

TEACHING WITH WRITING

THE OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY WRITING INTENSIVE CURRICULUM (WIC) NEWSLETTER

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PRE/VIEWS

By Vicki Collins, WIC Director

The main purpose of my column this issue is to say, "Thank you." I am especially grateful to the OSU faculty who have labored so tirelessly in the WIC vineyards over the past ten years, teaching with writing, designing compelling writing assignments, reading draft after draft, and guiding student writers to higher levels of achievement. You are the heart of the WIC program, and I thank you.

I also want to thank the faculty who have taken the WIC seminar, both those who do teach WIC courses and those who want to learn to use writing in non-WIC courses. Your contributions are vitally important in improving student writing and critical thinking at Oregon State.

Thanks also to the faculty who attended one or more of the spring term WIC Eating-to-Learn Seminars. Your sharing about student writing, problems, challenges, great ideas, renews us all for the classroom.

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WIC Celebrates its Tenth Year

By Vicki Collins, WIC Director

This year marked the tenth year of the OSU Writing Intensive Curriculum. A snapshot of WIC at ten indicates that the program is healthy and growing, thanks to the energetic involvement of faculty from across the university and the continued financial support of the university:

- Over 125 upper division writing intensive courses have been approved and are currently being taught by over two hundred faculty.
- WIC courses incorporate informal, ungraded or minimally graded writing as a mode of learning course content and introduce students to writing in their disciplines.
- This year's fall and winter term Introductory WIC Seminars for faculty were fully enrolled for a total of 34 participants, with additional applicants being turned away for lack of space, bringing the number of faculty who have WIC training to a total of 243.
- Faculty development continued in the spring term with seven weekly Eating-to-Learn lunch seminars on topics ranging from students presenting their survey results on the value of WIC courses to Steve Kunert's talk, "Teaching Students to Avoid Sexist, Racist, and Age-ist Language in Writing."
- WIC Department Development grants have supported not only development of new WIC courses but also various projects, including departmental writing retreats, that support and enhance writing within departments. Three grants were awarded this spring.
- Nine OSU departments from across the uni-

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versity have developed or are developing writing guides for students in their disciplines.

- Teaching with Writing, the WIC newsletter, is distributed not only to all teaching faculty on campus but also to Oregon community colleges and to some high schools.
- Dr. Susan McLeod, Chair of the Department of English at Washington State University and a prominent scholar in Writing Across the Curriculum, was this year's visiting speaker on teaching with writing. In addition to a formal lecture, she met with WIC faculty over lunch. Dr. McLeod was also one of the first composition scholars to conduct workshops at OSU nearly ten years ago. Over the years this group has included Andrea Lunsford, Peter Elbow, Anne Ruggles Gere, and many others.
- The WIC Director participates in the review of undergraduate majors by the University Curriculum Council and outside evaluators. As each undergraduate major is reviewed (several are done each year), the WIC Director examines current syllabi for all approved WIC courses for the major.
- Faculty can now track the progress of their WIC course proposals through the review process by checking the Web at osu.orst.edu/dept/academic/status/bccidx.htm.

As part of the continuing assessment of the WIC program, this year the Baccalaureate Core Committee, a body of the Faculty Senate which oversees the required core courses including WIC, clarified certain points in the Curriculum Guidelines for WIC courses. The increase in collaborative projects in WIC courses prompted the following clarification of Criterion 2 (new material is in all caps):

- Criterion 2: Writing intensive courses shall base a significant part of the grade on evaluation of writing.

Grades for papers should form at least 30% of the overall grade, WITH AT LEAST 25% OF THE OVERALL COURSE GRADE BASED ON EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUALLY WRITTEN PAPERS. COLLABORATIVE WRITING PROJECTS ARE APPRO-

PRIATE IN WIC COURSES, BUT INDIVIDUALLY WRITTEN PAPERS WHICH HAVE BEEN REVISED AFTER FEEDBACK MUST ALSO BE A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE GRADE. Writing intensive courses may also use various tests or quizzes which do not involve writing.

The Bac Core Committee's belief that a student's WIC experience should be in the community of other student writers interacting in a content-oriented course in their discipline led to this clarification:

- Criterion 3: Writing intensive courses shall focus on content related to the major disciplines and be taught by faculty knowledgeable about that discipline.

A WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE SHOULD BE A COURSE, OR SEQUENCE OF COURSES, IN THE DISCIPLINE AND INTEGRAL TO THE DEGREE PROGRAM. THE COURSE SHOULD HAVE A STRUCTURED SYLLABUS WITH DISCIPLINARY CONTENT AND AN ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS WHO INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH THEIR PROFESSOR ON A REGULAR TERM SCHEDULE. PART OF THE LEARNING IN A WIC COURSE OCCURS WHEN STUDENTS SHARE, DISCUSS, AND RESPOND TO EACH OTHERS' WRITTEN WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMON COURSE CONTENT OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.

Writing intensive courses are not English courses or grammar and punctuation courses; they are discipline courses which use writing tasks to help students learn.

The Bac Core Committee also stated for the sake of clarity that WIC courses must be a minimum of three credits, still leaving room for departments who require students to complete a sequence of courses as their writing intensive experience:

- Criterion 5: Writing intensive courses shall be upper division. THE WIC REQUIREMENT MUST

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Good Ideas from Other Universities

By Vicki Collins

I am just back from the National Writing Across the Curriculum Conference, held this year at Cornell University. Here are some good ideas from WIC/WAC programs at other institutions:

- At George Mason University, the week before classes begin in the fall is termed "Byte Week," a week full of university-wide workshops and demonstrations that help faculty catch up on the latest technologies.
- Michigan State University, funded by a FIPSE grant, has a program of writing groups for students working on dissertations. Their goal is to improve the graduation rate of doctoral students by supporting their writing and research process.
- In the College of Agriculture at Iowa State University, an upper division agronomy course is linked to a technical report writing course in the English department. Students are enrolled in both courses simultaneously, and the teachers of the two courses meet regularly to coordinate writing assignments and shape course content.
- At Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, a Web-design course involves students in the needs of the surrounding community. At the beginning of the term, students hear speakers from various community groups and agencies that need better methods of communication. Students then propose and execute Web-design projects for particular community clients.
- A survey of science alumni at Massachusetts Institute of Technology indicated that they were highly satisfied with all their preparation at MIT except for their preparation in written and oral communication. Biologist Paul Matsudaira initiated the "Bug Journal" (Biology Undergraduate Journal) in which students compete for opportunities to publish polished papers on their laboratory research. Papers are reviewed by faculty in the department and revised with the support of an in-department writing program.

(A copy of the journal may be borrowed from the OSU WIC office.)

■ At Cornell University, the John S. Knight Writing Program sponsors a summer institute for deans, chairs, provosts, and faculty from major universities to explore ways to improve communication skills in higher education.

■ The WAC program at Georgia State University funds grants for faculty across the university to conduct research on student writing in their discipline.

■ A number of universities (including Cal State Hayward) are linking an introductory course in a particular discipline with a specific section or sections of freshman composition, so that students are enrolled in both courses and teachers coordinate writing assignments and readings. Called "linked courses" or "learning communities," these arrangements, according to research, improve student retention at the first year level.

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I am grateful in addition to departments who have undertaken the task of examining writing outcomes of their students and who try daily, in class and in writing guides, to articulate what it means to write well in your discipline. I am especially grateful to the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences for sharing their writing assignment grid, part of which appears in this issue.

To the faculty and administration who support me in my work and make my job one of the most interesting in the institution, I am grateful.

In this issue, you will find a review of WIC at Ten (page 1), an announcement of WIC Grant recipients for 1999 (page 8), good ideas from WAC programs across the nation, and reports from 1998 WIC grant recipients. Several additional 1998 recipients will report in a future issue of *Teaching with Writing*.

Types of Writing in HDFS

As part of their Undergraduate Writing Handbook, the OSU Department of Human Development and Family Sciences has developed a grid which characterizes writing assignments used throughout their curriculum. The following are excerpts from the grid, which they call "a work in progress."

PROFESSIONAL WRITING			REFLECTIVE WRITING		
DESCRIPTION	NEWSLETTER	PROGRAM PROPOSAL	REFLECTIVE JOURNAL	PERSONAL THINK PIECE	POSITION STATEMENT
AUDIENCE	Report issued at regular intervals to keep targeted audience informed.	Document to seek program funding. Includes summary, introduction, problem statement, conceptual model, methods, evaluation, and budget.	Continuous intellectual and emotional conversation about your thoughts, ideas, feelings, readings, experiences.	Essay that explores and reflects on ideas or feelings raised by readings/lectures/videos/experiences. More developed focused, coherent, and complete than a journal entry.	Document that states your perspective about an idea, after critically examining alternative perspectives.
PURPOSE	General public; within agency; special interest groups. To inform; persuade.	Funders; stakeholders; potential clients; potential service providers. To obtain support, inform, persuade.	Self. To discover, raise questions about, modify, and make corrections among one's thoughts and feelings.	Self. To connect your personal life to your ideas and feelings.	Self and peers. Enables you to address an issue or idea from multiple perspectives and to develop your own perspective.
STYLE	Third or first person.	Third person; narrative and non-narrative: bullets, tables, graphs.	First person.	First person.	First person.
PROOF	Empirical evidence; anecdotal/personal examples; appeal to authority.	Empirical evidence; theory; reasoning.	Thoughts and feelings are expressed; changes and questions are evident; connections are made between thoughts and feelings.	Ideas or feelings are identified and reflected on. Connections are made between and among ideas, feelings and life experience.	Clear statement of claim; knowledge and examination of alternative perspectives; logic and reason used in presentation of arguments for one's personal perspective; logic and reason used to justify your view; coherent argument.
EVALUATIVE CRITERIA	Clear, concise; accurate; effective visual presentation.	Follows organizational guidelines; complete; concise; sections logically integrated; accurate; appropriate referencing.	Regular journal entries that describe, pose questions, record changes, display connections between thoughts and feelings.	Refined description of an idea or feeling; recognition of complexity; connects idea with personal experience.	Clarity of claims; knowledge of alternatives; coherent, logical argument; your view distinguished from alternatives; your claim justified.
PROCESS	Gather information; organize it logically in short sections with clear subheadings; peer review; revise.	Begin with clear problem statement. Develop conceptual model and goals from assumptions/theories about the problem. Develop methods/objectives from goals. Write introduction, abstract; revise. Data from sources such as population demographics, needs assessment, research, and theories.	Write your thoughts and feelings, changes in them, questions about them, and connections made between them on a regular basis.	Reflect on the idea or feeling raised by the lecture/discussion/videos/readings. Draw on your experience to illustrate the idea or feeling, its development, nature and meaning for you. Refine your understanding.	Draft a claim statement; explore strengths and limitations of alternative views; develop argument against alternatives; summarize your claim and argue against the alternatives; peer review; revise.
RESOURCES	Program/agency records; evaluation data.				

ACADEMIC WRITING

	SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ARTICLE	ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH ARTICLE	LITERATURE REVIEW	RESEARCH PROPOSAL	RESEARCH REPORT
DESCRIPTION	Brief restatement of the content of an empirical article; includes purpose, method, and findings.	Document identifying strengths/weaknesses of an empirical article.	Document that summarizes, analyzes, and integrates research on one topic.	Document that lays out plan for answering empirical question.	Document that summarizes a completed empirical study.
AUDIENCE	Self; peers; other professionals.	Self; peers; other professionals.	Self; peers; other professionals.	Self; peers; funding agency; professionals; invested public.	Self; peers; funding agency; professionals; invested public.
PURPOSE	To inform.	To inform, encourage critical thinking; build knowledge; maintain professional standards	To inform; encourage critical thinking; draw conclusions; synthesize and build knowledge.	To answer an empirical question; build scientific knowledge; learn research process.	Fulfill contract with funding agency; inform; build knowledge; encourage critical thinking; learn research process.
STYLE	Third person; "with the grain"	Third or first person; write "against the grain"; join the conversation.	Third or first person; write "against the grain"; think critically and bring a broad perspective to more narrow concerns.	First or third person; rigidly structured to meet guidelines; typically includes abstract, problem statement, literature review and conceptual model, design and analysis plan, significance, budget, and resources.	First or third person; rigidly structured: abstract, introduction, and research question; conceptual model and brief literature review; method (sample, procedures, measures, analysis); results and/or discussion; conclusion; references. Tables and figures as appropriate.
PROOF	Accurate; comprehensive; balanced; unbiased.	Fair; adheres to scientific principles	Fair; adheres to scientific principles.	Adheres to scientific principles.	Adheres to scientific principles
EVALUATIVE CRITERIA	Accurate, comprehensive, balanced, omits your opinion.	Extent to which you identify strengths/weaknesses in theoretical foundation, issue's importance, method (i.e., design, sample, measures, analysis), and appropriateness of conclusions.	Extent to which you identify strengths/weaknesses in theoretical foundation, issue's importance, method (i.e., design, sample, measures, analysis), and appropriateness of conclusions. Extent to which you integrate the literature.	Extent to which you identify important, researchable question; appropriateness of model and literature reviewed; soundness of design; potential significance; appropriateness of budget and resources.	Cohesive research question linked to data and to literature; clear; logical; strengths and limitations identified.
PROCESS	Read quickly; reread slowly for content; write gist statements; organize into introduction, body, conclusion; revise, peer review, revise.	Read quickly, reread slowly for content; gist statements; identify questions, hot spots, concerns, compelling arguments, relevant data; organize into introduction, major points, conclusion; revise, peer review, revise.	Identify and delimit topic; identify appropriate literature; analyze each article; draft integration of separate analyses; draft a conclusion addressing commonalities, articles, and identifying possible causes of discrepancies; revise; peer review; revise.	Identify and delimit research question; identify related theoretical and empirical literature; briefly review literature; draft research plan; draft other sections; revise; peer review; revise.	Examine results; compare findings to expectations derived from theory, hypotheses, and literature; draft results; draft introduction, model, and literature review; draft discussion; revise; draft abstract; peer review; revise.
RESOURCES	Research article.	Research article; other articles on same topic; related theory; knowledge of good science.	Related theory and research articles; knowledge of good science.	Related theory and research articles; knowledge of good science; RFP if applicable; knowledge about funding agency, if applicable.	Sources used in writing proposal; additional sources as needed to explain findings; your data.

Student Writing Guide for the Department of Sociology

By Mark Edwards and Dwaine Plaza
(Sociology)

Soon after arriving here at OSU last year, the two of us completed the WIC training, and subsequently applied for and received a WIC grant to help the department develop a writing guide for students. We, as well as department chair Becky Warner, all teach the department's one WIC course, "Conducting Social Research" which is part of a 2-quarter research methods sequence for upper-division students. These classes, as well as many of the department's other courses, have a strong writing component, ranging from ungraded in-class writing to major research papers developed over the two-term sequence.

The department began meeting last Spring to construct the handbook, and after 5 workshop sessions together, we are near finishing a final draft, intended to be available to students this Fall. The handbook is designed to be a useful collection of tools that are readily available to students. It will be a required text in most of the department's upper division core courses. We are still discussing how best to distribute it to our students.

Because of the various ways that writing is integrated into the department's curriculum, the handbook required broad scope. Units have been developed for writing a quantitative research paper, qualitative research paper, theoretical paper, and evaluation reports. Other units include a segment on how to use a reflective academic journal (for students completing internships). We have sought to strike an encouraging tone in the text while raising the standards of what we expect in student writing.

Throughout, we have sought to emphasize writing as a process. We believe that this is a particularly liberating concept for students who seem to think that one is either gifted or inept at writing. In the handbook, we will be showing students real examples of first drafts and then second drafts of sections of research papers, highlighting what was changed and why the change was an improvement.

Most of the department faculty have actively par-

ticipated in some aspect of the development of this project. The extensive (and often very animated) discussions among participants about what we are looking for in good writing, how to teach writing, and how genres of sociological writing are similar and different have been professionally invigorating. It has caused us to think more carefully about how students learn to write and how writing fits into our courses.

In many instances, these writing units were assigned to one person and then brought back to the next session for extensive discussion. In other instances, faculty went away to collaboratively develop some part of the handbook. The process of developing the handbook has been good for our collaborative work as a faculty, and we are hopeful that the new writing guide will be useful for students while they are in our classes as well as a resource for them in their future employment.

Writing Philosophy Papers: A Student Guide Goes on Line

By Bill Uzgalis (Philosophy)

With WIC funding, a team of OSU Philosophy Department faculty (Courtney Campbell, Jon Dorbolo, Kathy Moore, Jeff Ramsey, and Bill Uzgalis), along with WIC director Vicki Collins, produced a writing manual for philosophy students at OSU. *Writing Philosophy Papers: A Student Guide* was published by Kendall-Hunt in 1997. The Guide serves a number of purposes. One is to give students a clear sense of the writing assignment they are being asked to do and the criteria for evaluation. Another is to cut down the time it takes to give instructions about assignments in class. The Guide also helps faculty achieve consistency in the way they evaluate student writing at different levels.

Now, thanks to another WIC grant, *Writing Philosophy Papers: A Student Guide* is on line. During the summer of 1998, Bill Uzgalis oversaw the scanning of the guide and its conversion to HTML. This portion of the project was completed in time for the on-line guide to be used by students in philosophy classes, fall quarter 1998. The Writing Guide can be found at

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<http://osu.orst.edu/dept/philosophy/resources/guide/Guide.html>.

Why put a book up on the web? One reason is that having a book-length reference work means that many students will make use of only a small part of the book for their particular class. This makes them reluctant to buy the book and makes professors more reluctant to require it. Having the guide on line means that students can consult just the part they need for their class, and at no cost (unless they print it).

Secondly, books are relatively difficult to alter or expand once they have gone to press. The web does not have this limitation. This means that it is possible to change, develop, and improve the writing manual with relative ease.

We have, over the past year, added additional examples and exercises based on material in the Guide. For example, to the section on "Identifying a Philosophical Problem," links to problems for PHL 302 were added to help students come to understand what constitutes a philosophical problem. Moreover, we are able to link particular sections of the Writing Guide to other websites. For example, in the section on "Dialogue," a link was added to the web site "Is War on Iraq Just?" to illustrate the importance of finding common ground between people holding quite different views, as the necessary basis for dialogue.

In Winter quarter, the Philosophy Department held a retreat to help faculty understand the nature and uses of the Guide, both the book and the on-line version.

Lillie Presents WIC Assignment At Geological Meeting

Bob Lillie (Geosciences) received a WIC Grant for partial support of travel expenses to the Geological Society of American Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, October 19-24, 1997. Dr. Lillie, along with Dr. Kevin Pogue of Whitman College, were organizers and co-chairs of a Theme Session on "Approaches to Undergraduate Teaching of Geophysics," sponsored by the Keck Foundation Geology Consortium and the National Association of Geoscience Teachers. Talks in-

cluded examples of classroom, laboratory, and field teaching techniques used to convey concepts of geophysics to undergraduates. Many of the presentations focused on the incorporation of writing (graded and ungraded) as integral parts of courses.

Dr. Lillie's presentation was titled "Sequenced Writing Assignment for Solid Earth Geophysics Course." The technique was inspired by OSU's WIC and advanced WIC workshops and has been presented to other WIC participants over the years. Students research the crustal structure and tectonic evolution of a region of the Earth. A paper is developed gradually throughout the term, with critique from the instructor and revision at each step. Students thus learn that writing is an ongoing process, not something done at the last minute. The writing sequence follows the course content, progressively incorporating seismic, gravity, magnetic and heat flow observations. Geophysical techniques discussed in lectures thus have a context, because students are writing about them for their region as the course progresses.

See information on Bob Lillie's new textbook, which incorporates the assignment, at http://www.prenhall.com/books/esm_0134905172.html.

Call For Participants In Fall 1999 WIC Faculty Seminar

Faculty interested in the fall 1999 WIC Faculty Seminar should ask their department chair to send an email nomination to Vicki Collins (vcollins@orst.edu). The seminar will meet five Wednesday afternoons from 3 to 5 pm, beginning on October 13 and ending on November 10. Faculty who complete the seminar receive a \$250 honorarium. Last fall the seminar nearly filled before any fall announcement was made, so early nominations are advised.

1999 WIC Grants Announced

Department of Agriculture and Resource Economics (Larry Lev, Proposer)

Goal: To support a half-day workshop for the Department of Agriculture and Resource Economics to encourage use of new teaching-with-writing practices throughout the AREC curriculum.

Department of Anthropology (Nancy Rosenberger, Proposer)

Goals: To continue development of the curricular guide to writing across the curriculum in anthropology. The grant will fund a department writing retreat and partial summer support for the faculty member editing the writing guide.

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (Joseph Krause, Juan Trujillo, Carleton Carroll, Guy Wood, Proposers)

Goal: To provide matching funds for purchase of computer software (Daedalus Group) designed to provide invention and revision guidance for students composing essays in French, Spanish, and German. This software will help the department implement the writing proficiency guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

WIC Department Development Grants are awarded each year to support departments in the use of writing throughout the curriculum.

**Next grant proposal deadline:
Feb. 15, 2000.**

About Teaching With Writing

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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 as signments.
- 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 Collins by email at VCollins@orst.edu or consult the OSU Curricular Procedures Handbook.

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TOTAL 3 OR MORE CREDIT HOURS. IN THE CASE OF A DEPARTMENT WHOSE WIC REQUIREMENT IS SATISFIED BY A SEQUENCE OF COURSES, WIC CREDIT WILL BE AWARDED UPON COMPLETION OF THE ENTIRE SEQUENCE.

The full text of the Writing Intensive Course Guidelines can be viewed at www.osu.orst.edu/dept/academic/cph1998/026_writing_intensive_courses_guidelines.htm.

There is much to celebrate as WIC turns ten years old and takes its place as one of the best established Writing Across the Curriculum programs in the country. These ten years of WIC have had a significant impact on both teaching and learning. More courses engage students in active, writing-centered learning, and more students are graduating with the writing skills they need in their disciplines. Thanks to all of you who have been part of this rewarding endeavor.