

TEACHING WITH WRITING

THE OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY WRITING INTENSIVE CURRICULUM (WIC) NEWSLETTER

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Pre/Views: Read This Issue!

By Vicki Tolar Burton

Would you like to know what writing experiences students have in your college? Read this issue of *Teaching With Writing*. Are you wondering how your college compares to other colleges at OSU in the teaching of writing? Read this issue. Are you just ready for some good news in the midst of dismal budget predictions from Salem? Read this issue. I think you will be impressed with the quality and variety of experiences student writers are having at OSU.

When all the Writing Profiles contained in this issue were completed, it felt like Christmas. Why? Because of the richness and diversity and creativity that is reflected in these documents. Also because of the commitment to teaching and learning that is evident on every page. Our students are writing—often and in many different ways—and our faculty are committed to helping them improve as writers. This is something to celebrate.

I also want to commend the members of the Faculty Senate Baccalaureate Core Committee, and especially their chair, John Lee (Mathematics), for the serious thought and careful consideration they gave to reviewing these eighty-four WIC courses. This was an incredibly labor-intensive task. Committee mem-

A Report on the State of Writing at OSU: College Writing Profiles, 2001

By Vicki Tolar Burton

As you will see in this issue of *Teaching With Writing*, the recent Baccalaureate Core Committee review of Writing Intensive (WIC) courses has born abundant fruit: We now have a detailed picture of the writing experiences of OSU students in their majors as reflected in the syllabi and assignments of over eighty WIC courses across the university. The courses reviewed were those approved before 1996, which includes about two thirds of all WIC courses.

This issue of *Teaching With Writing* includes a Writing Profile for each college that offers an undergraduate major. These profiles were compiled from the syllabi and writing assignments submitted by departments for Bac Core Committee review. With the assistance of three student assistants trained in the teaching of writing, the WIC director has reviewed all the course materials to create a picture of how writing is being taught in each college of the university that has undergraduate majors. Each profile includes:

- WIC courses in the college reviewed by the Bac Core Committee
- Average number of words written by students in WIC courses in the college
- Types of informal writing used to learn course content
- Types of formal writing assignments (often going through at least one revision)
- Ways that students receive feedback on their writing, and
- Ways that students experience and gain instruction in the writing process.

These College Writing Profiles depict a varied and complex picture of student writing at Oregon State University, a picture that suggests our students are gaining rich and diverse experiences in writing across the disciplines and across professions. The profiles indicate that OSU writers are learning to give and receive feedback, to revise and polish their writing, and to use writing as a mode of learning course content.



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Agriculture ~ Writing Profile

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College of Agriculture WIC classes require an average of 8000 words (32 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5000 to 16,000 words.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Directed freewrites and freewrites to generate class discussion
- ◆ Daily responses to homework or reading
 - “Provide a summary of a reading assignment from the text that is not covered in lecture, report of a field trip or lab tour, or summarize difficult lecture material.” (CSS 315)
- ◆ Microthemes
 - “Respond to a question or comment on a concept, video or other material presented in class. They write their responses on a 3”x 4” card during a 5-minute period in class.” (FW 497)
- ◆ Rhetorical précis of course readings
 - Structured paragraphs (similar to the rhetorical précis)
- ◆ Outlines of papers or projects
- ◆ Write-and-pass
- ◆ Journals
 - “Students write one or two pages weekly on topics directly related to the assigned text. Students must show a basic understanding of the assigned material.” (AG 421)
- ◆ Discussion entries on class list-serve (Blackboard site)
- ◆ Brainstorming
 - “We start all assignments with brainstorm sessions. We explore all the possible ways to approach the subject, discuss format, and weigh strengths and weaknesses of various ideas.” (HORT 418)

WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001

- AG 421 Leadership Development
- AREC461 Agricultural and Food Policy Issues
- CSS 315 Nutrient Management and Cycling
- CSS/HORT 480 Case Studies in Cropping Systems Management
- FW 481 Wildlife Ecology
- FW 497 Aquaculture
- HORT 311 Plant Propagation

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Meeting minutes
- ◆ Self-assessment narrative
 - “Critically analyze your personality by describing how the positive personality traits you possess can work to your advantage when leading people and when you would use them. In addition, you are also asked to describe a not-so-positive personality trait that you possess and how that could work against you...” (AG 421)
- ◆ Problem-solving exercise
 - “Power Point presentation
- ◆ Interview transcription
 - Policy paper
 - Position brief
 - Lab report
- ◆ Case study
 - Expository report/research paper or project
 - Formal abstract
 - Memoranda
 - Proposal for paper or research
 - Thesis

Writing as a Process

- HORT 418 GolfCourse Maintenance
- RNG 403 Senior Thesis
- (FST 423)

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor's written response (with or without a grade)
- ◆ Conferences with instructor
- ◆ Peer review (in groups or with partners), review sheets
- ◆ Student models of properly written assignments
- ◆ Writing Center

Food Science & Technology was included in the review, but no materials were submitted by the department.)



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Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum College of Business ~ Writing Profile

The College of Business WIC class requires 6,000 words (24 pages) of writing per student,
including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Write-and-pass
- ◆ Directed free-writes
- “Students might be asked to briefly write up an argument for and against an unrelated diversification corporate strategy and then for and against a related diversification strategy. This exercise would then serve as the basis for a discussion.” (BA 469)

WIC classes reviewed by the

Baccalaureate Core
Committee 2001

BA 469

Strategic Management
and Business Policy

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Case studies
- ◆ Article summary

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor written response (with or without a grade)
- ◆ Peer review (in groups or with partners)
- ◆ Writing Center

Writing as a Process

- ◆ Models of properly written assignments
- ◆ Feedback on one paper applied to the next paper
- ◆ Website on frequent errors as resource



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum College of Engineering ~ Writing Profile

College of Engineering WIC classes require an average of 6,750 words (27 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 6000 to 7000 words.

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Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Directed freewrites to generate class discussion
- ◆ Lab observations and notebooks
 - "Students are required to keep laboratory notebooks every day that they are in class. This is a professional skill needed by all scientists and engineers. It is the way students record what they are learning." (CHE 414)
- ◆ Self-assessment narratives
 - "Bi-weekly project correspondence is used to communicate project status and individual needs among team members and to faculty." (IE 497-498)

WIC classes reviewed by the

**Baccalaureate Core
Committee 2001**

- CHE 414**
 - Chemical
 - Engineering Lab
- CS 361**
 - Fundamentals
 - of Software
 - Engineering
- IE 497-498**
 - Industrial
 - Engineering
 - Analysis
 - and Design

Formal Writing Assignments

- WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001**
 - ◆ Product prototype
 - ◆ Business plan
 - ◆ Safety report
 - ◆ Technical report
 - ◆ Funding proposal
 - ◆ Project proposal
 - "The purpose of the team proposal is consensus building toward what the team thinks it is supposed to accomplish during the term." (IE 497/498)
 - ◆ Project notebook
 - ◆ User manual
- CS 361**
 - "The purpose of this manual is to explain the features of this program and how to use them to prospective end-users of the system. The manual should focus on what users see and what they do rather than the internal details of how the program works." (IE 496/498)

Writing as Process

- (ECE 441/442/443**
 - Engineering Design
 - Project was included in the review, but no materials were submitted by the department.)



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Forestry ~ Writing Profile

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College of Forestry WIC classes require 35-40 pages of writing per student, through multiple drafts, over three terms.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Literature reviews
- ◆ Problem statement
- ◆ Problem methodology
- ◆ Progress report

WIC classes
reviewed by the
Baccalaureate Core
Committee 2001

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor written response (with or without a grade)
- ◆ Conferences with instructor
- ◆ In-class discussion of writing
- ◆ Writing Center

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Proposals
 - “We try to get the students to consider themselves as employees trying to convince their supervisor about the value of a project” (FP 412)
- ◆ Expository (researched) papers/projects
 - “The foci of the course are critical thinking and strong technical writing skills (approximately 50% of the course grade is based upon written assessments)” (FP 413)

FP 411

Forest Products
Projects I

FP 412

Forest Products
Projects II

FP 413

Forest Products
Projects III

FOR 460

Forest Policy

Writing as a Process

- ◆ Revision, multiple revision



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum College of Health and Human Performance Writing Profile

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College of Health and Human Performance WIC classes require an average of 5,200 words (21 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5,000 to 5,600 words.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ♦ Daily responses to homework or reading
- ♦ Summaries of reading assignments
- ♦ Directed freewrites
- ♦ Freewrites to generate class discussions
- ♦ Two-paragraph summaries of journal articles
- ♦ Preparing questions for upcoming speakers
- ♦ Defining broad terms
- ♦ Developmental writing exercises
- ♦ “While some of these are aimed at getting students familiar and comfortable with writing (in general), others are aimed at identifying ‘common errors’ in student writing, appropriate referencing, professional ethics, peer review, reflective writing, etc.” (H 440)

WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001

- EXSS 481**
Analysis of Critical Issues in EXSS
- H 440**
Environmental Health
- H 476**
Planning Health Programs

Formal Writing Assignments

- ♦ Publishable scholarly article
 - ♦ “Each student selects where he/she would most like to publish his/her work (e.g., local newspaper, professional journal). Students locate publication guidelines, etc., and consider their topic in relation to the audience for whom they are writing.” (EXSS 481)
 - ♦ Expository report (researched report)
 - ♦ “Apply current technical information found in journals and reports, and be able to interpret and communicate this in an understandable way to the public.” (H 440)
 - ♦ Memoranda
 - ♦ Journal
 - ♦ Grant proposal
 - ♦ “This assignment provides opportunities to develop writing skills that are essential for developing interventions, applying for funding, and communicating the needs of selected groups and subgroups of society who are less well represented.” (H 476)
 - ♦ Cumulative project (proposal, lit review, drafts, final)

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ♦ Peer review
- ♦ Instructor’s written comments (with or without a grade)
- ♦ Writing Center

Writing as a Process

- ♦ Cumulative project (proposal, lit review, drafts, final)
- ♦ Revision, multiple revision
- ♦ Brainstorming
- ♦ Reliving your writing experience
- ♦ “As quickly as you can, write down how you went about doing the writing assignment. What did you do to prepare yourself to write? Where did you do your writing? Why did you choose to write about the topic you did?” (EXSS 481)
- ♦ Writer’s Success Journal (EXSS 481)



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Home Economics & Education ~ Writing Profile

College of Home Economics and Education WIC classes require an average of 5,666 words (24 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5000 to 7000 words.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Daily responses to homework or reading (directed freewrites)
“The informal writing assignments often form the basis for small group or class discussions.” (AIHM 370)
- ◆ Microthemes (short narrative responses to directed questions)
- ◆ Brainstorming (for project/paper topics)
- ◆ Summaries of textbook topics
- ◆ Critiques of writing samples
“Students read several problem statements that were examples of various strengths and weaknesses in writing. Then, given specific criteria for evaluation, the students write a brief critique of each problem statement. These exercises provide the instructor with the opportunity to ‘correct’ problems during the process of learning, rather than attempting to address such problems after the product has already been completed.” (HDFS 461)
- ◆ Short case studies
- ◆ Sentence style exercises

WIC classes reviewed by the

Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001

- ◆ AIHM 370
Textile and Apparel Market Analysis
- ◆ HDFS 461
Individual and Family Policies and Programs II
- ◆ NFM 416
Cultural Aspects of Food

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Publishable scholarly article
- ◆ Marketing plan report
“Students practice synthesizing and drawing conclusions from information acquired from reference materials and trade publications.” (AIHM 370)
- ◆ Lab report
“Reports are to be written in the style of a research journal article . . . Thus, they experience what it is like to prepare a professional research article.” (NFM 419)
- ◆ Grant proposal
“Each section of the program proposal is treated as an independent assignment, even though the sections are eventually combined to create the proposal in its entirety.” (HDFS 461)

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor's written response (with or without a grade)
- ◆ Conference with instructor
- ◆ Peer review (in groups or with partners), review sheets
- ◆ Required Writing Center consultations

Writing as a Process

- ◆ Departmental Writing Guide (AIHM, HDFS)
- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Revision, multiple revision
“Students write and revise multiple drafts of each of the seven sections that constitute the finished program proposal. The students base their revisions on feedback attained from mandatory visits to the Writing Center and mandatory conferences with the course instructor. The students have the opportunity to revise even further when they turn in the final draft of the proposal in its entirety.” (HDFS 461)



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Liberal Arts: Humanities /Fine Arts ~ Writing Profile

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CLA Humanities & Fine Arts WIC classes require an average of 5,433 words (22 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5000 to 10,400 words.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Outlines of papers, projects
 - ◆ Drafts of papers, projects
 - ◆ Daily responses to homework or reading
 - ◆ Directed freewrites
 - ◆ Reading response journals
 - ◆ Rhetorical précis of course readings
 - ◆ Summaries of reading assignments
 - ◆ Microthemes (short narrative responses to directed questions)
 - ◆ Write-and-Pass
 - ◆ WritePair/Share
 - ◆ Handout on a scholarly journal
 - ◆ “Review issues for past three years; identify hot topics, hot authorities, scope, audience” (WR 411)
 - ◆ Daily Oral Language (grammatical sentence exercises)
 - ◆ Concert reports
 - ◆ Score studies
- “Writing should demonstrate a deeper degree of personal exploration and intellectual awareness of the music” (MUS 325)
- ◆ Notes for oral presentations

WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001

COMM 422 Small Group Communication	FR 439 Francophone Studies
	GER 411 Fourth Year German
COMM 456 Rhetoric 500 BC - 500 AD	HST 407 Seminar
	MUS 324 History of Western Music
COMM 458 Rhetoric 500 AD-1900 AD	MUS 325 History of Western Music
	SPAN 438 Selected Topics in Luso-Hispanic Culture
COMM 464 Rhetorical Criticism	TA 332 History of the Theater
	ENG/AMS 407 Seminar
	ENG 431 John Milton
	ENG 445 Studies in Non-Fiction
	ENG 452 Studies in Film
	WR 411 The Teaching of Writing
	WR 453 Rhetorical Tradition and Teaching of Writing
	ENG 470 Studies in Poetry
	ENG 480 Studies in Literature, Culture, and Society
	WR 495 Introduction to Literacy Studies

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Expository (researched) report
“Writing about music entails a complex mix of analytical and interpretive skills coupled with the ability to express in words the essence of aural events” (MUS 324)
- ◆ Research paper/project
- ◆ Publishable scholarly article
- ◆ Cumulative project (proposal, literature review, drafts, final)
- ◆ Portfolio of previous work within the course
- ◆ Autobiography as a reader and writer
- ◆ Reading journal
- ◆ Translation
- ◆ Major practical project (narrative on direct experience, not research-based)
- ◆ Written response to job interview question

Writing as a Process

- ◆ Online Departmental Writing Guide (COM/M, PHL)
- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Freewriting as invention
- ◆ Multiple revision
- ◆ Cumulative project (each iteration revises and adds new material)
- ◆ Self-assessment exercise (“Freewriting in the Middle”)
- ◆ Process memo

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor’s written response
- ◆ Conference with instructor
- ◆ Peer review (in groups or with partners), review sheets
- ◆ Writing Center



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Liberal Arts: Social Science ~ Writing Profile

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CLA Social Science WIC classes require an average of 8,525 words (34 pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5000 to 16,000 words.

Informal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Freewrites to generate class discussion topics
“an ‘x-ray’ of any persistent writing problems a student might have” (PS 459)
- ◆ Daily responses to homework or reading (directed freewrites)
- ◆ Lab observations
- ◆ Observation log
- ◆ E-mail correspondence with peers/professor
- ◆ Journal
- ◆ Via
- ◆ Self-monitoring exercise
“an assessment technique often employed by clinical psychologists in research and/or in practice” (PSY 480)
- ◆ Conversation starter
- ◆ Impromptu in-class writing: diagnostic, raise a question, respond to lecture
- ◆ Paragraph revision exercises
“Students read a poorly written paragraph about research results, and then in class, they immediately begin to write an improved draft and then discuss it with other students”, (SOC 416)

WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001

- ANTH 370 Family, Gender, Generation
- PS 419 Topics in American Politics
- PS 429 Topics in Judicial Politics
- PS 459 Topics in Int'l Relations
- PSY 430 Animal Behavior
- PSY 440 Cognition Research
- PSY 470 Psychometrics and Psychological Testing

Formal Writing Assignments

- ◆ Microthemes (short narrative responses to directed questions)
- ◆ Literature review
- ◆ Research paper/project/report
- ◆ Proposal for paper/research
- ◆ Publishable scholarly article
- ◆ Cumulative project (proposal, lit. review, drafts, final)
- ◆ Op-ed article
- ◆ Editorial “on a complex and often hotly disputed issue within the confines set by most newspapers . . . comprehensible, informative, authoritative, and persuasive... could be published, in the student’s hometown” (PS 459)
- ◆ Newsletter write-up
- ◆ “Explain to an audience what the main points of the research were . . . you must also ‘sell’ your research...illustrating why the research was done and why we should care about the results” (SOC 416)
- ◆ Annotated bibliography
- ◆ Book review or analysis
- ◆ Public opinion survey paper
- ◆ Political analysis
- ◆ Think Piece

Feedback to Students on their Writing

- ◆ Instructor's written response (with or without a grade)
- ◆ Conference with instructor
- ◆ Peer review (in groups or with partners), review sheets
- ◆ Circulated drafts
- ◆ Drafts read aloud to class
- ◆ E-mail response to drafts
- ◆ Writing-Editing teams
- ◆ Writing Center

Writing as a Process

- ◆ Departmental Writing Guide (SOC)
- ◆ Online Departmental Writing Guide (ANTH, PS)
- ◆ Published articles as models
- ◆ Professor writes with class as model
- ◆ Revision/multiple revision of drafts

Conducting Social Research



Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum

College of Science ~ Writing Profile

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College of Science WIC classes require an average of 7,100 words (28+ pages) of writing per student, including drafts, final papers, and informal assignments. Requirements for individual courses range from 5000 to 20,000+ words.

Informal Writing Assignments	WIC classes reviewed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee 2001	Formal Writing Assignments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Directed freewrites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Students are asked to jot down lists and ideas that are relevant to some aspect of the presentation . . . these assignments are collected and returned with comments and additions.” (GEO 427) ♦ Freewrites to generate class discussion ♦ Daily responses to homework or reading ♦ Lab observations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Students are required to write 1-5 pages in a scientific lab notebook while they are doing chemistry in class.” (CH 463) 	<p>BB 493 Biochemistry Lab</p> <p>BI 333 Understanding Environmental Projects</p> <p>BI 371 Ecological Methods</p> <p>BIBOT 489 Analysis of Environmental Issues</p> <p>CH 463 Experimental Chemistry</p> <p>GEO 427 Volcanology</p> <p>GEO 462 Geosciences Field Methodology</p> <p>MTH 333 Fundamental Concepts of Topology</p> <p>MTH 338 Non-Euclidean Geometry</p> <p>PH 401, 403 Research and Thesis</p> <p>Z 414 Scientific Communication for Biologists</p>	<p>♦ Journal</p> <p>♦ Collaborative Project</p> <p>“Students work in teams of 5-7 authors whose individual papers are used to create a team report.” (BI/BOT 489)</p> <p>♦ Formal abstract</p> <p>♦ Lab report</p> <p>♦ Literature review</p> <p>“A major part of this assignment is to locate, read and understand published scientific articles and to write in one’s own words a suitable procedure synthesizing the assigned compound, complete with proper references.” (CH 463)</p> <p>♦ Research paper/project/report</p> <p>“Students are asked to read research papers, report on results and fill in details. This writing is equivalent to the writing done in survey articles by professionals in the field.” (MTH 333)</p> <p>♦ Technical report</p> <p>♦ Thesis</p> <p>♦ Portfolio</p> <p>Writing as a Process</p> <p>♦ Online Departmental Writing Guide (CH)</p> <p>♦ Brainstorming</p> <p>♦ Outlines of papers and projects</p> <p>♦ Revision, multiple revision of drafts</p> <p>“Students are led through the process of preparing the final report through a series of revisions that are thoroughly marked, but minimally graded.” (CH 463)</p> <p>♦ Published articles as models</p> <p>♦ Portfolio</p> <p>♦ Progress reports</p>
<p>Feedback to Students on their Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Team project with member feedback ♦ GTA/TA/Research assistant response ♦ Peer review ♦ Instructor’s written response (with or without a grade) ♦ Reflective self-assessment essay ♦ Writing Center 	<p>♦ Non-Euclidean Geometry</p> <p>♦ Research and Thesis</p> <p>♦ Scientific Communication for Biologists</p>	<p>♦ Non-Euclidean Geometry</p> <p>♦ Research and Thesis</p> <p>♦ Scientific Communication for Biologists</p>

Pre/Views continued from page 1

are Bonnie Avery (Library), Janet Lee (Women Studies), Bob Jarvis (Fisheries and Wildlife), Kurt Peters (Ethnic Studies), Christine Snow (Exercise and Sport Science), and John Dilles (Geosciences).

Some readers may ask, when they look at the numerical results of course approvals and denials (see article on right), whether there is cause for concern. I don't think so. The requests to remove WIC designation reflect, in large, departmental decisions that are already in effect. Some courses that at first looked like good WIC prospects either were not appropriate or are not being taught. The one area of concern is in the College of Science because the dropping of WIC designation from five History of Science courses (at the request of the Department of History) shifts the responsibility for teaching writing to science majors more fully onto the faculty in the College of Science. Several new WIC courses in COS are in the pipeline, but more are needed.

The fact that twenty-seven WIC courses, as currently taught, no longer meet WIC criteria is mostly the result of what I call "curricular drift." At one time, all of these courses met WIC criteria, but over time, instructors change, syllabi are revised, new faculty arrive, and elements that were essential for WIC designation are dropped, often inadvertently. I believe that many course corrections for curricular drift can be made easily and quickly, and I expect at least two-thirds of the denied courses to be back within guidelines by November.

Some faculty are intentionally out of compliance and wrote "in-your-face" messages to the Bac Core Committee indicating, for example, that they don't believe that revision helps students improve their writing and they don't intend to include any revision in their course. Okay. Then the course should not be a WIC course. A large body of research indicates that revising is a key component in improving student writing.

In closing, I want to thank the students who helped me with the review of courses and the construction of the Writing Profiles: Anna Harrell (06 English), Mark Gardner (04 English), and Amy Timshel (05 English). They have been magnificent.

As I leave for sabbatical (I'm writing a book called *Spiritual Literacy: Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric in John Wesley's Methodism*), I feel very positive about the work that faculty and students across the University are doing as writers and teachers of writing. Thank you!

Bac Core Committee Publishes WIC Results

The Baccalaureate Core Committee of the Oregon State University Faculty Senate is charged with periodically evaluating courses that constitute the Baccalaureate Core requirements for all undergraduates at the university. In 2000-2001, the committee reviewed Writing Intensive Curriculum (WIC) courses that were approved before 1996, slightly over eighty courses. The departments were asked to submit current syllabi and writing assignments for the courses, along with enrollment information, word count, and a narrative describing how each WIC criterion was met by the course. Departments also had the opportunity to request that WIC status be removed from a course.

Committee members and the WIC director reviewed all the materials submitted for each course and recommended either continuation or denial of WIC status. The results of the review are:

- Number of WIC courses approved: 38
- Number of courses dropping WIC status in 2001 (by department request): 14
- Number of courses dropping WIC status in 2002 (by department request): 5 (all are History of Science courses)
- Number of courses denied but eligible for revision: 27

For courses that were denied, departments have until November 1, 2001, to revise the course in a way that fully satisfies WIC Guidelines (see WIC website link to Proposals and Guidelines at <http://wic.orst.edu>). The WIC director offered workshops to assist departments in these revisions, and several departments have already resubmitted their revised syllabi. In any case, unless a department requested immediate removal of WIC status, all WIC courses stand until August, 2001. This means that a course that has been denied can still be offered as a WIC course during the 2001-2002 school year.

According to Bac Core Committee Chair John Lee (Mathematics), the committee encourages departments to revise their denied courses and notes that in a number of cases the changes that need to be made are fairly simple and straightforward, not involving major changes in the course as it has been taught. Departments that need to make major changes have been given an additional year to re-conceptualize their Writing Intensive courses.

2001 WIC Grants Announced

The following departments and faculty have been awarded Department Developmental Grants from the Writing Intensive Curriculum Program, according to WIC director Vicki Tolar Burton.

Department of Apparel, Interiors, Housing, and Merchandising (Leslie Davis Burns, Proposer)

Goals: Through two retreats, to articulate the writing across the curriculum philosophy of the Apparel Design and Merchandising management undergraduate programs, to review and revise the specific writing required in thirteen courses in those programs, and to coordinate writing assignments throughout the curriculum. Also, to hire one graduate student and two undergraduates to assess the effectiveness of the AIHM Departmental Writing Guide.

Department of Art (Andrea Marks, Proposer)

Goals: Through a retreat of the Graphic Design faculty, to plan and implement more writing across the full graphic design curriculum. To create a writing guide (and eventually a writing web site) for students in the graphic design program.

Biology Program (Indira Rajagopal, Proposer)

Goal: To convert BI 315 (Molecular Biology Laboratory) into a WIC course by designing writing assignments consistent with WIC requirements and preparing and submitting a WIC proposal.

Center for Writing and Learning (Wayne Robertson, Proposer)

Goal: To make a film in which international students speak about how writing is taught in their home countries and describe adjustments they have had to make as writers at OSU. The film will be used to inform Writing Assistants and WIC faculty on how to help international students as writers.

Department of Microbiology (Linda Brusland, Mary Burke, and Walt Ream, Proposers)

Goal: To develop a writing guide for students in Microbiology.

State of Writing continued from page 1

The profiles also suggest that OSU faculty across the university are taking writing seriously, designing compelling writing assignments for their students, and challenging their students to raise their writing to a professional level before they graduate.

This assessment has resulted in good news about writing at OSU. It is hoped that these writing profiles will help faculty who are designing or revising WIC courses and also that they will generate important conversations in the colleges about student writing and writing instruction both within WIC courses and throughout the curriculum. We are also eager to share these profiles with our colleagues at Oregon community colleges and with colleagues across the country.

WIC 2001-2001

- Vicki Tolar Burton will be on sabbatical.
- Lisa Ede will be interim WIC director.
- No five-week faculty seminars will be offered.
- There will be periodic Eating-to-Learn lunches and other WIC events.

Save the afternoon of Tuesday, October 9, for a workshop led by Peter Elbow, Professor of English at U. Massachusetts, Amherst, and a leading scholar in the teaching of writing.

About Teaching With Writing

Editor: Vicki Tolar Burton

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Teaching With Writing is the newsletter of the Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum Program. As part of the Baccalaureate Core, all OSU students are required to take an upper division writing intensive course in their major.

The content of the WIC courses ranges from radiation safety (for Nuclear Engineering majors) to golf courses design (a Horticulture option). While subject matter differs by department, all WIC courses share certain commonalities defined by the Faculty Senate:

- Informal, ungraded or minimally graded writing is used as a mode of learning the content material.
- Students are introduced to conventions and practices of writing in their discipline, and the use of borrowed information.
- Students complete at least 5000 words of writing, of which at least 2000 words are in polished, formal assignments.
- Students are guided through the whole writing process, receive feedback on drafts, and have opportunities to revise.

For complete information on WIC guidelines, contact Vicki Tolar Burton by email at Vicki.TolarBurton@orst.edu or consult the OSU Curricular Procedures Handbook.