide to revision for students.



Assessing and Evaluating Student Writing

The WEC Program promotes fairness and transparency in assessing students’ writing. Students should be aware of the specific criteria by which their assignments will be assessed. Criteria for an assignment should be reviewed with students when the assignment is given and in advance of when students are graded. Grading standards, checklists for evaluating writing, and anonymous samples of writing from previous semesters in response to the same or a similar assignment can give students a better idea of what works and what doesn’t.

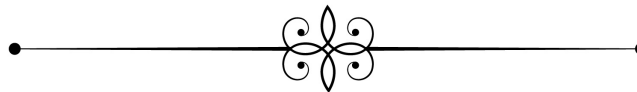
Part of creating fairer assessment ecologies (and more inclusive spaces) in writing classrooms is working to ensure that all students have access to all course grades. You can find out more about best practices for writing assessment and anti-racist writing assessment by viewing:

- Conference on College Composition and Communication’s position statement on Writing Assessment:
<https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/writingassessment>

- The WPA-GO Anti-Racist Assessment Task Force position statement: http://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/pt/sd/news_article/313021/_PARENT/layout_details/false)
- Labor-based grading: <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/perspectives/labor/>
- The Council of Writing Program Administrators' Statement on "Best Practices for Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism": https://wpacouncil.org/aws/CWPA/pt/sd/news_article/272555/_PARENT/layout_details/false

Statement on AI and Writing

For detailed information on how to approach generative AI (like ChatGPT) in a writing-enhanced class—along with a statement you can include in your syllabi—please refer to this document: [Syllabus Policy Writing with AI](#).



Example Rubrics

ENG 201: Writing in the Disciplines

Rubric for Paper 1: Critique

- ___/20 Complete source information for the original article is provided
- ___/20 The critique includes an adequate summary of the article's main points
- ___/20 The critique includes an appropriate and supported (not simply stated) evaluation of the article
- ___/20 The evaluative language is appropriate for an academic audience
- ___/20 The critique overall is clear and (mostly) grammatically accurate.
- ___/100

Rubric for Paper 2: Analysis of Writing in Your Discipline(s)

- ___/12.5 Cites and engages with at least one source from class

- ___/12.5 Uses and analyzes quotes or specific details from sources in the discipline(s) being described to support argument
- ___/12.5 Demonstrates an understanding of the sources used, with sufficient detail so that someone who had not read the source would understand it
- ___/12.5 Cites details as evidence for how literacy works within the discourse community of the discipline(s), including quotes from interviews, quotes from the writing observed (the two articles in the discipline(s) and/or images from the articles
- ___/12.5 Puts forth a focused argument about the discipline(s) observed that appears at the beginning of the paper and is sustained throughout
- ___/12.5 Organization of the overall paper demonstrates an understanding of how to use the sections specified by the assignment (i.e. Introduction, Methods, etc.)
- ___/12.5 Paper contains citations for all sources and uses in-text citations (mostly) correctly
- ___/12.5 Paper is clearly written and (mostly) grammatically correct
- ___/100

Rubric for Paper 3: Honors Thesis Proposal

- ___/10 Cites sources that are relevant to the paper topic
- ___/10 Uses and analyzes concepts or quotes from sources
- ___/10 Demonstrates an understanding of the sources used, with sufficient detail so that someone who had not read the source would understand it
- ___/10 Gives a clear sense of what area of the topic you plan to investigate and why
- ___/10 Has a clearly stated research problem, question, or notes a gap in past research
- ___/10 Uses metatext to guide the reader through the organization of the proposal
- ___/10 Reflection demonstrates an understanding of the goals of the course
- ___/10 Reflection cites and substantially engages with at least one source from class.

___/10 Citations are included for all sources

___/10 Paper is written clearly and is (mostly) grammatically correct

___/100

ENG 302: Composition Theory and Practice

Rubric for Observation Assignment

___/10 The observation report includes basic information about the context of the observation (course level, tutorial).

___/10 The observation report includes a detailed description of what occurred during the class.

___/10 The observation report draws connections between the observed class and two or more of the readings we've read in our course.

___/10 The interpretation of the readings is accurate and appropriate in that it shows an understanding of the readings and relevance to composition or literacy teaching/tutoring.

___/10 The observation report includes hypothetical follow-up questions indicating engagement with the class observation and/or course readings.

___/10 The observation report reveals insight about how composition courses do or do not reflect composition, reading, or literacy theory.

___/10 The observation report is organized in a clear and coherent manner.

___/10 The tone of the report is appropriate for an academic audience

___/10 The language of the report is clear and (mostly) grammatically accurate.

___/100

Rubric for Final Project

___/10 The project is based on a topic relevant either to students in the community site or to composition students

___/10 The project refers to relevant theory/theories

- ___/10 The project includes a clear description of the context and audience for the lesson plan
- ___/10 Learning objectives and goals are labeled and explicitly stated
- ___/10 Detailed instructions for a teacher or tutor are included
- ___/10 At least three tasks related to the learning objectives are included for students to complete
- ___/10 Technology is integrated into the lesson plan (or at least mentioned)
- ___/10 In terms of format, the lesson plan adequately reflects the model provided
- ___/10 Handouts and additional resources are included or links are provided
- ___/10 The language is clear and (mostly) grammatically accurate
- ___/100

ENG 396G: Language and Identity

Rubric for Final Project

- ___/12.5 Cites sources that are relevant to the paper topic and literacy site (including at least one from class)
- ___/12.5 Uses and analyzes quotes or specific concepts/detail from sources
- ___/12.5 Demonstrates an understanding of the sources used, with sufficient detail so that someone who had not read the source would understand it
- ___/12.5 Cites details from the literacy site, including details of literacy activities, quotes from interviews, and descriptions of the site and people
- ___/12.5 Puts forth an original argument about the literacy site that appears at the beginning of the paper and is sustained throughout
- ___/12.5 Organization of the overall paper demonstrates an understanding of how to use the sections specified by the assignment (i.e. Introduction, Methods, etc.)
- ___/12.5 Paper contains citations for all sources and uses in-text citations (mostly) correctly

_/12.5 Paper is clear and (mostly) grammatically correct

_/100