

QuickTime™ and a
None decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

FALL 2005 WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE SURVEY REPORT



PREPARED BY
JEFFREY M. RINGER AND MIKE GARCIA

PUBLISHED BY
UNIVERSITY WRITING PROGRAMS

ON BEHALF OF THE
UNIVERSITY WRITING COMMITTEE

Contents

Overview	3
Student Perceptions of WI Courses	4
Faculty Perceptions of the Current WI Architecture	6
Faculty Comments	7
More Writing, More WI Courses	8
Student Expectations Across WI Courses.....	9
First-Year Writing	10
Basic Writing Skills: What Are They?	11
Advanced Disciplinary Knowledge	12
Form and genre	13
Reading Skills	15
Language and Tone.....	15
Database Use	16
Issues in Teaching with Writing	17
Drafting.....	17
Informal Writing.....	18
Workshops	18
Workload and Support	19
Assessment and Accountability	19
Toward Outcomes	20
A Need for Multiple Perspectives.....	21
References	23
Appendix A: University Writing Requirement	24
Rationale	24
Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses	26
Appendix B: Student Survey Instrument	28
Appendix C: Student Survey Data Sheet	29
Appendix D: Faculty Survey Instrument	31
Appendix E: Faculty Survey Data Sheet	33
Appendix F: Faculty Aggregate Comments	35
Overview	35
Disciplinarity	36
Institutional Context	37
Student Preparation	42
Resources	46
Appendix G: Comparative Review of WI Programs	51
Overview	51
Comparison of UNH and Ten Peer Institutions.....	52
Recommendations.....	54

Fall 2005 Writing Intensive Course Survey Report

Jeffrey M. Ringer and Mike Garcia

Overview

The University Writing Requirement (UWR) was approved by the Faculty Senate in 1995 and implemented soon thereafter. This Senate action established the University Writing Committee, a permanent committee comprised of representatives from all colleges and from related academic and administrative units. The purpose of the Writing Committee is to oversee the implementation of the UWR and to perform periodic review of the effectiveness of the Writing Requirement and of Writing Intensive (WI) courses. Accordingly, the University Writing Committee is currently reviewing the UWR and WI courses. (See Appendix A for the complete text of the UWR and WI Guidelines.)

During AY 04-05, the Writing Committee implemented the first stage of a four-part assessment strategy, a survey of department chairs at UNH and UNH-Manchester. Following this, the Writing Committee approved and published the *Spring 2005 Department Chairs Survey Report*. The information gathered from the Chairs Survey informed the Committee's development and implementation of the WI Course Survey. The *Fall 2005 Writing Intensive Course Survey Report* represents the culmination of the second stage of the current comprehensive review.

The goal of the WI Course Survey was to gauge instructor and student perception of WI courses and architecture. Over the course of a year, the Writing Committee wrote and revised the survey instruments, both of which can be found in the appendices to this document. The student portion of the WI Course Survey included seven multiple-choice questions. (See Appendix B for the complete survey questions.) With the generous assistance of Institutional Research, the student survey was administered as part of the standard, end-of-semester Teacher Evaluation (TEV). For the sake of consistency, the WI survey asked students to respond to each item using the same five-point Likert scale ("strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") used throughout the TEV. The faculty portion of the WI Course survey included 11 questions and was administered to all instructors teaching WI courses through Blackboard and via email. (See Appendix D for the complete faculty survey instrument.)

Taken together, the student and faculty portions of this survey tell us much about the effectiveness of the current UWR. The information gathered in this two-part survey tells us that, in general, the architecture seems to be working: instructors who responded to the survey are designing and teaching their WI courses according to the guidelines, while students who are taking those courses overwhelmingly agree. We discuss these perceptions—and their exceptions—in greater detail in the body of this report. We talk first about the students' responses and second about the faculty responses.

Student Perceptions of WI Courses

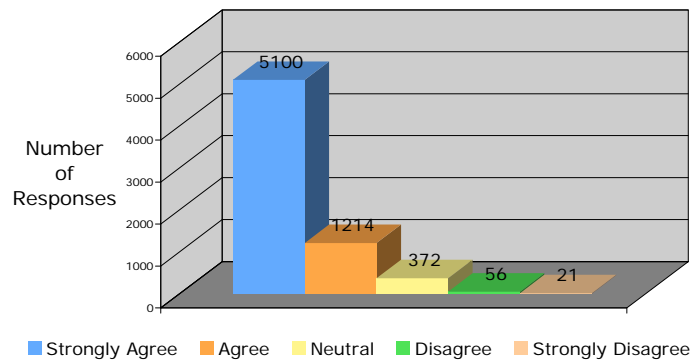
The student portion of the Survey of Writing Intensive Courses was administered as part of the standard TEV at the end of the Fall 2005 semester. Linking the WI survey to the TEV no doubt played a significant role in generating an excellent response. Of the 9,180¹ students enrolled in WI courses, 6,858² (75%) responded to the survey.

The questions that comprised the student survey instrument derived from the language of the writing requirement itself. For example, the first statement students responded to—*Writing was an important part of this course and accounted for a significant part (50% or more) of my final grade*—borrows language from WI Guideline 1:

Students in the course should do substantial writing that enhances learning and demonstrates knowledge of the subject or the discipline. Writing should be an integral part of the course and should account for a significant part (approximately 50 percent or more) of the final grade.

As Figure A suggests, a sizable majority (75%, or 5,100) of students who responded to Q1 of the WI survey strongly agreed that writing was central to their course. When combined with the number of students who agreed (1,214, or 18%), the percentage of students agreeing is a considerable 93%. Few students (372, or 6%) had a neutral response. Even fewer (56, or 1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (21, or 0%) that writing was a substantial part of their course.

Figure A
Writing was an important part of this course and accounted for a significant part (50% or more) of my final grade.



Students largely agreed that their courses were consistent with the second item of the survey: *This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for a grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brain-storming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries)*. A significant majority of students (3,341, or 55%) marked “strongly agree” and 1,407 (23%) marked “agree,” while 909 (15%) were neutral and 436 (7%) disagreed. The percentage of students strongly disagreeing (5, or 0%) was statistically insignificant. Such results suggest that student experience in WI courses is consistent with WI Guideline 3:

The course should include both formal (graded) and informal (heuristic) writing. There should be papers written outside of class which are handed in for formal evaluation as well as informal

¹ This figure represents total enrollment in WI courses and was calculated using data from the Office of the Registrar. Students enrolled in more than one WI course would have taken the survey for each of their courses.

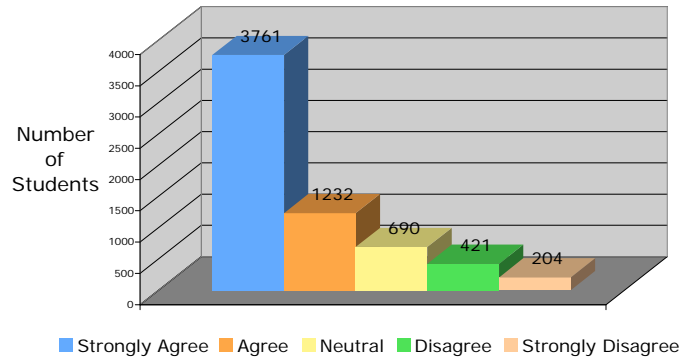
² This is the total number of students responding to the survey as a whole. The number of students responding to each individual question varied. The percentages that follow derive from the number of responses for each question. See Appendix C for a more complete data set.

assignments designed to promote learning, such as invention activities, in-class essays, reaction papers, journals, reading summaries, or other appropriate exercises.

The third statement to which students responded—*I wrote regularly throughout this course (at least once each week)*—was based on WI Guideline 2, which states that students should “write regularly throughout the course.” Again, a majority of students (3,761, or 60%) strongly agreed that their WI course experiences met these standards and 1,232, or 19% of students agreed (see Figure B).

The number of students who responded neutrally to (690, or 11%) or disagreed with (421, or 7%) this question was slightly more significant than the same responses for the previous two questions. A total of 204 (3%) students strongly disagreed. However, the mean response was still over 4 (4.26). Judging by this response, students in WI courses seem to be writing often.

Figure B
I wrote regularly throughout this course (at least once each week).

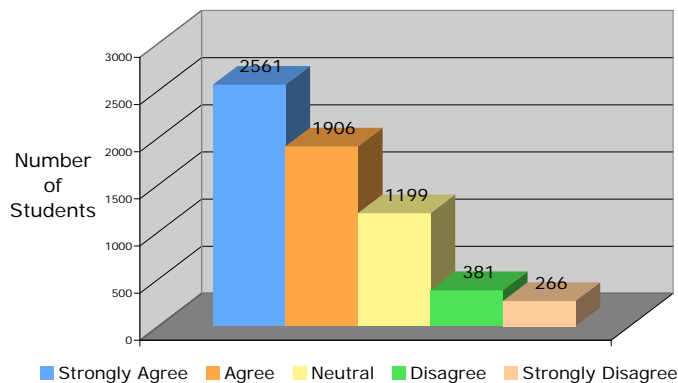


Survey items 4 and 5 focused on revision and feedback and, in doing so, reflect the aims of WI Guideline 2: “Students should be able to receive constructive feedback of some kind [...] during the drafting/revising process to help improve their writing.” Responses to these two statements were similar. 4,765 students (75%) agreed or strongly agreed that their WI instructors “encouraged [them] to use a writing process for major assignments.” The response to item 5—*I received timely and helpful feedback on my writing that allowed me to improve subsequent assignments*—had a slightly higher rate of agreement: 4,920 students (78%) agreed or strongly agreed.

The neutral responses for items 4 and 5 were 914 (14%) and 824 (13%), respectively. That leaves the respondents who disagreed: 632 (10%) for statement 4 and 564 (9%) for statement 5.

Figure C

My writing improved as a result of this course.



The philosophy underlying statement 6—*The writing I did in this course helped me learn the course material*—is commonly referred to as “writing to learn.” That is, the purpose for such writing is to help students achieve mastery of

new ideas, in part by synthesizing them with prior knowledge. In this regard, statement 6 reflects assumptions underlying WI Guidelines 1 and 3. Again, the majority of students (5,228, or 83%) agreed or strongly agreed that the writing they did helped them learn the

course material. 704 students (11%) responded neutrally, while 379 students (6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The final statement to which students responded—*My writing improved as a result of this course*—had the lowest rate of agreement. Nevertheless, the majority of students still responded positively: 4,467 students (71%) strongly agreed or agreed that their writing improved. That leaves approximately a third of the respondents who were either neutral (1,199, or 19%) or in disagreement (647, or 10%). (See Figure C.) The higher rates of disagreement and neutrality for this prompt likely reflect the difficulty inherent in gauging writing improvement. As Condon (2001) reminds us, attributing changes in writing ability to any isolatable factor (such as a single WI course) is difficult to say the least. That a majority of students agreed is a positive sign.

Faculty Perceptions of the Current WI Architecture

The faculty portion of the WI Course Survey was administered electronically. Of the 407 total instructors teaching WI courses, 137 (34%) responded to the survey. Respondents³ came from each of the five schools and colleges at the Durham campus as well as from UNH-Manchester.

Instructors who responded ranged from full professor (37, or 27%) to teaching assistant (22, or 16%).

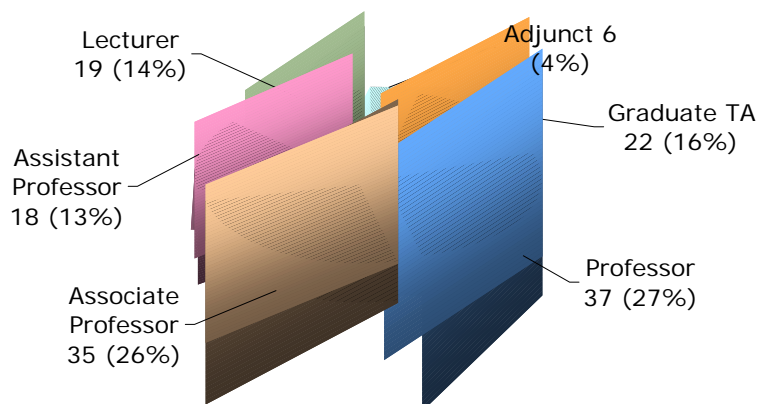
Other responses came from associate professors (35, or 26%), assistant professors (18, or 13%), lecturers, (19, or 14%) and adjuncts (6, or 4%). (See Figure D.)

The survey instrument consisted of eleven questions, the first three of which solicited general information (rank, college/school, and WI courses taught) from respondents. Of the remaining survey items, three were open-ended questions that resulted in sixteen pages of faculty commentary. Due to the wealth of information in these comments, the bulk of this report deals with those responses.

The remaining five survey questions were objective in nature and offered a range of answers. Responses to these items provide a snapshot of how faculty perceive their WI courses as meeting the standards of the WI Guidelines.

For example, Question 4—*Written work accounted for what percentage of the grade in this course?*—reflects WI Guideline 1. Most faculty (83, or 61%) responded that writing entailed more than 75% of the grade; 45 faculty (33%) chose between 50% and 75%. Only 8 (6%) identified writing in their courses as comprising between 25% and 50% of the grade, while none see writing as encompassing less than 25% of the course grade. Based on this response,

Figure D
Faculty Respondents by Rank



³ We use the terms “instructors,” “respondents,” and “faculty” interchangeably.

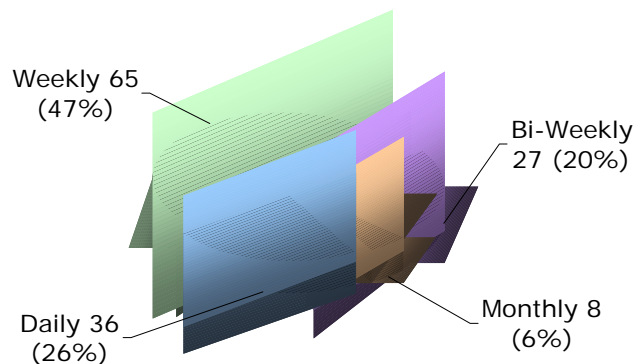
the vast majority of instructors (94%) place significant emphasis on writing in their WI courses.

Responses to Question 5 were equally as high. Of the 137 respondents, 134 (98%) agreed or strongly agreed that they “*encouraged students to use a writing process for major assignments (A writing process can include stages such as prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing.)*.” In other words, the vast majority of respondents would describe their WI courses as consistent with WI Guideline 2.

Question 6 asked faculty to respond to a statement that reflects Writing Intensive Guideline 3: *This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for a grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brainstorming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries)*. Again, a significant majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (121, or 89%) that the WI courses they teach include these elements of formal and informal writing. Only 14 (10%) disagreed, while very few (1, or 1%) strongly disagreed.

The next objective question, Question 8, received the greatest range of responses among faculty respondents. The question—*Which best describes how often you require students to write in your course?*—allowed four answer choices: Daily, Weekly, Bi-Weekly, and Monthly. The choice that received the greatest number of responses was weekly (65, or 47%). 36 faculty (26%) chose daily, while 27 (20%) chose bi-weekly and 8 (6%) chose Monthly. When combined, these data suggest that the majority of faculty (101, or 73%) ask their students to write at least every week, while 35 (26%) require students to write once or twice a month. (See Figure E.)

Figure E
Which best describes how often you require students to write in your course?



Question 9, the final question to which instructors responded using a Likert scale, likely represents the most difficult statement to quantify. The prompt—*The writing in this course helped me teach the subject*—reflects the writing-to-learn ideal that writing can serve as not only a mode of evaluation for gauging student progress, but also a teaching tool that helps instructors facilitate student engagement with new ideas. The vast majority of respondents agreed (40, or 29%) or strongly agreed (89, or 65%) that writing operated in such a way, while a much smaller portion of respondents disagreed (6, or 4%) or strongly disagreed (1, or 1%).

Faculty Comments. One of the chief aims of the Fall 2005 Survey of Writing Intensive Courses was to gauge faculty and student perceptions of the effectiveness of the current UWR. A correlative aim was to solicit faculty input on how the guidelines could be revised. Toward that end, Question 7 on the faculty survey asked the following: *How would you change the guidelines in the current University Writing Requirement to make UNH graduates better writers?* Several instructors noted satisfaction with the guidelines and advocated no change:

I think the guidelines are fine as is.

I feel that the university writing requirements are good. Students entering the university usually need support and practice in writing. The WI requirements lead in this direction.

I was happy with the guidelines.

I don't think I'd change anything.

[I] can think of no ways at this time.

I wouldn't change the guidelines.

Other comments noted a similar degree of satisfaction but also alluded to concerns outside the domain of the guidelines:

[The] guidelines are fine. Implementation is the weakness.

I have no suggestions for changing the guidelines. My sense is that [students] simply need the experience of writing and re-writing in their chosen field.

These comments seem to suggest that the WI guidelines can be implemented across disciplinary boundaries without compromising the kinds of writing and expectations pertaining to a particular field of study. We will return to this issue of disciplinarity later in the report.

More Writing, More WI Courses. Several faculty expressed an opinion that UNH undergraduates should do more writing throughout their undergraduate careers. Of these respondents, a significant number suggested a more rigorous course requirement:

Require more courses that are writing intensive. Have fewer courses relying only on multiple choice exams and without significant writing requirements

More writing intensive courses—students do not get enough practice and their writing is weak

I think that the Guidelines work well. Encouraging students to use the writing process is key. Also, having students write both formally and informally is important. My only wish is that more “GenEd” courses were writing intensive.

By calling for more WI courses in the general education curriculum, this last comment represents a slightly nuanced version of the others.

Several respondents, however, had more specific suggestions for ensuring that undergraduates become more experienced writers:

The current guidelines are not preventing UNH students from becoming better writers. I'm not sure that students in my department are doing enough writing for which they are receiving constructive feedback. Perhaps we need to require more writing in all courses!

Have a writing component in all courses offered at UNH.

Writing across the curriculum is excellent. But, students complain they are shocked to be asked to write at the senior level when they never have been challenged to write for previous courses. Many senior students do not know the basics of composition. To truly succeed, there needs to be a lot more writing in a lot more courses, with more emphasis on composition mechanics.

The continued expectation of writing throughout the curriculum [is essential].

Require more reading and writing in all classes.

I don't have any particular concerns about the guidelines, but I would encourage more writing across the curriculum. Students need practice and extensive feedback to improve.

Regardless of the suggested approach, the central belief underlying all of these comments is the idea that more experience writing leads to better student writers. But a second assumption also emerged, particularly in the following comment:

Simply ... encourage more writing in all classes, just not WI.

Arguably, the rhetoric of writing intensive requirements can lead students and faculty to perceive a dichotomy between “writing” courses and “non-writing” courses. As a result, they might relegate all writing concerns to WI courses while not expecting to address them in “normal” courses. Some of the comments calling for more writing in all courses might be an anticipation of this unintended—yet potentially powerful—interpretation of the UWR.

A second possible consequence of the UWR is that students will take only the four WI courses they need. However, according to figures provided by the Registrar's Office, students on average take more WI courses than the minimum. Students graduating in May 2005 took an average of 6.52 WI courses over four years. In every college, students take more than five WI courses per four years.

Student Expectations Across WI Courses. The comments in the previous section dealt mainly with *how much* writing students do. Again, the assumption is that the more WI courses they take and writing they do, the better off they will be. However, quantity of writing alone does not ensure that students will experience and will come to expect similarly rigorous standards from course to course or from year to year.

For example, some respondents noted the consequences that arise when expectations for WI courses are not shared by students and faculty:

The issue is not guidelines. [...] The issue is uniformity of expectations amongst faculty. My course was primarily undergraduate seniors with graduate students. Yet, these students were surprised to see the number and detail of comments on each of their papers. The students reported that their teachers had not graded on writing quality and that they had not received comments like these since ENG 401. Because I graded on quality of writing as well as understanding of the material, the students were initially frustrated by their low grades.

Somehow increase the overall expectations of students. After I return the first assignment, they will often say, “Oh, you want me to write better? I can do that.” What did they think? It is a writing intensive course!

According to these and similar responses, students who hold misperceptions of what a WI course should entail tend to be less successful. There are, however, different possible causes for these students' misperceptions. While it is true that standards for writing differ from

teacher to teacher, it is also the case that some UNH undergraduates complete several semesters of coursework without taking a WI course. As a result, these students might be unprepared for rigorous work in writing. Students should be made aware that the high expectations for writing established in English 401 (First-Year Writing) will be revisited several times throughout their undergraduate careers.

First-Year Writing. Generally, the first WI course undergraduates at UNH take is English 401, First-Year Writing. According to the course’s mission statement, English 401 “is designed to help students become better able to use writing for academic, professional, and personal goals.” Along with this goal, the course aims to help students “develop their writing skills” while challenging them to cultivate “the habits of mind that constitute critical thinking.” First-Year Writing is also the one WI course that all undergraduates take. It serves as the cornerstone of the UWR.

Given the course’s centrality to the UWR—and the fact that the WI Course survey asked faculty to reflect on the UWR and the WI Guidelines—it is not surprising that several faculty commented on 401. Some of these comments reflect a positive view of the course and its position in the WI architecture. One instructor wrote that First-Year Writing

is a course that is very important for all students.

Others recognized the importance of First-Year Writing in a more indirect manner:

I would suggest First Year Writing be made a two-semester course.

It would be great to have a year-long writing course. One that introduces concepts in one semester and then allows students to take a more independent study-style class the next semester that allows students to research and write a longer/more ambitious and complex piece.

These statements allude to one of the limitations of a single-semester first-year writing requirement, a limitation that the following comment helps articulate:

Acknowledge that we can’t rely primarily on Eng 401 to teach writing but that it will take a systematic effort by UNH faculty at every course level (400-700) and in every major.

The implication here is that a one-semester course on its own cannot handle the total burden of teaching writing. Students need more experience with writing throughout their undergraduate careers. Many instructors recognized this and called for more attention to writing in disciplinary courses (see below, “Advanced Disciplinary Knowledge”). The following quote reveals a somewhat different perspective:

Require more specific instruction focusing on writing itself. A student who passes English 401 may need more preparation for additional writing intensive courses. That’s not to say that the instructor of a WI course isn’t teaching writing, of course she/he is. But I find students in a 600 level WI course whose writing skills require far more instruction, at a very basic level, than one would think necessary.

In other words, students who take 401 may still need instruction related to “writing” in general. But this instructor is clearly pointing to what he or she defines as “basic” skills, a theme that emerged frequently throughout instructor comments.

Basic Writing Skills: What Are They?

Although most faculty were satisfied with the language of the WI requirement itself, many still expressed concerns regarding their students' writing abilities. A substantial number of respondents focused on the "basic" writing skills of their students:

Many senior students do not know the basics of composition.

I don't think the problem is [with] the guidelines - the problem is with the preparation students receive before they come to UNH. We do our best to plug walls and put out fires.

I'm not sure what the school offers as far as "remedial" courses, but some of the students I have in my class don't seem to have a grasp of basic grammar. There is little time that I can spend in class helping students with basic skills. ... There are students who just don't seem to understand the very basics, and asking around, I know that students who need more focused help are in nearly every section of the course.

Better preparation of students across the curriculum - it is my observation that UNH students are very weak in their writing skills and need more practice in order to better develop the skills of writing.

The overall message is that, even with the current writing requirement, students need to receive better instruction in basic writing skills before (and perhaps during) their work in WI courses.

These comments raise an important question: What *are* basic writing skills? The UWR uses the term *basic writing* only once, defining it specifically as word- and sentence-level proficiency:

Students with basic writing problems (constant and recurring difficulties with usage and sentence structure) can be referred to the Writing Center for assistance.

In other words, the current language of the UWR does not specifically address the problem mentioned in the responses above: that many undergraduates do not appear to have received adequate instruction in basic writing issues. In fact, due to the lack of a course dealing with these topics at UNH, the UWR designates the writing center as the best place to resolve recurring problems.⁴

In addition, faculty concerns with basic skills go beyond the usage and structure issues mentioned in the UWR. A frequent cause for concern among respondents was students' apparent lack of proficiency in *grammar*, a term that seemed to comprise a variety of issues:

Students who come to UNH with better skills - spelling, grammar, the ability to recognize the parts of a sentence [are more successful].

Students in my class were surprised that I corrected grammar and expected papers to be carefully proofread before being turned in for a grade. This should not come as a surprise to

⁴ It should be noted that the UWR does not restrict the writing center to working only with basic writers. The Connors Writing Center's website makes it clear that staff "work with students on all forms of writing during any stage of the writing process." See <http://unh.edu/writing/connors.html> for more information.

any student. I would have expected this would have been drilled into students' heads sometime in the first 2-3 years.

It would be enormously helpful in advanced level courses (and 500 level courses as well) if students were given focused writing guidance in the freshman writing course. Grammar is always a problem with most students and is annoying, as are spelling errors and sentence fragments. The introductory freshman English class should emphasize exclusively expository, non-personal, writing, including thorough training in CITATION and PARTS OF SPEECH/GRAMMAR. Students should emerge with some strict diagnosis of pervasive problems. It is INFURIATING to get students who have proceeded into sophomore or junior year without any sense of what they're doing wrong with writing.

Maybe students need to take a writing intensive course early in their college education. The students have many grammatical errors, such as not knowing when to use a colon vs. a semi-colon, not knowing the difference between "their," "there," and "they're." They write the way that they speak and they do not seem to understand the notion of "formal presentation" in their writing.

Require a technical writing course that includes library and online database research techniques, and introduction to style guidelines (e.g. APA)

Grammar is a somewhat imprecise term relative to the concerns mentioned above. Although respondents used the term frequently, their specific concerns dealt with proper use of language, punctuation, fluency, audience awareness, and disciplinary conventions such as citation. None of these problems is technically grammatical in nature. Therefore, more rigorous training in grammatical concepts such as "parts of speech" or "parts of a sentence" might not yield the proficiency that these respondents are looking for. Additionally, research has indicated that direct grammar instruction fails to improve performance in writing, and may in fact impede fluency by introducing unnecessary anxiety (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, & Schoer, 1963; Hillocks, 1986; Hillocks & Smith, 1991). Instead, focused contextual instruction in each of the specific areas mentioned above, as well as feedback on technical issues, could prove beneficial.

But where should this instruction and feedback take place? Most often, respondents indicated a wish that "basic" writing issues be resolved in First-Year Writing or, even better, during high school. However, it should be noted that the higher-order challenges of writing in the major might raise basic issues that have remained undetected in the less complex assignments of basic courses.

Advanced Disciplinary Knowledge

Arguably, basic writing skills entail more than mastering the parts of speech, more than appropriate use of punctuation, and more than understanding what a sentence is—and, in fact, more than the conventional skills mentioned in the preceding section. For example, many survey comments indicated concerns with UNH students' awareness of basic conventions of scholarly writing in their discipline:

What is far more important, in my view, is that students understand the conventions of argumentative scholarly writing in their major discipline, and are familiar with different conventions in other disciplines (sciences or business vs. humanities, for instance). Above all, what should be emphasized is instruction in how do write clear and strong scholarly arguments.

This instructor recommends that the UWR concern itself more with two types of literacy. The first type of literacy can be understood as a fluency in the ways in which “scholarly arguments” in a student’s “major discipline” are constructed. In terms of the current WI guidelines, this would correspond to disciplinary literacy. The other type of literacy is related to the awareness that conventions of writing differ from discipline to discipline. What counts as “good writing” in one discipline may not count as good writing in another. One instructor articulated this idea as follows:

[The Writing Requirement] needs to recognize that there is as much variety in good ways to write as there are kinds of writing to do.

Such recognition, however, addresses only part of the issue. According to the instructor who wrote the first comment, the WI guidelines need to foster awareness not only of the fact that writing conventions do indeed differ from discipline to discipline, but also what those differences are.

Other comments articulate more specifically some of these conventions. We have sub-divided these comments into the following categories: form and genre, language and tone, database use and reading skills.

Form and genre. We define “form” as the structure of a piece of writing by which it can be categorized as one type or another. As a convention, form governs how a piece of writing looks—its length, its required sections, its use of visuals, and so forth—as well as how it is read and interpreted. Because form can often provide a sense of structure (i.e., the Introduction-Methodology-Results-Discussion form followed by many articles in the sciences), it can serve as a heuristic for writers: it aids in the process of invention and organization of evidence. Although disciplines make use of various forms in their discourse, some disciplines might stress form more explicitly than others. In other words, some disciplines may have less latitude than others to experiment with form.

Several respondents addressed form, often in a way that revealed a vital connection between form and discipline. The following comments, for instance, addressed formalistic features that are appropriate for technical writing:

I think students, would in general, benefit from a technical writing course. Most Computer Science students do not know how to organize and present the details of technical work.

The writing for this course involved technical writing that follows a specified formal software engineering methodology. Students needed to be able to express their software designs using these written techniques which involved using diagrams and design descriptions on index cards, as well as narrative explanations. The narrative explanations included comments, assumptions and explanations, but were not the primary source of encapsulating the software design elements. The diagrams and index cards were more useful for explaining the designs.

The first comment makes clear that, in Computer Science, there are certain agreed-upon (i.e., disciplinary) ways to “organize and present the details of technical work.” The second comment illuminates one aspect of such presentation: students must know how to write about their software using diagrams and narrative. In other words, the disciplinary ways of communicating here entail more than just words; they also entail visual communication, a

specific kind of literacy that Composition Studies has researched in recent years (see for example Handa, 2004).

Visual literacy involves not only the reading of diagrams and the incorporation of them as transactional elements of written research, but also the visual presentation and layout of text. One instructor wrote,

Secondly, students seemed to have very little knowledge of formatting papers to make them easier to read and to help achieve a point.

On one level, “formatting papers” involves such surface-level features as paragraph indentations, font size, and headers, but it also includes visual features such as bulleted and numbered lists. In the next comment, which has to do with assigning informal writing in class, the respondent designates bulleting as *inappropriate* to his or her discipline:

Personally, I find informal writing to have some disadvantages that contributed to my decision to do a minimal amount in the class. First, I feel that it provides students with practice for bad habits, such as lazy spelling, casual punctuation, bullet pointing, etc.

In categorizing “bullet pointing” as a “bad habit,” this respondent fails to take into account the fact that, in many genres in many fields, using bullets is not only appropriate but also expected. Undoubtedly, there are disciplines in which the use of bullets in formal writing is unsuitable. At the same time, bullets are a central feature in business-related disciplines, where the *failure* to make use of them might be construed as a “bad habit.” In addition to the use of diagrams, charts, figures, and tables, bulleted and numbered lists are visual tools for helping writers organize key points in a manner perceived as highly readable to the field. Knowing how to format papers visually is one aspect of being able to write well and, to use the respondent’s terms, “achieve a point.”

The close relationship between “formatting” and “achieving a point” could indicate a more substantive view of form. For example, many rhetoric handbooks outline two ways to structure a persuasive essay. One way is called a thesis-first, or deductive, form of argument. Structurally, this approach involves opening with an explanation of the issue, followed by a statement of the writer’s thesis, a response to possible counterarguments, and then evidential support of the essay’s claim. By contrast, a delayed-thesis organization (sometimes referred to as Rogerian argument) begins with a significant treatment of counterclaims and delays the thesis until near the end. Each of these forms or organizational patterns is intended for a different audience and purpose: the delayed-thesis presentation is generally used to address an audience that likely will be hostile to the writer’s position, whereas the thesis-first organization works well for audiences that might not know much about the topic at hand. Either way, the two forms of argument here are linked substantively to helping writers “achieve a point” effectively.

Whereas *form* and *genre* are often used as synonyms, researchers in rhetoric and composition theory have reconceptualized genre in recent years. Campbell and Jamieson (1978), for example, argue that genres of writing exemplify the social structures of which they are a part. Extending this idea, Miller (1984) links genre to the particular social action the piece of writing is expected to accomplish. The following comment by a faculty member likewise links audience awareness to considerations of genre:

Also, using [...] papers with specific writing styles assigned (editorial, internal memo to coworkers, etc.) helps them understand how to write to an audience.

The assumption here is that genre (in this case, an editorial or a workplace memo) correlates directly with the social structure within which a writer is communicating.

Audience also plays a significant role in determining the kinds of forms or genres available to writers:

[U]sing both informal writing-journals and formal papers and exams, as well as papers with specific writing styles assigned (editorial, internal memo to coworkers, etc.) helps them understand how to write to an audience.

This comment affirms the idea that form and genre can serve as heuristic devices: they can help writers know how to say what they're trying to say and how to present it. Familiarity with genre and form can lead to greater proficiency with more localized issues such as word choice. The connection here to audience is important in that it illuminates the relationship between formal characteristics and rhetorical situation, in which the expectations of the audience play a significant part.

Reading Skills. Recent research in literacy and composition suggests that knowing how to write in a specific form or genre is akin to knowing how to *read* a certain form or genre. One instructor wrote:

Make them better READERS of research and argument; make them better oral presenters and discussers of research and argument [...]

This comment suggests that “reading” is not unitary; there are ways that one must read specific kinds of writing such as “research and argument” that may differ from reading other forms or genres of writing. In other words, one can be taught how to read a kind of writing effectively or for a specific purpose.

Language and Tone. One common complaint regarding student writing is that it often contains language that is inappropriate to the specific rhetorical situation. A second, equally common complaint is that, when students do try to use “academic” language, they do so in a way that renders their tone awkward and forced. One instructor put it this way:

Another common problem I find is the propensity of students to use overly complex sentence structure and/or unnecessary clauses. I think they do so in an attempt to “sound intelligent.” However, it has the opposite effect and detracts from a clear presentation of their ideas. I appreciate the work of the instructors teaching freshman English and wonder how students who are inadequate writers, since they have already been accepted into the university, can gain assistance in their writing.

Bartholomae (1985) addresses this very concern in “Inventing the University.” He explains that student writing is often overly complex because students are trying to write in a discourse and use discourse-specific language in ways that are unknown to them. They are trying to appropriate the academic discourse found at universities without fully knowing how to do so.

On a basic level, this difficulty results from students’ not understanding academic terms and their definitions. Two instructors made the following recommendations:

teach [students] college-level vocabulary

[My students need a] technical vocabulary database, but I'll have to develop my own.

The importance of explicit teaching of what words mean in a disciplinary context (i.e., a database of technical terms) cannot be understated. At the same time, such dictionary definitions are always to some extent removed from their various contexts. Students can learn vocabulary, but they must still struggle to learn how to use them. Thus, this is as much an issue of discursive context as it is of definition. For example, the word “and” in mathematics has a far more specific and nuanced meaning than its use in daily speech. The learning of such terms can begin with a dictionary definition, but it must be supported and furthered by the recognition of the discourse-specific nuances of each term.

Database Use. Our primary concern in this section has been the variety of definitions of “good” writing adopted by different fields. For students to produce acceptable writing, they must be familiar with the conventions of genre, form, language, and tone appropriate to their discipline. Such awareness cannot be separated from the larger concern of what counts as legitimate knowledge in a field. A closely related concern is how to gain access to knowledge that exists within the field.

Along these lines, many respondents mentioned that their students need more thorough instruction in library research (a “basic” concept many students first explore in First-Year Writing):

Require a technical writing course that includes library and online database research techniques, and introduction to style guidelines (e.g. APA).

I have been teaching seniors for the past few years and am appalled at their inability to do basic database searches, find journals at the library (some confessed to me today that they have never go to the periodical section at the library and have relied on text only documents from databases), and write a short but [coherent] literature review. That they arrive at their senior year without these skills is appalling to me. I have learned that I need to spend time with them to get them “up to speed.” This experience has been consistent for the past 5 years. My inclination is that students need to have more experiences writing across more courses and that this writing should be integrated with the learning objectives and be structured so that the students can build on their learning from one assignment to the next.

While accessing and searching databases is a skill often developed in English 401, there are limits to how extensively it can be taught in a generalized setting. Effective use of databases depends as much on disciplinary knowledge as it does on familiarity with the interface. For example, an English 401 teacher might not know the most useful databases, the most reputable journals, or the most productive search terms and methods of searching that an electrical engineering student could use. Only an instructor within the field could give the student all of the information he needs to study within his field. Similarly, although a 401 teacher might assign a literature review that conforms to rigorous standards within the field of English, that knowledge might not be of much use when the student attempts to write a literature review within a field other than English.

Searching databases, finding journals, and writing literature reviews demands an advanced knowledge of the disciplines within which students perform these tasks. Students have to know not only which databases to search (i.e., ERIC, Business Source Premier, PsycArticles, GeoRef, and so forth), but also those journals respected by the field. In other words, these “writing” activities are neither discipline-neutral nor completely transferable (Russell, 1995; Smit, 2004). Writing is always bound up in disciplinary ways of knowing. To

perform these writing tasks, students have to know what counts as legitimate knowledge and legitimate ways of producing knowledge within a given discipline.

Because of the disciplinary nature of the concerns mentioned in this section, addressing them is perhaps more complicated. The following questions are worth our consideration: What steps should UNH take to improve students' abilities in this "basic" area? Should the University Writing Requirement be amended? Should English 401 change its focus, and if so, how far could it venture into specific disciplinary conventions? Should departments incorporate more explicit instruction of disciplinary writing in their courses? The solution could (and perhaps should) entail each of these approaches and more.

Issues in Teaching with Writing

Two of the most controversial elements of the University Writing Requirement read as follows:

2. Writing should be assigned in such a manner as to require students to write frequently throughout the course. Major assignments should integrate the process of writing (prewriting, drafting, revision, editing). Students should be able to receive constructive feedback of some kind (peer response, workshop, Writing Center, professor, TA, etc.) during the drafting/revising process to help improve their writing.

3. The course should include both formal (graded) and informal (heuristic) writing. There should be papers written outside of class which are handed in for formal evaluation as well as informal assignments designed to promote learning, such as invention activities, in-class essays, reaction papers, journals, reading summaries, or other appropriate materials.

Drafting. The notes on drafting and "process writing" in the University Writing Requirement generated specific concerns among respondents—specifically, that a process approach can encourage "lazy" or half-hearted writing:

The process approach taught in English 401 has a tendency to encourage students to turn in work that is in draft rather than finished form; it also tends to encourage students to ask for rewrites in order to up their grades. In general I support a process approach, but I also think that these unintended consequences of that approach need to be considered in the University Writing Requirement. I do not have any concrete suggestions about how to address these issues, though I do note that this is a widespread problem.

Experience has shown me that ungraded assignments of any type signal to students that they need not take them seriously. They do ungraded assignments without care, simply anticipating that they can implement the instructor's corrections after they receive them. As a result, it seems the instructor at times is working harder on the paper than the student. I also am not convinced that having something written every single week somehow strengthens student writing. The focus, quality, [and] significance of exercises seem more important, in my judgment, than the frequency of writing along a weekly time scale.

Although the problems mentioned with drafting are genuine, and are to some extent inherent in the nature of drafting, students might mistakenly believe that a "draft" is meant to be nothing more than a subpar version of a paper, as the above comments suggest. Instructors might also be having some difficulty sorting out which "errors" or mid-process imperfections are worth responding to, and as a result end up "writing the paper" for their students.

Process pedagogy implies that many problems in drafts do not necessarily require a response, as students will take care of them on their own, or through peer feedback, as they progress toward their final drafts. Other problems might not require full commentary by the teacher, but simply a check mark or a note (because they are the result of carelessness by the student, rather than a genuine lack of knowledge of grammatical conventions).

Informal Writing. The “informal writing” requirement received the most complaints among respondents, primarily because of a perception that writing of an exploratory nature fits well with some forms of writing and not others. A few respondents suggested that the requirement be eliminated; others asked that it be better justified or explained.

I would eliminate Writing Intensive Guideline #3.

[I need more] information on the goals, policies, the thought beyond the distinction.

Although students write in-class essays in this class, they are graded as part of the exams. So, the requirement for “informal writing,” as this is defined by the guidelines, seems unnecessarily rigid to me.

Workshops. Certainly, the drafting and informal writing requirements could be redesigned to better accommodate different teachers, courses and disciplines. However, comments in support of drafting outnumbered those opposing it:

I think requiring a paper topic for your review prior to an assignment and giving the students an option for rewriting one paper and writing an additional paper during the class helps them understand what I am looking for and helps them edit and organize their writing better.

I think that faculty in all courses should give feedback on student writing when they turn in written assignments. Revising written work based on instructor feedback needs to be emphasized more.

It would be nice if courses other than English 401, particularly those in departments other than English, made the drafting process an important part of their course curriculum. What I hear from students is that, while they get a lot out of the drafting in an introductory writing course, they never use it again. I know that this has led some of their grades to go down in other classes.

It would be nice if some of the techniques and practices from 401 explicitly carried over into other classes, like drafting, how to analyze texts, incorporating sources into writing, etc.

In other words, the majority of respondents seemed to believe that drafting is not inappropriate in itself, but is not adequately understood or valued by some of their fellow instructors. A grading workshop might help overwhelmed faculty members learn how to prioritize and manage the act of responding in order to make the drafting process beneficial, yet less dependent on them. In fact, the Writing Requirement suggests such a sophisticated approach to the writing process, rather than a simple set of drafts:

Longer assignments can be broken up into stages or components with feedback at critical points to allow for a more effective writing/researching process and, ultimately, a more satisfying product.

Workload and Support. Some instructors expressed resistance to informal writing and drafting because such process methodologies tend to be time consuming, a problem that is compounded by swelling class sizes. The Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses anticipated this demand on an instructor's time:

In order to fulfill the following guidelines, Writing-Intensive courses need to be supported by restrictions on class size and/or additional supports such as teaching assistants, class linked tutors, stipends for materials and course development, the Writing Center, and Writing-across-the-Curriculum support.

Despite the fact that this statement suggests that WI classes be small, nowhere do the Guidelines mandate a certain class size. As a result, instructors continue to struggle with mounting WI course enrollments:

The most important constraint I face in helping students become better writers is the size of the classes I teach. [...] I find it very difficult to fulfill the spirit of the WI guidelines with class sizes of 40 students.

Many other instructors share the sentiment that workload demands are significant obstacles to following the WI Guidelines:

Writing intensive is grading- and conferencing- intensive; large classes and multiple courses (or, in the case of adjuncts, multiple jobs) limit the time an instructor can give to each student.

By limiting literature courses to 30 students, the English Dept makes WI pedagogy possible. If I were to teach a larger WI course, I would need teaching assistants to give students the individual feedback on every written assignment I now provide myself.

[T]he recent expectation that faculty serve on (or are placed on, nominated to) numerous dept. and university committees is overwhelming (in terms of workload) and impinges on how much time teachers have for grading in WI courses.

Respondents agreed that WI courses are most effective when instructors are provided with several kinds of institutional support:

The smaller the class size, the more effective the course.

Smaller classes and better compensation for the instructors are, I think, the chief factors in improving writing instruction.

My department has agreed to limit the class size to 25. This has been extremely helpful. I don't need any additional assistance.

Assessment and Accountability

A number of comments expressed a desire to see the university regularly assess the WI requirement. Many of these comments echoed what one instructor stated plainly:

Ongoing assessment of writing requirement

This call for assessment was often connected to how the university defines WI courses; it also often pointed to standardization, or ensuring that courses labeled as WI are equally

writing intensive. In part, the desire for such standardization can be attributed to the wealth of anecdotal evidence that some WI courses were far less writing intensive than others. That sentiment emerges in the following comments:

Require every WI course to be recertified by the UWC every three year[s]. It is ridiculous to let the departments police themselves. I have students who tell me they take WI course that have three essay exams and two short essay papers.

I believe each WI course should be evaluated regularly (every two or three years) to ensure that they are truly meeting the guidelines. Writing assignments are due almost daily in my class, and I spend a significant amount of my time helping students individually on improving their writing. I too often have heard students tell me about other WI courses where they only had to complete one paper - with no early drafts required. I also think it would be helpful to have goals at different levels or within different departments or schools to identify what students should be learning related to writing in each of their WI classes.

As it is clear in these comments, the perception that not all WI courses are created equal leads to a desire for some form of standardization and ongoing assessment of the University Writing Requirement. The two comments above direct this need for assessment toward the courses themselves. One instructor posed a different focus for assessment—WI course faculty:

I would recommend creating a certification program for faculty who teach WI courses—make a course WI only when it is taught by a WI certified faculty. The small class size would be a good incentive for this.

Each of these ideas is in harmony with the language of the current requirement, which reads as follows:

To ensure accountability and the provision of adequate support and resources over the long term, the [Writing] committee will monitor and assess the WI course offerings regularly (every two or three years) through a variety of means, such as analysis of syllabi and/or portfolios, interviews with faculty and students, surveys and questionnaires.

But while introducing the issue of accountability within the writing intensive curriculum, this guideline also raises implementational problems; most notably, it mentions means of assessment without defining *standards*. As a result, these standards must be constantly defined and justified with each assessment.

Toward Outcomes. By contrast, a relatively specific set of outcomes at the university, department and program levels would provide WI courses with a more stable measure against which to be assessed. Some respondents appeared to be working toward the concept of outcomes:

The emphasis should be shifted from some measure or percentage of the quantity of writing, and away from the idea of writing for the sake of writing. What is far more important, in my view, is that students understand the conventions of argumentative scholarly writing in their major discipline, and are familiar with different conventions in other disciplines (sciences or business vs. humanities, for instance). Above all, what should be emphasized is instruction in how do write clear and strong scholarly arguments.

This comment suggests that the current emphasis seems to be on the quantity of writing in a course rather than its content. However, the only quantifiable element of the current Writing Requirement is that written assignments comprise 50% of a WI course grade. And indeed, the UWR makes this note:

The quantity of writing required is less important than how the writing is integrated into the course. For example, frequent short writing assignments... can sometimes be more effective than long research papers submitted at the end of the course which receive comment and evaluation only after the course is over.

Therefore, it should be noted that faculty are somehow receiving the message that quantity is the most important factor of the current requirement, regardless of its actual language. One of the causes for misunderstanding, perhaps, is that the 50% rule is relatively straightforward, while little is said about how writing should be integrated effectively into courses. Again, workshops might be helpful in this regard, but it might also be necessary for departments to establish course outcomes that indicate whether long or short papers (or a combination of both) are most appropriate for instruction at various levels within their programs. They could also define appropriate drafting and response methods more effectively than a universal requirement.

In fact, the language of the UWR suggests that departments become more involved in the process of defining the details of writing instruction in their departments, establishing the need for a “department plan” for Writing Intensive courses:

The Writing Committee will not undertake a formal approval process for each course or department plan but will cooperate with departments in their planning.

A Need for Multiple Perspectives. Why should departments be involved? The answer is clear: it is the only way to meet the expectation that WI guidelines be, as one commenter put it, “appropriately rigorous and flexible.” Yet this leads to another question: how can WI guidelines be defined for a university with disciplines spanning the sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, and various technical and professional fields?

This tension can be understood in terms of enforcement. One instructor wrote in response to Question 7 that UNH should simply “[e]nforce the guidelines.” At a Spring 2006 meeting with faculty from several disciplines, one instructor remarked rather strongly that what faculty need is more top-down control on the part of the University Writing Program: faculty need to be told what to do, and how to do it. Other instructors, however, answered Question 7 in a very different way, which the following quote demonstrates:

Each of us has a different teaching style, and course content in some disciplines may vary from term-to-term. For example, my course [...] involves designing and implementing a complex marketing project for an outside company. There [are] several areas of each project that require writing, but the nature of the projects, which vary by company, make the writing component less predictable and harder to administer equitably from class to class. One project may involve the creation of advertising with less writing required, and another may involve significant market research and report generation hence more writing. Teachers need some flexibility to adapt the WI requirements to meet changes in their courses.

In short, while the Writing Requirement needs to be as specific as possible to benefit instructors of WI courses and to ensure that all UNH students develop their writing abilities within fair and consistent environments, the requirement can't be *so* specific that it burdens

instructors with irrelevant requirements or precludes the possibility of useful discipline-based assignments such as the examples above.

To give an example, a suggestion such as this—

Establish a university-wide required number of written pages that the student will complete in a WI class.

—seems fair at first, but might become problematic when implemented across the university curriculum. Some discipline-specific genres require more collaboration, more stages of drafting/editing, or more use of specialized language than others. A course paper might test what students know, or it might require them to do much of their learning and research while writing; if the latter is the case, each page will take longer to write. For these reasons, a set number of pages across courses and disciplines does not necessarily ensure a consistent workload.

A possible revised Writing Requirement might establish general guidelines and outcomes for all WI courses (and for the whole of a student's writing instruction at UNH) while allowing secondary and tertiary guidelines and expectations at the college, department and program levels. These additional requirements would be more specific than a university-wide requirement could be, and would be established within each department as a joint venture between department faculty and the University Writing Committee. In other words, departments would no longer be "policing themselves." Instead, they would be contributing to guidelines which would then be implemented, reviewed and enforced by the University Writing Committee.

References

- Bartholomae, D. (1985). Inventing the University. In M. Rose (Ed.), *When a writer can't write: Studies in writer's block and other composing-process problems* (pp134-65). New York: Guilford.
- Braddock, R., Lloyd-Jones, R., & Schoer, L. (1963). *Research in written composition*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Campbell, K. K. and Jamieson, K. H. (Eds.). (1978). *Form and genre: shaping rhetorical action*. Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association.
- Condon, W. (2001). Accommodating complexity: WAC program evaluation in the age of accountability. In S. H. McLeod, E. Miraglia, M. Soven, and C. Thaiss (Eds.), *WAC for the new millennium: Strategies for continuing writing-across-the-curriculum programs*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Handa, C., ed. (2004). *Visual rhetoric in a digital world: A critical sourcebook*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Press.
- Hillocks, G., Jr. (1986). *Research on written composition: New directions for teaching*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Hillocks, G., Jr., & Smith, M. W. (1991). Grammar and usage. In J. Flood, J. M. Jensen, D. Lapp, & J. R. Squire (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts* (pp. 591-603). New York: Macmillan.
- Miller, C. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 151-67.
- Russell, D. R. (1995). Activity theory and its implications for writing instruction. In J. Petraglia (Ed.). *Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction* (pp. 51-78). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Smit, D. W. (2004). *The end of composition studies*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Appendix A: University Writing Requirement

UNIVERSITY WRITING REQUIREMENT

Motion to Revise the University Writing Requirement
Passed in Principle May 8, 1995

Passed with amendment and with the attached implementation plan and guidelines on
November 27, 1995

“WRITING INTENSIVE” COURSES. All undergraduates will be required to complete Freshman English plus three “writing intensive” courses, at least one of which will be in the major, and at least one of which will be on a 600-level or above.

RATIONALE

As the cornerstone of any higher education, academic and disciplinary literacy is the concern of the entire faculty and the whole university curriculum. Understanding that literacy is a long-term developmental process, the university community is committed to the following goals for student writing and learning.

- a. Students should use writing as an intellectual process to learn material, to discover, construct, and order meaning.
- b. Students should learn to write effectively in various academic and disciplinary genres for professional and lay audiences.
- c. Students should learn to display competence with the generic features and conventions of academic language.

Writing assignments which support course and curricular objectives are strongly encouraged in all courses, whether they are designated Writing Intensive or not. However, in order to ensure that students have a coherent and intensive set of experiences with writing at the college level that will help them meet the goals listed above, the Academic Senate has passed a motion (May 8, 1995) requiring that students must take at least four courses which are defined as Writing Intensive (WI).

The old writing requirement built into the GenEd program (Groups IV-VIII) is no longer feasible, and students can and do avoid GenEd courses with significant writing components. This new requirement will ensure that students attend to writing throughout the undergraduate career. Courses designated “writing intensive” will be identified in GenEd (by the GenEd Committee) and in each undergraduate major (by department or program faculty). Sufficient seats now exist in GenEd classes of less than 30 to accommodate as many students as might wish to fulfill this requirement with two GenEd courses. The University Writing Center will provide not only individual assistance to students but also consultation to faculty as the

attempt to implement “writing across the curriculum.” Writing in the major will take many forms, from senior theses and projects to major special courses.

Motion for Criteria and Implementaion of “Writing-Intensive” Courses Passed 11/27/95

1. That the passage of GenEd Revision #1 be finalized with the following description of the general features of Writing-Intensive Courses and implementation plan (see below).

2. Additionally, that a Writing Committee be formally constituted as a Permanent Committee with representation from the following constituencies:

- 1) General Education Committee
- 2) Academic Standards
- 3) A representative from each of the colleges*
- 4) Center for Teaching Excellence
- 5) Coordinator of Composition
- 6) Director of the Writing Center
- 7) Director of the WAC Program
- 8) Undergraduate Student Representatives (to be chosen by the Student Senate)

*Each college will be represented by one of the other categories or by election. Since Liberal Arts (English Department) will have permanent representation through categories 5,6, or 7, there should at least one additional Liberal Arts representative to ensure the other departments can also be represented.

The Writing Committee will:

- a) recommend policies concerning the administration and operation of the University Writing Requirement and WAC/UWC Program,
- b) oversee the development of writing-intensive courses in General Education and in major disciplines,
- c) promote writing across the curriculum,
- d) evaluate the program regularly (every second or third year on a rotating basis) using a variety of measures, such as analysis of syllabi, interviewing of faculty and students, surveys, portfolio, etc., and, as necessary, suggest changes in procedure or policies to ensure efficiency, and
- e) advise the Provost on resources required to support the program requirements.

*The Writing Committee will act as a clearinghouse for disseminating information about the University Writing Requirement and will keep and update the information sent by departments, including syllabi and course descriptions. The committee will cooperate with the Registrar’s Office to publish a list of WI courses for the university each year.

*The Writing Committee will not undertake a formal approval process for each course or department plan but will cooperate with departments in their planning. However, to ensure accountability and the provision of adequate support and resources over the long-

term, the committee will monitor and assess the WI course offerings regularly (every two or three years) through a variety of means, such as analysis of syllabi and/or portfolios, interviews with faculty and students, surveys and questionnaires.

Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses

These guidelines are intended to support and supplement this revision of the university writing requirement. In order to fulfill the following guidelines, Writing-Intensive courses need to be supported by restrictions on class size and/or additional supports such as teaching assistants, class linked tutors, stipends for materials and course development, the Writing Center, and Writing-across-the –Curriculum support. Departments will have the authority to use or reconfigure existing courses or, alternately, to develop new courses to fulfill the WI requirements as they see fit.

1. Students in the course should do *substantial* writing that enhances learning and demonstrates knowledge of the subject or the discipline. Writing should be an integral part of the course and should account for a significant part (approximately 50 percent or more) of the final grade.

Learning in any course includes learning the appropriate ways of reading, writing and thinking for that subject or discipline. Traditional writing assignments, such as senior theses, seminar papers, take-home and in-class essay exams, case studies, laboratory notebooks or reports, proposals, literature reviews, and field research should be considered as possible sources for satisfying the writing requirement. There is no single or universal formula for satisfying the WI requirement as courses naturally differ according to their level, form, and function. For example, General Education courses may emphasize writing-to-learn strategies, while major courses may incorporate an additional focus on discipline-specific writing.

While it is important to make explicit the conventions of thinking and writing in one's area of expertise, instructors are not expected to treat every mechanical or stylistic infelicity. Students with basic writing problems (constant and recurring difficulties with usage and sentence structure) can be referred to the writing center for assistance.

2. Writing should be assigned in such a manner as to require students to write regularly throughout the course. Major assignments should integrate the process of writing (prewriting, drafting, revision, editing). Students should be able to receive constructive feedback of some kind (peer response, workshop, Writing Center, professor, T.A., etc.) during the drafting/revising process to help improve their writing.

The quantity of the writing required is less important than how the writing is integrated into the course. For example, frequent short writing assignments (2-5 pages) for which the student receives comments and an opportunity to revise can sometimes be more effective than long research papers submitted at the end of the course which receive comment and evaluation only after the course is over. Longer

assignments can be broken up into stages or components with feedback at critical points to allow for a more effective writing/researching process and, ultimately, a more satisfying product.

3. The course should include both formal (graded) and informal (heuristic) writing. There should be papers written outside of class which are handed in for formal evaluation as well as informal assignments designed to promote learning, such as invention activities, in-class essays, reaction papers, journals, reading summaries, or other appropriate exercises.

Assigning work in a variety of genres for a variety of audiences can help students synthesize and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge effectively. It is important that evaluation of writing be conducted by people trained in the conventions of the genre being used and be appropriate to the nature of the assignment. New writing and assessment strategies, such as portfolio and student self-assessment, are encouraged.

Appendix B: Student Survey Instrument

Semester: _____ Year: _____ Instructor: _____

Course Number: _____ Course Title: _____

Purpose. The University Writing Committee is currently reviewing the Writing Requirement and Writing Intensive (WI) courses. Answering the following seven questions will help us improve the academic program at UNH. This survey will not affect the WI status of this or any other course you are currently taking.

Instructions. Please respond to the following statements by blackening the appropriate circle.

1.	Writing was an important part of this course and accounted for a significant part (50% or more) of my final grade.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brainstorming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries).	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	I wrote regularly throughout this course (at least once each week).	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	The teacher of this course encouraged me to use a writing process for major assignments. (A writing process can include stages such as prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing.)	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	I received timely and helpful feedback on my writing that allowed me to improve subsequent assignments.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	The writing I did in this course helped me learn the course material.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	My writing improved as a result of this course.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix C: Student Survey Data Sheet

University of New Hampshire Aggregate

Fall 2005 Student Survey of Writing Intensive Courses
Preliminary Findings

General Statistics

Total WI enrollment: **9180**

Total Responses: **6687**

Percent Responses: **73**

Responses by Question

1. Writing was an important part of this course and accounted for a significant part (50% or more) of my final grade.

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.63/0.732

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	4959	74
Agree (4)	1189	18
Neutral (3)	368	6
Disagree (2)	56	1
Strongly Disagree (1)	21	0

2. This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brainstorming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries).

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.13/1.120

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	3217	52
Agree (4)	1374	22
Neutral (3)	898	14
Disagree (2)	433	7
Strongly Disagree (1)	4	0

3. I wrote regularly throughout this course (at least once each week).

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.24/1.103

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	3625	59
Agree (4)	1204	19
Neutral (3)	685	11
Disagree (2)	420	6
Strongly Disagree (1)	204	3

4. The teacher of this course encouraged me to use a writing process for major assignments. (A writing process can include stages such as prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing.)

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.16/1.095

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	3245	52
Agree (4)	1413	23
Neutral (3)	876	14
Disagree (2)	416	6
Strongly Disagree (1)	192	3

5. I received timely and helpful feedback on my writing that allowed me to improve subsequent assignments.

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.16/1.063

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	3079	50
Agree (4)	1720	27
Neutral (3)	798	12
Disagree (2)	340	5
Strongly Disagree (1)	206	3

6. The writing I did in this course helped me learn the course material.

Mean/Std. Dev. 4.04/1.033

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	3295	53
Agree (4)	1789	29
Neutral (3)	690	11
Disagree (2)	238	3
Strongly Disagree (1)	131	2

7. My writing improved as a result of this course.

Mean/Std. Dev. 3.97/1.101

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree (5)	2502	40
Agree (4)	1845	30
Neutral (3)	1172	19
Disagree (2)	368	5
Strongly Disagree (1)	256	4

Appendix D: Faculty Survey Instrument

Background Information (Questions 1-3)

Question 1: Please enter the course number and section using the following format: ADMN 400 (01).

Question 2: My faculty rank is:

- Professor
- Associate
- Assistant
- Lecturer
- Adjunct
- Post-doc
- Graduate Student/TA
- Other

Question 3: My department is:

Questions 4-7 pertain to the guidelines established for Writing Intensive courses and the University Writing Requirement.

Question 4: Written work accounted for what percentage of the grade in this course. (Writing Intensive Guideline #1)

- more than 75%
- between 50% and 75%
- more than 25% but less than 50%
- 5% or less

Question 5: I encouraged students to use a writing process for major assignments. (A writing process can include stages such as prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing.) (Writing Intensive Guideline #2)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 6: This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brainstorming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries). (Writing Intensive Guideline #3)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 7: How would you change the guidelines in the current University

Writing Requirement to make UNH graduates better writers?

Questions 8-11 ask you to tell us more about the writing in your particular course.

Question 8: Which best describes how often you require students to write in your course?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Bi-Weekly
- Monthly

Question 9: The writing in this course helped me teach the subject.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 10: What kind of support do you most need to teach a WI course better?

Question 11: Please add any other comments that you would like to make.

Appendix E: Faculty Survey Data Sheet

University of New Hampshire Aggregate

Fall 2005 Faculty Survey of Writing Intensive Courses
Preliminary Findings

General Statistics

Aggregate:

- Total faculty teaching WI courses..... **407**
- Total Responses **137**
- Percent Responses..... **34%**

Responses by Rank:

- Professor..... **37** (27%)
- Associate **35** (26%)
- Assistant..... **18** (13%)
- Lecturer **19** (14%)
- Adjunct..... **6** (4%)
- Grad/TA..... **22** (16%)

Colleges & Schools Represented:

- College of Engineering & Physical Sciences
- College of Liberal Arts
- College of Life Sciences & Agriculture
- School of Health & Human Services
- University of New Hampshire, Manchester
- Whittemore School of Business & Economics

Responses by Question

Question 4: Written work accounted for what percentage of the grade in this course? (Writing Intensive Guideline #1)

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
More than 75%	83	61
Between 50% and 75%	45	33
Between 25% and 50%	8	6
25% or less	0	0

Question 5: I encouraged students to use a writing process for major assignments. (A writing process can include stages such as prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing.) (Writing Intensive Guideline #2)

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree	93	68
Agree	41	30
Disagree	2	1
Strongly Disagree	0	0

Question 6: This course included both formal writing (such as papers written outside of class and handed in for grade) and informal writing (such as freewriting, brainstorming, in-class essays, reaction or response papers, journals, reading summaries). (Writing Intensive Guideline #3)

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree	83	61
Agree	38	28
Disagree	14	10
Strongly Disagree	1	1

Question 7: How would you change the guidelines in the current University Writing Requirement to make UNH graduates better writers? (Please see the document entitled, "Aggregate Faculty Comments by Category.")

Question 8: Which best describes how often you require students to write in your course?

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Daily	36	26
Weekly	65	47
Bi-Weekly	27	20
Monthly	8	6

Question 9: The writing in this course helped me teach the subject.

Choice	Frequency	Percent Response
Strongly Agree	89	65
Agree	40	29
Disagree	6	4
Strongly Disagree	1	1

Question 10: What kind of support do you most need to teach a WI course better? (Please see the document entitled, "Aggregate Faculty Comments by Category.")

Question 11: Please add any other comments that you would like to make. (Please see the document entitled, "Aggregate Faculty Comments by Category.")

Appendix F: Faculty Aggregate Comments

Aggregate Faculty Comments by Category

Fall 2005 Faculty Survey of Writing Intensive Courses

Preliminary Findings

Overview

The recent Survey of Writing Intensive courses administered to faculty teaching WI courses at the end of the Fall 2005 semester consisted of 11 items, three of which allowed respondents to write open-ended comments. These three questions are:

- *Question 7:* How would you change the guidelines in the current University Writing Requirement to make UNH graduates better writers?
- *Question 10:* What kind of support do you most need to teach a WI course better?
- *Question 11:* Please add any other comments that you would like to make.

What follows is a complete, unedited list of responses to these three items from faculty across all colleges, schools, and divisions at both the Durham and Manchester campuses. For the purpose of analysis, these comments were divided into four thematic categories that emerged from reading the comments themselves. These categories are nonetheless artificial divisions—some comments could easily fit in more than one category. Where necessary, we added subdivisions of the major categories in order to better group comments. The categories (with sub-categories in parentheses) include:

- **Disciplinarity.** (*Genre, Technical and Professional Writing, and Modern Languages*)
- **Institutional Context.** (*Assessment and Standardization, More Writing and WI Courses, WI Guidelines, First-Year Writing, Class Size, and Recognition*)
- **Student Preparation.** (*Pre-UNH, Basic Skills, Expectations, and Pedagogy*)
- **Resources.** (*Workshops and Collaboration, Writing Center and Writing Fellows, Awareness of WI Guidelines, Technology, Grading and Responding, and TAs and Tutors*)

For purposes of context, we added the question number in parentheses following each comment, which correspond to the questions above. We also added brief descriptions of each of the major categories.

Disciplinary

Comments in this category have to do with the way in which the WI Guidelines intersect with writing required in different disciplines or fields of study. Although many of the comments called for more attention technical writing or writing in professional fields, some also highlighted the way the requirement works for multiple disciplines. Sub-categories include: Genre, Technical and Professional Writing, and Modern Languages.

Genre

The emphasis should be shifted from some measure or percentage of the quantity of writing, and away from the idea of writing for the sake of writing. What is far more important, in my view, is that students understand the conventions of argumentative scholarly writing in their major discipline, and are familiar with different conventions in other disciplines (sciences or business vs. humanities, for instance). Above all, what should be emphasized is instruction in how do write clear and strong scholarly arguments. Likewise, I have had only mixed success in using various approaches to process writing. Much of my experience tells me that students catch on pretty quickly to the idea that they need only exert minimal effort on the first draft. If they are permitted to draft, re-write, and re-submit assignments, they can rely on the faculty member to do lots of the editing and correcting, clarifying and proofreading, for the student. (Question 7)

It needs to recognize that there is as much variety in good ways to write as there are kinds of writing to do. (Question 7)

For writing students, an introductory course on the three major genres -- fiction, nonfiction, and poetry -- would be a terrific addition. The course could be offered as a lecture/workshop with a lecture by a master teacher one day and smaller breakout sessions with TAs on another. That way, many students -- say 50 -- could sign up for the course. (Question 7)

Each of us has a different teaching style, and course content in some disciplines may vary from term-to-term. For example, my course, Marketing Workshop, involves designing and implementing a complex marketing project for an outside company. There several areas of each project that require writing, but the nature of the projects, which vary by company, make the writing component less predictable and harder to administer equitably from class to class. One project may involve the creation of advertising with less writing required, and another may involve significant market research and report generation hence more writing. Teachers need some flexibility to adapt the WI requirements to meet changes in their courses. (Question 7)

In the musical theatre discipline the current requirements work very well because the students take a very strong interest when they must do historical background research and writing historical papers, developing character analyses, maintain a journal and obtain constant feedback. Sometimes the students will write something and turn it in on a daily basis or a weekly basis and immediate feedback which is very exciting and timely for them. I like it too because we theatre folk are so pumped after rehearsal at 11pm that it helps to get thoughts across before the down time and sleep. Theatre majors tend to focus on the immediate and go into hyper-focus when they are in rehearsals that lead to a performance. A combination of the experimental, historical, analytical and writing all add up to a stronger performance and since we charge for admission this is a good thing. (Question 7)

Technical and Professional Writing

I think students, would in general, benefit from a technical writing course. Most Computer Science students do not know how to organize and present the details of technical work. (Question 11)

Require a technical writing course that includes library and online database research techniques, and introduction to style guidelines (eg. APA) (Question 7)

The writing for this course involved technical writing that follows a specified formal software engineering methodology. Students needed to be able to express their software designs using these written techniques which involved using diagrams and design descriptions on index cards, as well as narrative explanations.

The narrative explanations included comments, assumptions and explanations, but were not the primary source of encapsulating the software design elements. The diagrams and index cards were more useful for explaining the designs. (Question 7)

Writing required in my course models on professional writing in field. Building an experience base is important, to allow students to see examples of reports similar to what they are working on. It's difficult to create, and a goal of mine to find ways of modelling for the students. (Question 11)

Technical vocabulary database, but I'll have to develop my own. Example assignments and grading rubrics. (Question 10)

A software design integrated development environment package that helps standardize and automate diagram production would be useful in this course. (Question 10)

Modern Languages

I would add modifications for courses in modern languages, which, while writing intensive by any definition, include (especially in lower levels) more revision, shorter papers, and a stronger grammatical component. It would be useful to have specific guidelines for grading such assignments and for establishing a sense of consistency in grading between sections. (Question 7)

My biggest concern with the writing requirement is that there is not institutional support outside of the classroom/or our dept for writing intensive classes in foreign languages - it would be nice to have writing tutors in foreign languages available. We have over 100 majors in spanish, and hundreds and hundreds of students taking composition classes at all levels. We could use the support for foreign languages! (Question 7)

Institutional Context

Comments in this section have to do with the institutional nature of a university-wide writing requirement. Some of these comments call for more support, while others call for more accountability. Since the Writing Requirement is a University-wide requirement, we placed comments that call for a specific change to the requirement itself here. Sub-categories include: Assessment and Standardization, More Writing & WI Courses, WI Guidelines, First-Year Writing, Class Size, and Recognition.

Assessment and Standardization

Require every WI course to be recertified by the UWC every three year. It is ridiculous to let the departments police themselves. I have students who tell me they take WI course that have three essay exams and two short essay papers. (Question 7)

Ongoing assessment of writing requirement (Question 7)

I would recommend creating a certification program for faculty who teach WI courses--make a course WI only when it is taught by a WI certified faculty. The small class size would be a good incentive for this. (Question 7)

I believe each WI course should be evaluated regularly (every two or three years) to ensure that they are truly meeting the guidelines. Writing assignments are due almost daily in my class, and I spend a significant amount of my time helping students individually on improving their writing. I too often have heard students tell me about other WI courses where they only had to complete one paper - with no early drafts required. I also think it would be helpful to have goals at different levels or within different departments or schools to identify what students should be learning related to writing in each of their WI classes. I teach seniors. Since they have all had a number of WI courses by the time I see them, I should be able to expect that they can all write a grammatically correct sentence; that's not always true. Students should be required to meet some standards throughout, and if they don't meet the writing standard, there should be some penalty/process to improve. Despite working very hard with poor writers, it is still possible (and likely) that a poor-writing student could pass my class and still not have a solid understanding of proper English

grammar, and I'm guessing that could happen in other courses. Professors should have some outlet to send those students to that would require them to take additional courses that focus strictly on proper writing. If this exists, I am unaware of it. (Question 7)

Do not have the WI student eval questions appear in the column to the right of the regular teaching survey. My department uses the first set of those 20 "bubbles" and therefore I was unable to have my students complete the survey. I spoke with someone in the Institutional Research Office and they confirmed that this problem was known (having been identified earlier). She instructed me have my students complete my department's additional questions rather than the WI program questions. (Question 11)

More Writing & WI Courses

If they are already "graduates," then there isn't much we can do! I guess that wasn't the question. The current guidelines are not preventing UNH students from becoming better writers. I'm not sure that students in my department are doing enough writing for which they are receiving constructive feedback. Perhaps we need to require more writing in all courses! (Question 7)

Require more courses that are writing intensive. Have fewer courses relying only on multiple choice exams and without significant writing requirements (Question 7)

Have a writing component in all courses offered at UNH. (Question 7)

Simply to encourage more writing in all classes, just not WI. (Question 7)

I don't have any particular concerns about the guidelines, but I would encourage more writing across the curriculum. Students need practice and extensive feedback to improve. (Question 7)

Less restriction in choosing course materials and deciding different approaches to writing. (Question 10)

I'm not sure. I think that students need to have more experiences writing across all four years of their career at UNH. I have been teaching seniors for the past few years and am appalled at their inability to do basic database searches, find journals at the library (some confessed to me today that they have never go to the periodical section at the library and have relied on text only documents from databases), and write a short but coherent literature review. That they arrive at their senior year without these skills is appalling to me. I have learned that I need to spend time with them to get them "up to speed." This experience has been consistent for the past 5 years. My inclination is that students need to have more experiences writing across more courses and that this writing should be integrated with the learning objectives and be structured so that the students can build on their learning from one assignment to the next. My students (for the most part) are smart and well-motivated. If they are not well prepared, I'm not sure about the skills of other students. I'm rambling - but an integrated across the board attention to writing as a way to learn and communicate is essential at UNH. (Question 7)

More writing intensive courses - students do not get enough practice and their writing is weak (Question 7)

I think that the Guidelines work well. Encouraging students to use the writing process is key. Also, having students write both formally and informally is important. My only wish is that more "GenEd" courses were writing intensive. (Question 7)

Writing across the curriculum is excellent. But, students complain they are shocked to be asked to write at the senior level when they never have been challenged to write for previous courses. Many senior students do not know the basics of composition. To truly succeed, there needs to be a lot more writing in a lot more courses, with more emphasis on composition mechanics. Good Luck. (Question 11)

The continued expectation of writing throughout the curriculum (Question 10)

Require more reading and writing in all classes (Question 7)

WI Guidelines

Enforce the guidelines (Question 7)

Establish a university-wide required number of written pages that the student will complete in a WI class. (Question 7)

more consistency with what constitutes a WI course (Question 7)

Although students write in-class essays in this class, they are graded as part of the exams. So, the requirement for "informal writing", as this is defined by the guidelines, seems unnecessarily rigid to me. Information on the goals, policies, the though beyond the distinction (Question 10)

I think writing guideline #2 might be revisited or at least assessed in terms of its over all contribution to WI classes since it is the most difficult to implement in any consistency way given other requirements. (Question 7)

I would set 50% limit on use of multiple choice in courses under 60 enrollment. (Question 7)

the guidelines are fine. Implementation is the weakness (Question 7)

I would eliminate Writing Intensive Guideline #3. (Question 7)

Perhaps tighten the definitions of what constitutes WI; and (although this is probably impossible) alter the perception that a WI course is more work than a non-WI (and the reality, if that's the case, but I don't have data) (Question 7)

I cannot think of anything specific. I am not saying that students in my WI classes (700 level) are perfect writers, but their problems vary so much from one person to another than I don't feel a change in the guidelines would solve those problems. (Question 7)

The guidelines are fine. Implementation is the weakness (Question 7)

I think the guidelines are fine as is. (Question 7)

I wouldn't change the guidelines—if departments become more invested in writing and encourage communication among their faculty regarding how best to use writing in their courses, the requirement could become almost irrelevant. (Question 7)

I feel that the university writing requirements are good. Students entering the university usually need support and practice in writing. The WI requirements lead in this direction. (Question 7)

I was happy with the guidelines. (Question 7)

I don't think I'd change anything. (Question 7)

can think of no ways at this time. (Question 7)

Requirements as they stand are appropriately rigorous and flexible (Question 7)

No specific changes, however the 50% of the grade rule, at least for my course, is difficult to adhere to from term to term (see 11 below). (Question 7)

I have no suggestions for changing the guidelines. My sense is that they simply need the experience of writing and re-writing in their chosen field. (Question 7)

I would not like the writing intensive requirement to be changed to something less directed exclusively toward the written word (i.e., a "visual literacy" requirement or oral communication). Writing is a

particular, crucial skill that college students ought to focus on a great deal (particularly for many of current students, for whom the written word is not a primary means of communication). Thinking about that requirement in "broader" ways will only take away from their spending sufficient time on the written word. If there are other communication skills that the university is interested in fostering among students, fine, but make them additional, SEPARATE requirements. (Question 11)

The WI requirement is very helpful as it puts writing on the radar screen as an important issue. IMHO UNH should make develop a set of mandatory outcomes for every graduate, with communication skills at the top of the list (both written and oral). (Question 11)

I'm quite pleased to be able to offer three WI courses although it remains somewhat of a struggle. I think it essential and many of my students write back after graduation and indicate how helpful this has been in their graduate work (Question 11)

The requirements look pretty good. I'd like to see more emphasis on revision--maybe a requirement that in each writing-intensive course at least one piece of writing--minimum, say, 1,200 words--be revised at least once, and ideally twice. (Question 7)

Because this course is a gen. ed., many students thought it would be easier. I have required daily journals and 3 papers, and it seems to be kind of a drag to them. Perhaps all Gen. Ed. category 8's should be writing intensive to create some uniformity? (Question 7)

First-Year Writing

I would suggest First Year Writing be made a two-semester course. (Question 7)

Acknowledge that we can't rely primarily on Eng 401 to teach writing but that it will take a systematic effort by UNH faculty at every course level (400-700) and in every major. (Question 7)

Require more specific instruction focusing on writing itself. A student who passes English 401 may need more preparation for additional writing intensive courses. That's not to say that the instructor of a WI course isn't teaching writing, of course she/he is. But I find students in a 600 level WI course whose writing skills require far more instruction, at a very basic level, than one would think necessary. (Question 7)

It would be great to have a year-long writing course. One that introduces concepts in one semester and then allows students to take a more independent study-style class the next semester that allows students to research and write a longer/more ambitious and complex piece. (Question 7)

Having taught only first year writing, I do not feel I can answer that question except to say that it is a course that is very important for all students. The only major flaw is that so many of the students are at different levels, at times it was hard to reconcile this, and some students didn't get what they needed from the class. If possible, I would find a way to make a few different levels. (Question 7)

(Same as in previous surveys) Is there a survey students take late in their academic careers about the writing courses they've taken? If so, it might be helpful to have a copy. I would be curious to hear what students thought later on about what they'd learned in 401 and other writing intensive courses. (Question 10)

The process approach taught in English 401 has a tendency to encourage students to turn in work that is in draft rather than finished form; it also tends to encourage students to ask for rewrites in order to up their grades. In general I support a process approach, but I also think that these unintended consequences of that approach need to be considered in the University Writing Requirement. I do not have any concrete suggestions about how to address these issues, though I do note that this is a widespread problem (Question 7)

Class Size

The most important constraint I face in helping students become better writers is the size of the classes I teach. In sociology, upper level seminars (where students should be doing significant writing and research) are generally around 40 students, which is about twice the ideal size. In these classes, I generally have students write several shorter papers and a major research paper. However, I have found it difficult to do more than this in terms of writing assignments. As a result, I have removed the WI designation from a 600-level sociology class I regularly teach (SOC 645), and I am considering doing the same for the course I taught this semester, SOC 665. In the latter course, 45% of the final grade was based on students' graded writing. This falls short of the 50% threshold spelled out in the guidelines, and although I will continue to require written work in all my 600-level courses, I find it very difficult to fulfill the spirit of the WI guidelines with class sizes of 40 students. (Question 10)

Have smaller classes and fewer exams that do not require essay-type answers. Students also need more help in thinking logically and making convincing oral arguments. these should be components of all course. (Question 7)

Assure that class size for WI courses were capped at 25 to allow more time for both students and faculty to interact, and for faculty to spend more time with each individual students and his/her papers (drafts). (Question 7)

More graduate students and faculty. Both numbers have decreased in our dept while the number of undergrads and administrators has increased. (Question 10)

Smaller classes and better compensation for the instructors are, I think, the chief factors in improving writing instruction; I see nothing wrong with the guidelines. Writing intensive is grading- and conferencing- intensive; large classes and multiple courses (or, in the case of adjuncts, multiple jobs) limit the time an instructor can give to each student. (Question 7)

By limiting literature courses to 30 students, the English Dept makes WI pedagogy possible. If I were to teach a larger WI course, I would need teaching assistants to give students the individual feedback on every written assignment I now provide myself (Question 10)

I wish that I had fewer students. 24 students in a 401 class does not give instructors nearly enough time to give students the individual attention they need. I think a cap of 15-20 would make a huge difference. (Question 10)

Don't pressure us to raise enrollments; don't judge a course principally by how many butts there are in the seats. (Question 10)

Most of our courses are relatively small (capped at 30), so, while grading papers is time consuming, this task is generally manageable and it helps me get to know my students better through what they write. (Question 10)

The smaller the class size, the more effective the course (Question 10)

Library reference staff support (quite good as it is); smaller classes and better compensation would mean more time to devote to each student, and therefore better teaching. (Question 10)

Smaller class size would allow me to provide more extensive guidance and feedback to individual students. (Question 10)

Smaller classes (Question 10)

To be honest, the biggest thing that holds me back is poor funding from the state which caused the department to increase my class size from 20 to 25 several years ago. That caused me to switch to largely multiple choice exams and to reduce the emphasis on writing because it became too time-consuming to grade so many written essays and papers. (Question 10)

Small classes, so I can conference more. Since often writing errors are thinking errors, and lackluster writing can mean superficial thinking, even writing fellows have only limited usefulness. (Question 10)

My department has agreed to limit the class size to 25. This has been extremely helpful. I don't need any additional assistance (Question 10)

By stressing frequent writing assignments in ITAL 503, I have helped my students improve their Italian as well as their organizational skills. The relatively small class size (18, as opposed to 25-27 in ITAL 401) allows me to take the time each paper deserves. If the class were much larger, size would be prohibitive. (I would like, for example, to require very short writing assignments in ITAL 401. But because we are consistently overenrolled, and I have no T.A., it is often impossible.) (Question 11)

The major problem I have is dealing with increasing class size and keeping the intensity of writing as needed to teach this course (Question 11)

Streamlining of committee work: this is a larger issue, not one WI can address, but the recent expectation that faculty serve on (or are placed on, nominated to) numerous dept. and university committees is overwhelming (in terms of workload) and impinges on how much time teachers have for grading in WI courses. (Question 10)

Recognition

I assign (and therefore grade) at least one hand-in assignment a week. This is not recognized, and therefore not valued, by my department/college. If the university is to promote the writing activities suggested by the writing requirement, then colleges need to recognize that faculty members who are serious about the writing component of these course will be investing a lot of time reading papers and giving feedback. Generally, I believe that a WI course is viewed by my college as no different in time-investment than a non-WI course. (Question 10)

Recognition from the authorities of the highest and lowest order at UNH that faculty are putting in extra effort for these classes. A "free lunch" would be nice. (Question 10)

Institutional support. UNH should make it a priority to encourage (and financially enable!) a "culture of writing" on campus. (Question 10)

I would like the university to realize that conference courses are very different than lecture/discussion courses, that to meet with each student once a week for 15 minutes is a HUGE time commitment but that the conferences is critical to student writing success. (Question 10)

Student Preparation

Comments grouped in this section have to do with how well students are—or are not—prepared to do the kinds of writing asked of them at UNH. Some of these comments had to do with students' high school experiences; however, many of them also called for more attention to students' basic skills—and to teacher expectations of students—at UNH. Sub-categories are: Pre-UNH, Basic Skills, Expectations, and Pedagogy.

Pre-UNH

Some students don't write well because they come into the university having never been required to write a paper in high school. Some have really poor study skills, and will not do assigned readings or other assignments unless compelled by some grading consequence (such as a pop quiz, or the necessity to write a graded assignment, in-class, on the reading). Yet, getting students to read well-written essays, articles, editorials, speeches, arguments, etc. is one excellent way to expose them to models of good writing. But, to make students into scholars who can read critically and write well in their discipline, you need to change the culture of the University (and of secondary education), not merely the WI program. As it is, students spend way too much time concerned about matters ultimately irrelevant to their education, and have far

too many distractions (many provided by the University itself) to keep them busy while they are not learning to read, write, and think. On a separate issue, while I generally consider the technological innovation of systems like blackboard to be useful for some teaching problems, it is clearly a mixed blessing. In a large-lecture class (not WI) I require students to write short assignments on the blackboard platform, but both the size of the class, and the mechanisms of the system, discourage any possibility of detailed feedback to students (and, in any case, my experience tells me students often ignore feedback on a writing assignment--unless, again, some element of their grade turns on what they do with that feedback). (Question 11)

Good writing requires both a broad thought process and exposure to reading. The students I find to do the best are those that come, interestingly enough, from private secondary schools. (Question 7)

I don't think the problem is will the guidelines - the problem is with the preparation students receive before they come to UNH. We do our best to plug walls and put out fires. (Question 7)

Basic Skills

The introductory freshman english class should emphasize exclusively expository, non-personal, writing, including thorough training in CITATION and PARTS OF SPEECH/GRAMMAR. Students should emerge with some strict diagnosis of pervasive problems. It is INFURIATING to get students who have proceeded into sophomore or junior year without any sense of what they're doing wrong with writing (Question 7)

I'm not sure what the school offers as far as "remedial" courses, but some of the students I have in my class don't seem to have a grasp of basic grammar. There is little time that I can spend in class helping students with basic skills. Perhaps there should be some form of assessment of first-year students' writing ability and a section or two of very "general skills English" for those who need help getting their writing up to "college level." There are students who just don't seem to understand the very basics, and asking around, I know that students who need more focused help are in nearly every section of the course. (Question 11)

Maybe students need to take a writing intensive course early in their college education. The students have many grammatical errors, such as not knowing when to use a colon vs. a semi-colon, not knowing the difference between "their," "there," and "they're." They write the way that they speak and they do not seem to understand the notion of "formal presentation" in their writing. (Question 7)

It would be enormously helpful in advanced level courses (and 500 level courses as well) if students were given focused writing guidance in the freshman writing course. Grammar is always a problem with most students and is annoying, as are spelling errors and sentence fragments. Another common problem I find is the propensity of students to use overly complex sentence structure and/or unnecessary clauses. I think they do so in an attempt to "sound intelligent." However, it has the opposite effect and detracts from a clear presentation of their ideas. I appreciate the work of the instructors teaching freshman english and wonder how students who are inadequate writers, since they have already been accepted into the university, can gain assistance in their writing. (Question 7)

better preparation of students across the curriculum - it is my observation that UNH students are very weak in their writing skills and need more practice in order to better develop the skills of writing. (Question 10)

Students who come to UNH with better skills - spelling, grammar, the ability to recognize the parts of a sentence. (Question 10)

Students in my class were surprised that I corrected grammar and expected papers to be carefully proofread before being turned in for a grade. This should not come as a surprise to any student. I would have expected this would have been drilled into students' heads sometime in the first 2 - 3 years. Secondly, students seemed to have very little knowledge of formatting papers to make them easier to read and to help achieve a point. Personally, I find informal writing to have some disadvantages that contributed to my decision to do a minimal amount in the class. First, I feel that it provides students with practice for bad

habits, such as lazy spelling, casual punctuation, bullet pointing, etc. Second, it is difficult to structure assignments in my discipline that do not require research. In some disciplines this may not be the case. (Question 7)

A resource to allow students to improve their editing skills. This would need to be a combination of grammar refresher and editing symbol / techniques for beginners. I could then direct students to this resource if I felt they needed help with these skills. (Question 10)

Expectations

Some how increase the overall expectations of students. After I return the first assignment, they will often say, "Oh, you want me to write better? I can do that." What did they think? It is a writing intensive course! (Question 7)

The issue is not guidelines. Although, I do think that all courses should be considered writing intensive. The issue is uniformity of expectations amongst faculty. My course was primarily undergraduate seniors with graduate students. Yet, these students were surprised to see the number and detail of comments on each of their papers. The students reported that their teachers had not graded on writing quality and that they had not received comments like these since ENG 401. Because I graded on quality of writing as well as understanding of the material, the students were initially frustrated by their low grades. (Question 7)

Education of students in composition before they get into my class. Skilled advisors in the Writing Center to provide useful suggestions and guidance to students during the writing and editing process (Question 10)

More basic research paper writing skills in ENGL 401, perhaps two semesters of first year writing course. (Question 7)

Pedagogy

I think requiring a paper topic for your review prior to an assignment and giving the students an option for rewriting one paper and writing an additional paper during the class helps them understand what I am looking for and helps them edit and organize their writing better. Also, using both informal writing-journals and formal papers and exams, as well as papers with specific writing styles assigned (editorial, internal memo to coworkers, etc.) helps them understand how to write to an audience. (Question 7)

I think that faculty in all courses should give feedback on student writing when they turn in written assignments. Revising written work based on instructor feedback needs to be emphasized more (Question 7)

I might let them choose a subject/focus for the class rather than teaching from a reader. I think it always goes better when students have a say in what they are learning. The more invested they are in the subject the more they will probably get out of it. (Question 7)

Writing seems to work best when the student has a specific reason that pertains directly to something that is important to them. In musical theatre they realize that acting and performing requires much more than showing up to rehearse, learning your lines, singing and dancing. They develop each time they attack a role from the sociological and historical background of the character they are portraying. The writing and research become relevant. The assignments become more than assignment they help the actor be stronger in the part. THE difference is very apparent when one looks at a sophomore (who may sing and dance and act) and sees that same performer in their Junior or Senior year. The honesty and characterization is more complete. Many of the musical theatre students are able to compete in summer stock and on national tours because they are a cut above. An example - a young man was auditioning for noted director Hal Prince in the first revival of Cabaret They wanted someone for Cliff. As an undergraduate Brian wasn't the best academic in the department but when it came to a part he did his research and his writing. Eleven finalists men sang for the Mr. Prince and then they began to read. Brian was the third one to read and when he was done he slowly walked to the door and heard al Prince say to the stage manager "send the others home." The stage manager responded "But, Mr. Prince, you haven't heard the others read. Prince's answer "He's the only one that showed any signs of intelligence. He's Cliff." Brian called that day and said You never

would have said that during my undergraduate days - I was a PIA (pain in the...) and I responded. "Yes Brian, but who is more important? Me or Hal Prince. Keeping our capstones, performance objects on a 50-50 basis and a writing intensive is a perfect balance and "fit" for musical theatre students. (Question 11)

I would encourage portfolios, where students keep all their work for the course together, and I would encourage "progressive" writing assignments, from responses to questions to major, independent essays. I would tie oral presentations and written papers together. (Question 7)

Make them better READERS of research and argument; make them better oral presenters and discussers of research and argument; teach them college-level vocabulary; teach remedial grammar and punctuation for writing; make them care about communicating ideas through writing as a relevant aspect of their lives outside of the classroom. (Question 7)

Experience has shown me that ungraded assignments of any type signal to students that they need not take them seriously. They do ungraded assignments without care, simply anticipating that they can implement the instructor's corrections after they receive them. As a result, it seems the instructor at times is working harder on the paper than the student. I also am not convinced that having something written every single week somehow strengthens student writing. The focus, quality, of significance of exercises seem more important, in my judgment, than the frequency of writing along a weekly time scale. (Question 7)

It would be nice if courses other than English 401, particularly those in departments other than English, made the drafting process an important part of their course curriculum. What I hear from students is that, while they get a lot out of the drafting in an introductory writing course, they never use it again. I know that this has led some of their grades to go down in other classes. (Question 7)

First, I would have a public speaking course requirement for everyone who comes to UNH. Being able to write to an audience is the most important skill the students leave 401 with. They learn to focus their writing toward an audience with effective communication as the goal. However, I think that many students aren't comfortable with an audience, aren't sure of the voice they're to use in a formal paper (or even an informal one), and simply aren't prepared to discuss a subject on paper when they are barely willing to discuss verbally. Going along with the speech requirement, the Inquiry class the school is considering is almost a must. In the writing class, we ask students again and again to think critically, to investigate the matter more deeply. But we don't take into account that perhaps they haven't had practice with critical thinking in the past. My own high school didn't prepare me for any type of investigative learning. I went to college ready to "fill in the blanks" and memorize formula after formula. Without several teachers (a writing teacher and an Inquiry teacher, among others) whom I just happened to have in class, I would have never become a writer and certainly wouldn't have had much of a desire to search for answers in the world. I was lucky. I don't think UNH students should "luck" into being critical thinkers. And I don't think they'll get there on their own. Think how much more engaging a later class in economics or biology or English or anything would be if the students were, early on, asked to look at the world always with wide open, critical eyes. Also, I think an emphasis on creative writing in the 401 class could be a real help in opening up the students to new ways of thinking. Being a "newer" teacher, I spend most of my time in class on more formal writing tasks (bibliographies, research papers, etc). And I feel like I can't stray into a more "creative" look at writing because the course is asking me to do too much. This being the only "required" course for each student on campus, it seems that the university thinks this one class can be used to get the students civically involved, make them aware of issues of global importance, teach them about politics--basically to show them that there is a world out there. Which is fine. But we never get to focus on "writing" itself, on the language, on its endless meanings and nuances, how restructuring a sentence can completely change its tone, how that tone drives meaning. And we certainly don't spend much time at looking at writing as something meaningful to the individual, as a lens to look inward, to see where that student's own feet are planted before she looks up and out at the world. And we certainly don't get to see writing as what it can be at its most basic--reflective and expressive and fun. The goal of 401 right now seems to be to give students the tools they can use to be agents in the world--a way they can use the language to get things done, which is fine. However, I think it is of absolute importance for us to not just make students proficient writers so they can use the language to get a better job or do well in written assignments. It's more than that. I would hate to see this as a "skills" course only. It has the potential (if it is allowed to be more creative, more "inward" looking) to be a place where a student discovers just what

she is thinking and why she thinks that way. In my experience, writing has been just as much a part discovery as it has been a means of persuasion. (Question 7)

Resources

Comments in this category call for different kinds of resources, such as faculty workshops that focus on WAC techniques and greater availability of writing fellows, tutors, or TAs. Sub-categories include: Workshops and Collaboration, Writing Center and Writing Fellows, Awareness of WI Guidelines, Technology, Grading and Responding, and TAs and Tutors.

Workshops and Collaboration

A few years back there was a series of terrific speakers (included John Bean) that came to campus and discussed their approaches to using writing in the classroom. This was extremely helpful for me in thinking about how to use writing to engage students in the course material. I would like there to be more faculty training workshops on topics like how to respond to student's work to help me keep refining and improving the WI component of my course. (Question 10)

I could use "writing across the curriculum" support/training/tools. I am struggling to help my students write better while using that writing to engage with course content. (Question 10)

Are there "orienting" sessions? Quite honestly, I do not know. How about an email to all WI professor just before classes begin--offering assistance, how to contact the writing center, etc. (Question 10)
Occasional workshops on techniques and approaches to using writing in various and creative ways. I have attended several since 1995 and have arranged some for our Department faculty, but need to be reminded and need to be taught new ideas regularly. (Question 10)

More faculty communication and sharing of teaching ideas (Question 10)

Faculty development opportunities in the use of writing to learn (Question 10)

I don't think I need any support at this time given the small class size and the guest speakers I have lecture weekly. (Question 10)

The department is doing fine as far as support goes. I have advisors I can go to. I have a group of all the other teachers whom I can talk with (at least every other week) about the course. (Question 10)

1/2 day workshops with other WI teachers (like the Teaching Excellence ones during winter break) that look at crafting assignments, helping students integrate research, etc. (Question 10)

I have taken many, many writing courses in the past, but would welcome a refresher course. (Question 10)

I would like the opportunity/time to observe other instructors in their classrooms. I would like the staff meetings to be more oriented to sharing ways to encourage/facilitate the writing process in the classroom. (Question 10)

Faculty development efforts/activities/opportunities are ALWAYS welcome and useful (especially if accompanied by refreshments). (Question 10)

Active input from staff/colleagues who are skilled in the "writing process." More time in teaching load to allow for the greater amount of time to spend with each student and his/her work (particularly as written works are evolving). Some means to get through to students the importance of writing and of budgeting their time to allow for frequent edits and input during the writing process. (Question 10)

I'd like to know more about the writing training that students get in English 401 so I can use strategies and processes that are familiar to them. I'd also like suggestions on how to use peer feedback on writing in the classroom. (Question 10)

Further support for teaching grammar and the research paper. (Question 10)

Individualized attention to students. And "hands on" writing help and follow-up. (Question 10)

Perhaps some examples of good, and bad writing that can be given to each student at the start of the term. Sample papers that have been extensively "marked-up" can be used to show students who good writing enhances effective communications. (Question 10)

It is embarrassing to say, but I need assistance in improving my own writing. This would improve my teaching of writing skills.

I've had a lot of support in the past, so don't feel a particular need at this point. I'm always interested in talking about how to develop "good" assignments, provide feedback and grade effectively and efficiently. But I think I have a handle on the basics and am confident in my teaching WI courses (Question 10)

I received great support. As a TA, I took a class and spoke with other TAs daily. (Question 10)

Writing Center and Writing Fellows

Writing Fellows can be helpful. There are 106 students in my "writing intensive" course. This makes it somewhat difficult to give individual attention to a student's writing problems. (Question 10)

The Guidelines are fine but we need more resources to support more writing fellows with discipline specific writing assignments. Elliott Gruner is doing great job in the writing center but if writing is important to UNH then it needs to put some more resources behind it. (Question 7)

Consultants (at the writing center, associated with the dept or college, I don't care) who have some scientific background - so are not brought to a screeching halt by the content of my students' papers - and who (at the very least) understand that different disciplines have different writing conventions and genres: MLA style is not the be-all and end-all, and what goes for Psychology doesn't go for all sciences. It would also be nice if writing consultants could help students find other resources, e.g. through Library Reference Dept. web site.

Writing fellow/assistant who is familiar with the writing convention in this particular discipline and can provide individualized help to students who are struggling with writing OR some kind of release time for me to provide such help. (Question 10)

The Writing Fellows program has been invaluable, especially with Gail's help. Without this program as it has been adapted to our needs my course would be much less successful. (Question 10)

I use memo writing as one tool, and I've found the writing center staff not versed in how this is effectively done. They try to teach the students how to write essays, which are very different. (Question 10)

The library and learning center have been most helpful (Question 10)

I have received strong support from the library reference staff. I also have a graduate student learning to teach in the teaching excellence program that will help this semester. Part of what could help is a better understanding from colleagues of how much time it takes to review and provide content and style feedback to students, and therefore how to strike a balance between numbers and time to help students. ONE unlikely but useful option would be to count WI courses as slightly higher in RCM to demonstrate an institutional commitment. I'll hope to use a Writing Fellow soon. (Question 10)

I have found my students do not take advantage of the writing center, even though I strongly recommend it and even write it into the syllabus. I do not know why this is the case, but it would be helpful if they had

practice using the writing center throughout their undergraduate study--especially the non-english majors. (Question 7)

think that more information to share with students about the support that the Writing Center can provide would be helpful. (Question 10)

The Writing Center is a critical resource. I encouraged all my students to go for each major paper this semester, and several did schedule appointments and get the extra help. I may build in extra credit next semester to prompt even more students to use the resource. The biggest "problem areas" I've seen with students is that they do not fully edit or proofread their papers. Having a writing assistant point out areas of confusion with content and/or organization/structure really aids my students in their final papers. Library support is also critical, since at least one of the major papers is research based. (Question 10)

I get it from the Writing Center: WF's to give regular support in consulting with students before assignments are handed in; WC readiness to help students. I suppose that WC staff could be stricter in warning students about pervasive problems -- sometimes I think they're too generous in reading for underlying content. (Question 10)

In this Honors section, the students were all good writers. When dealing in other classes with students who have serious difficulties with writing technique, the support of the Writing Center is crucial. I often advise students to go there, and I expect them to get help with basic technique if they do so. (Question 10)

Writing fellow (Question 10)

It would be useful to have a few writing consultants (or teaching assistants) who can help with individual and group conferences as well as small group workshops and grading. (Question 10)

Writing fellows (Question 10)

I have referred some of my students to the Writing Center. This works well. (Question 10)

The student fellow was excellent in providing student access to consultations about both technical and style issues in writing. (Question 10)

UNH Manchester offers excellent support for teaching WI courses. I had a class-linked peer tutor from the Learning Center who attended classes, facilitated small-group and whole-class discussion, and met with students for conferences outside of class. He also worked with the librarian to prepare and conduct a presentation on library resources and research strategies. There are also awards and honors which recognize distinguished student writing. (Question 10)

As I reviewed the guidelines, I was relieved to see that the expectation is not that faculty will correct every bit of poor grammar/sentence structure, etc but can refer students to the Writing Center. I have only a small number of students but I spend much time on reading and correcting papers. I was not sure how faculty could handle larger WI classes. (Question 11)

I think all Inquiry courses should be writing intensive and/or paired with an ENG 401 course and they should receive priority for writing fellows. (Question 11)

I really enjoyed the writing fellow, he made an important and significant contribution to the course. The only negative feedback I received was that I should have made weekly meetings with him mandatory. Thanks for the contribution to our pro-seminar. (Question 11)

The support of the Writing Center is great. I don't feel that I need any additional support at present. (Question 10)

More mentoring between the Writing Program staff and professors/instructors about innovative ways they can include writing in their courses (Question 7)

More time. Commenting on papers is time consuming. If the resources were available, assigning a consultant to each course would be helpful. That way, we would have a direct connection to the Writing Center, and could send students over to a person who understood the class objectives and the assignment requirements. (Question 10)

Awareness of WI guidelines

I did not know the writing intensive guidelines existed. This would have been helpful. (Question 10)

I would leave them pretty much as they are. They may need to be better understood by the faculty. (Question 7)

I was not aware that my course had been designated a Writing Intensive Course until I received the evaluation materials. This is the third time I have taught the course, but only the first time I have received surveys associated with the Writing Intensive program. Therefore, the first thing I would do is make sure all faculty teaching such courses are informed about this BEFORE the semester begins and provided with the relevant documentation about requirements and supports available. (Question 7)
no change, except make information more widely available to non-professor type faculty (Question 7)

Requirements are fine, but need to be more publicized to the faculty (Question 7)

I am new here, and did not realize the course was writing intensive. I guess I would like to see the guidelines. I think in the craziness of getting going, I just designed the course and started teaching. Fortunately, the class had a lot of writing. Next year I will be more conscious of this. (Question 7)

Since I have not seen them, I cannot comment upon them. What I state above, however, is how I want writing and the writing process to be parts of my course. Naturally, I hope that I am able to influence my students' writing habits, even in some small way. (Question 7)

Technology

For the first time, I used "chats" through Blackboard for informal writing/conversation between students outside of class (1/2 hour per week). I would like to know more about the multi-uses of informal writing, and very informal writing, and how this becomes integrated into the course material. (Question 11)

The University might consider putting a basic writing handbook on-line. Students should be encouraged to ask for help from their teachers before turning to the Writing Center. (Question 10)

I would like to hold regular classes, like twice per month, in the computer lab. The number of computers and computer labs is relatively small on this campus and integrating it into the curriculum would help students. In addition, it would be nice if some of the techniques and practices from 401 explicitly carried over into other classes, like drafting, how to analyze texts, incorporating sources into writing, etc. (Question 10)

A computer lab for English 401. Internet access in my office (Question 10)

It would be very helpful to have a computer-based program for making comments and including grammar and other notations in students papers: something where I can insert notes into a student's emailed document, then email it back to them, rather than printing it out and scribbling in between the lines and in the margins. Does such a program exist? Is it available on Blackboard? (Question 10)

A writing lab, with 24 computers, set up mainly for English 401 use. A place where I could regularly sign up my students (once or twice a month) for "hands on" composition and feedback would be wonderfully useful. (Question 10)

Checking for plagiarism software (Question 10)

If Blackboard were more reliable, I might consider using it, so working on that reliability would be one suggestion. VERY consistent guidelines about how proper citation and documentation of sources is taught

in English 401 would also be useful--I would like to be able to rely on a very firm, explicit foundation of skills in my classes on that issue, and what I find is that the skill levels vary much too widely. (Question 10)

Writers have individual difficulties; to work with each student requires more time and/or more assistance (Question 7)

Grading and Responding

More time and/or assistance in reading and assessing student writing. (Question 10)

Assistance with grading papers. (Question 10)

Help with volume of grading/reading papers and giving feedback (Question 10)

enough time to do all the grading (Question 10)

TIME...to read, correct, guide, help with revision, etc.... (Question 10)

help with grading (Question 10)

Grading support -- more workshops / group sessions on the kinds of comments that have proven effective in responding to and evaluating student essays (what these comments look like, sound like); how to make grading / comments both useful for the students and more efficient for teachers. (Question 10)

Teaching assistants to help students review and revise their papers. (Question 10)

Teaching Assistant enables me to cut the work in half. I do think the professor should do half the grading in order to stay in touch with the students. (Question 10)

Help grading the graded writing, which accounts for the majority of written assignments (Question 10)

Do not know. This was my first time teaching one. I would love to have had help with the grading or perhaps the ability to have someone else grade for grammar (rather than content). (Question 10)

TAs and Tutors

Tutor to help the weaker students (e.g. some freshmen) with grammar issues (Question 10)

more time for individual conferences; a teaching assistant or tutor to work individually with students (Question 10)

I'm not sure - the right kind of readers/graders would probably be most helpful. (Question 10)

First, teach the graduate students better and let them teach the undergrads...this will allow for more writing intensive labs. (Question 7)

I'm ok as long as I have adequate TA support. (Question 10)

Appendix G: WI Program Comparative Review

Executive Summary. This report compares the writing program requirement at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) to ten peer institutions. UNH's writing requirement meets or exceeds the requirements of its five peer institutions in New England and of two peer institutions in other regions. One West Coast peer institution surpasses UNH in its assessment of student writing performance, yet it does not offer more learning resources for students and faculty than UNH does. Two other peer institutions outside New England offer innovative, well-developed writing programs that might inspire continued positive development at UNH such as:

- Consider a two-tier writing requirement
- Limit class size in writing intensive or writing-in-the-major courses
- Make departments responsible for developing specific writing outcomes and implementation and assessment plans that integrate general, University-wide writing requirements
- Create a mechanism for continual program review
- Position the Writing Program as resource and clearinghouse for writing initiatives
- Expand faculty development opportunities
- Offer 600- or 700-level writing courses

A Review of Writing Intensive Requirements at UNH Peer Institutions

Joleen Hanson

Overview. The mission of every land grant institution like UNH is closely tied to the communication skills of its graduates. Student writing skills are a perennial focus of attention. All ten of the institutions identified as most comparable to UNH by the Office of Institutional Research have made choices about how to ensure that students develop effective writing skills. A few include requirements for speaking skills also. Most have specified performance requirements that students must demonstrate in order to graduate.

The institutions with writing requirements most similar to UNH's are the University of Connecticut and the University of Maine, both New England land grant schools. Two other similar but smaller New England institutions, the University of Rhode Island (URI) and the University of Vermont (UVM), have considered and rejected requiring writing intensive courses. The remaining six comparable institutions all take a two-tiered approach to writing instruction, requiring students to enroll in a lower division writing course or courses, followed by an upper division or a "Writing in the Major" course or program. Two of these institutions have developed and assessed innovative programs that UNH might wish to emulate: Oregon State University and North Carolina State University at Raleigh. Washington State University (WSU) also has a well-articulated two-tiered program focused on writing proficiency requirements and ambitious testing protocols that include timed exams and a writing portfolio. WSU's program would be difficult to replicate efficiently.

The following report will present a summary comparison of these ten benchmark institutions to UNH's current writing requirement, review the reasons why two of UNH's closest neighbors have rejected WI courses, and discuss in detail the unique features of the programs at Oregon State and NC State.

Comparison of UNH and Ten Peer Institutions. As shown in Table 2, only half of the institutions require writing intensive courses. UNH is the only peer institution that does not limit class size in writing intensive courses (See Table 3). All of the peer institutions have Writing Centers (see Table 2) and offer faculty workshops and other resources to support teaching writing (see Table 4).

Institutions Without Writing Intensive Courses

Both UVM and URI offer a range of writing courses, but neither has a university-wide writing intensive requirement, nor a required first year writing course. UVM, the smallest institution, has recently hired a “senior writing-in-the-disciplines” faculty member to provide guidance to the first year seminar courses and to lead the colleges through a process for ensuring that their students have a curricular focus on writing in both the first year and the senior year. Nancy Welch reports that in the past, departments across the university all had faculty “very much dedicated to multi-draft assignments and relying on writing as much as or more than on multiple choice testing. Since 1998, however, class sizes in these disciplines have grown by 25 percent or even 50 percent, making it virtually impossible for these faculty to continue working with students on writing.” She sees class size, not a WI designation, as the key to boosting writing in sophomore and junior classes.

URI had a small number of WI courses that became obsolete after a revision of the university’s general education requirements. The new general education requirements made “writing effectively” one of the eight integrated skill areas that all courses have to include to be approved. Each course is required to integrate 3 skill areas. Nedra Reynolds estimates that there are well over one hundred courses that attend to “writing effectively.” She notes, “We like this change because it makes all faculty responsible for the teaching of writing.” This approach is also consistent with the URI’s policy of allowing the greatest latitude possible in course selection. Undergraduate writing tutors and consultants serve faculty and students in all disciplines, and the College Writing Program offers a course and field experience to train them.

The philosophy of expecting all faculty members to teach writing only seems manageable at smaller institutions with the capacity to limit class size in courses across the curriculum. Most of the larger institutions in this survey specify particular kinds of courses in their writing requirements, either writing intensive courses or, more commonly, writing-in-the-major courses.

Two Model Programs

Innovative writing programs at Oregon State and NC State developed out of program evaluations and the resulting revisions to the Baccalaureate Core Requirements (Oregon State) and General Education Requirements (NC State). Currently, UVM and the University of Delaware, like UNH, have begun a period of program review, assessment, and potentially change. NC State and Oregon State provide instructive models for institutions considering change.

North Carolina State University at Raleigh⁵

The Campus Writing and Speaking Program (CWSP) at NC State was established in July 1997 as the university was revising its General Education Requirements for writing, speaking

⁵ Much of the text in this section is taken from the NC State website <<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/CWSP/index.html>>

and information literacy. The CWSP provides leadership in developing upper-level courses and other programmatic experiences that help students throughout the university write and speak competently in the disciplines. The program is housed within the Center for Information Society Studies, a research-driven center in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and it is advised by an interdisciplinary Campus Writing and Speaking Board.

The most remarkable feature of NC State's program is the focus on curriculum design and evaluation at the college and department level. Colleges are scheduled on a five-year plan to work with CWSP in developing writing and speaking outcomes, implementation plans, and assessment plans. These cycles are on-going; programmatic portfolio reviews, which are required by the institution on a seven-year cycle, mandate a section on curricular progress in the area of writing and speaking. CWSP consultations with undergraduate coordinators and other faculty from selected departments aid in the ongoing cycle of curriculum development and assessment. Outcomes development programs for 21 colleges at NC State are available online at <<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/CWSP/outcomes.html>>.

Colleges and departments have flexibility in determining how they will implement the writing and speaking requirement in upper-level courses. The CWSP has provided guidelines that describe two general and overlapping purposes for writing and speaking in upper-division courses: (1) to engage students in the thinking that defines a discipline of study and (2) to guide students in the mastery of the professional discourses of a field of employment. Two kinds of courses are suggested for meeting these purposes, each defined by the amount of writing and speaking involved in the course and the way writing and speaking are used: (1) writing-intensive courses and (2) courses in which students use writing and speaking primarily to learn course material. While the CWSP offers resources, including models of different kinds of WI courses, the colleges and individual departments have the responsibility for determining how they will meet the university-wide speaking and writing requirements. Each one can design the outcomes, implementation plans, and assessment plans that fit the peculiarities of their discipline.

Oregon State University⁶

As at NC State, Oregon State's writing program depends on academic departments to develop and assess their own specific learning outcomes that meet university-wide requirements. As part of the Baccalaureate Core requirements, all Oregon State students must take an upper division writing intensive course in their major. In 1989 the Writing Intensive Curriculum (WIC) Program was created to support departments across the university and individual faculty proposing and teaching these writing intensive courses. Departments regularly assess the effectiveness of their WIC offerings and make changes where appropriate. The WIC director works with departments as needed.

Resources that support WIC. The WIC program has a half-time director who also teaches in the English Department. WIC is a university program; it is part of Undergraduate Academic Programs and shares office space and a secretary with the Center for Writing and Learning, whose Writing Center is key to helping student writers across the curriculum. The WIC director receives advice from the Writing Advisory Board, a body of the Faculty Senate that oversees all Baccalaureate Core writing courses, and the WIC Advisory Committee, a group of senior faculty from across the university who teach WIC courses

History of WIC. By 1993-94, each department offering an undergraduate major had developed and gained approval of at least one WIC course in the major. The first Oregon

⁶ Much of the text in this section is taken from the Oregon State website <<http://wic.oregonstate.edu/>>

State students required to fulfill the WIC requirement graduated in June 1994. An exit survey of graduating seniors in 1999 indicated that students were highly satisfied with their WIC courses and rated the knowledge and skill gained in WIC as important for their future success.

Over 125 courses across eleven colleges have earned WIC designation. Each course proposal submitted for review includes: a full syllabus for the course; copies of writing assignments; information on how students will use writing as a mode of learning, receive writing instruction and be given opportunities to revise; and information on how the course will meet the 5000 word writing requirement for each student. Approximately 275 faculty have taken the introductory faculty seminar (offered twice annually since 1990), and 50 have taken the advanced faculty seminar (offered alternate years since 1995). Departments regularly assess the effectiveness of their WIC offerings and make changes where appropriate. The WIC director works with departments as needed

Online WIC Resources. One innovation of the WIC program unique to Oregon State is that a number of departments have designed and published writing guides for their discipline so that students will better understand what is expected of them as writers in that department. These guides were created with the assistance of a WIC development grant and with help from the WIC director. They are available online at http://wic.oregonstate.edu/wic_dept_writ_guides.html.

College Writing Profiles are available through the WIC newsletter website at http://wic.oregonstate.edu/wic_newsletter.html. These writing profiles (in .PDF format) were compiled based on the WIC course syllabi and writing assignments submitted for Oregon State Baccalaureate Core Committee review during 2001-03. Each profile contains listings of (1) the reviewed WIC courses in that college, (2) the average number of words written by students in that college's WIC courses, (3) types of both informal and formal writing assignments used in that college's WIC courses, and (4) ways that students in that college's WIC courses receive feedback on their writing and instruction in the writing process

Recommendations. UNH's Writing Program already includes elements common to the writing programs at peer institutions: university-wide expectations for student writing development, interdisciplinary leadership, a Writing Center, student writing consultants, an on-line writing lab, faculty development opportunities, and a sequence of writing courses. UNH is the only institution that does not limit class size in writing intensive or writing-in-the-major courses; this should be considered.

Most of the larger peer institutions have instituted a two-tier writing requirement that distinguishes requirements for first year and general education courses from the requirements for upper-level courses. The smaller peer institutions (URI and UVM) are seeking to maintain an emphasis on writing in most, if not all, courses offered. As a growing institution, UNH may benefit from focusing on a two-tier writing requirement which would only be a slight transition from the current focus on a specific number of writing intensive courses. In addition, the program could expand the selection of writing courses to include one or more upper level writing courses (600 or 700 level).

The UNH Writing Program might also consider implementing the innovative features common to both the NC State and Oregon State models. The first would be to delegate to academic departments and colleges the responsibility for formulating specific writing outcomes and implementing and assessing specific curriculum plans that integrate general, University-wide writing requirements. Related to this, the role of the Writing

Program would be to guide and assist the work of the departments and colleges. It would function as a resource and clearinghouse rather than as a designer or manager of all writing courses or as an enforcer of writing requirements. The mandate for incorporating writing into the curriculum needs to come from university-wide faculty and administrative coalitions, such as a Faculty Senate. Finally, the UNH Writing Program could help the University develop a mechanism for ensuring continuing, periodic review of college and departmental writing outcomes, implementation plans and assessment plans. A static program will always be obsolete; the university needs to plan for on going program renewal.

Table 1. Ten Peer Institutions (ranked according to number of undergraduate students)

School (acronym)	No. of undergrads
University of Vermont (UVM)	8,784
University of Maine (UMO)	11,400 ⁷
<i>University of New Hampshire (UNH)</i>	<i>11,529</i>
University of Rhode Island (URI)	11,546
Oregon State University (OSU)	15,713
University of Connecticut at Storrs (UConn)	16,112
University of Delaware (UD)	16,350
Washington State University at Pullman (WSU)	18,600
University of Massachusetts at Amherst (UMass)	19,394
North Carolina State University at Raleigh (NC State)	22,870
University of Colorado at Boulder (CU)	24,223

⁷ Total student population.

Table 2. Writing Requirements at Peer Institutions

School	WI Course Requirement		Other Required Writing Courses	Supporting Resources
	#	Type		
UVM	0	--	First year and senior year writing experiences	Senior Writing-in-the –Disciplines faculty position; Writing Center
UMO	2	1 in major	First year composition	Writing Center
UNH	3	1 in major; 1 at 600 level	First year composition	Writing Center; Online Writing Lab
URI	0	--	2 in communication, one must be a writing course	Writing Center; Undergraduate Writing Fellows Program; College Writing Program offers first year, advanced, and graduate writing courses
OSU	1	In major	First year writing course (Writing I), plus two upper level courses (Writing II or III)	Center for Writing and Learning; Online Writing Lab; Online Departmental Writing Guides and College Writing Profiles
UConn*	2	1 in major	First year writing seminar (Writing requirements revised in 2005)	Writing Center
UD	0		First year composition; some colleges require a second writing course	Writing Center; Plan to implement speaking and writing requirements
WSU	2	Both are writing-in-the-major courses	First year composition (Tier I), plus a Tier II course in writing or speech; writing exams in first year and mid-career; writing portfolio	Writing Resource Center; Online Writing Lab; Critical thinking rubric
UMass	Available, not required		First year composition; Junior year writing program	Writing Center; Adaptable grading criteria grids for evaluating writing in different departments
NC State	Available, not required		First year composition course, plus a second course in writing, speech or foreign language, plus upper level requirements that vary by department	Writing and Speaking tutorial services in person and online; 21 program outcome plans available online

*requirements for the College of Arts and Sciences

Table 3. Guidelines for Writing Intensive or “Tier 2” Writing-in-the-Major Courses

School	Enrollment Limit	Guided Revision	Minimum % of Course Grade Based on Writing	Amount of Writing	Types of Writing	Other
UMO	25	Yes	“Substantial”	Not specified	Not specified	
UNH	None	Yes	50%	“Substantial”	Informal (ungraded) and polished (graded)	
OSU	20-25	For graded writing	30%, with 25% based on individual writing	5,000 words total; 2,000 words of polished, revised writing	Informal (ungraded) and polished (graded); One assignment on a controversial topic requiring documentation of outside sources	Must focus on a discipline and be taught by disciplinary faculty; Must discuss professional writing practices
UConn	19	Yes	Students must pass writing requirements to pass the course	15 pages of revised, edited writing	Informal (ungraded) and polished (graded)	Explicit writing instruction required
UD	25	Highly recommended	Not specified	5,000 words (300 formal)	Informal (ungraded) and polished (graded)	Explicit writing instruction required
WSU ²	35	Yes	30%	At least 2 assignments; length reflects disciplinary expectations	Disciplinary writing	Must be taught by faculty in the discipline

¹Proposed Guidelines

² Guidelines for Writing-in-the-Major courses

Table 4. Support For Faculty Teaching WI or Tier 2 Courses

Institution	Faculty Development
UVM	Center for Teaching and Learning offers workshops (not necessarily about writing) and support for using technology
UMO	Center for Teaching Excellence, begun in 1999, has sponsored an intensive 2-day workshop on teaching writing for WI faculty with follow-up session 4 months later
UNH	Periodic workshops; Writing Fellows
URI	The Undergraduate Writing Consultants Program serves faculty in all disciplines.
OSU	Center for Writing and Learning provides: 1. Introductory and advanced, multidisciplinary faculty seminars held weekly for 5 weeks. At the end faculty have “concrete plans for changes in their courses” and receive an honorarium (\$250). 2. Weekly lunch seminars in spring, and periodic workshops often focused on technology/distance learning
UConn	The Writing Center is part of the Institute for Teaching and Learning. The Writing Center offers: 1. A summer orientation workshop 2. A spring semester series of 1.5 hour workshops with refreshments. Faculty can attend one or more than one. 3. Online resources, including an archive of past workshops 4. “W” course teaching orientation for new grad student TAs 5. Support for designing W courses including individual consultation and advice from a collaborative team of English and Animal Science professors on creating effective writing assignments and responding to writing
UD	PROPOSED: Faculty workshops with stipend
WSU	Periodic workshops offered throughout the year.
UMass	The Writing Program provides 1. A nationally-recognized teacher-education program for its staff of graduate student teaching associates 2. An annual spring conference, with free lunch, for junior year writing program instructors and representatives 3. A consultation service. 4. Online resources
NC State	The Campus Writing and Speaking Program (CWSP) collaborates with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. The CWSP provides faculty workshops, faculty grants, and faculty seminars.
CU	Office of Teaching Effectiveness does not specifically mention support for writing instruction