

## WRITING-INTENSIVE HIPS @UND

Writing-intensive (WI) courses emphasize writing across the curriculum and in many genres. Writing assignments are linked directly to the progression of course material and are integral steps towards building comprehension of core threshold concepts or primary course learning goals (that is, they are woven into the course fabric, not simply stitched onto the surface). As such, student writing is required regularly throughout the course and assessed on a weekly or biweekly basis, and assignments are sequenced so that they facilitate both improvement in student writing and mastery of course learning goals. Revision of written work is central and timely feedback from teaching staff is essential. Feedback should be both written and spoken, and should include both conferences between student and instructor, and peer review/feedback from classmates. WI courses should be small or have small sections and a significant portion of the student’s final grade in the course should be determined by the quality of the student’s thought expressed in writing.

To qualify as a high-impact writing-intensive course, the following required 5 key elements must be present.

Key Elements	Required?	Expected Features	Illustrative Examples
<b>Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels</b>	Yes	WI courses will have a variety of assignments with clearly defined objectives. The syllabus should include a statement of the overall goals for writing, and students receive a description of expectations for individual writing assignments. Should include some directed writing instruction to support writing outcomes.  Students demonstrate integration of critical thinking into the proper disciplinary contexts and genres for specific audiences appropriate to level of course (as opposed to focus on “accuracy” and pointing out surface errors).	Directed writing instruction in support of assignment on substantive writing issues. This could refer to content development, providing evidence for an argument, and issues of organization, substantial guidance on disciplinary style guides and documentation could be one component of meeting this criterion (although not likely to be the only component).
<b>Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time.</b>	Yes	Student writing is required regularly throughout the course and assessed on a weekly or biweekly basis. Assignments are sequenced so that they facilitate both improvement in student writing and mastery of course learning goals.	High stakes: A full term research paper requiring pre-writing, a research proposal, annotated bibliography, drafts, editing and peer review, with instructor feedback provided at regular intervals throughout the process.  Low stakes: Weekly short responses to assigned reading posted on a course blog or discussion board.  Five to ten minute in-class written reflection following discussion.
<b>Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters</b>	Yes	There is at least one graded writing assignment (constituting a significant portion of the course grade) which undergoes a structured peer and instructor review	A final paper goes through a process involving peer review in which the reviewer’s comments are graded by the instructor and revised (if necessary) before being forwarded to the peer

		process involving substantive feedback and a meaningful opportunity for revision. Student peer reviewers are instructed in how to provide meaningful feedback and held accountable for their contributions as reviewers. Writing conferences with faculty provide feedback and additional opportunity to revise.	author; authors are expected to revise based on peer and/or faculty review and to write a response to the review which describes how they responded to comments. Students meet with the faculty member to review the draft and receive feedback to guide revision and/or editing.
<b>Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback</b>	Yes	Timely feedback between stages or drafts; either the same written work receives multiple reviews (followed each time by revision) or multiple works are each reviewed at least once. All graded written work is provided feedback with an expectation of and sufficient time for the feedback to be incorporated into a new graded draft.	Written homework problems or essays are submitted, in draft form, and receive comments highlighting “big picture” errors or missteps and students are expected to revise.  Feedback on a lab report is given along with the final grade so that the student uses the feedback to improve the next lab report in the sequence.
<b>Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning</b>	Yes	A writing-intensive course has multiple writing assignments distributed throughout the semester. In the creation or development of the set of assignments, some attention should be given to the “trajectory” of a student’s writing and students should reflect on this process and their learning through structured reflective assignments and self-assessment.	A portfolio of written assignments with a reflective component that encourages students’ metacognition regarding their skill level as connected to the expectations for written communication.  Sequencing in terms of topic of inquiry might assign a first or second paper of the term that explores a concept or idea, as the student grapples with his or her understanding of new sources/ideas. Subsequent papers might apply that concept to new examples, or expand the students understanding through additional research, or narrow to a particular issue or implication. Final papers might then give the students opportunities to be more independent in creating an application or project that is meaningful to the student while still working within a new intellectual framework.

Three additional HIPs elements (“Opportunities to demonstrate intercultural knowledge & skills...,” “Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications,” and “Public demonstration of competence”) are encouraged but not categorized as essential.

\*Additional recommendations: WI classes should not exceed a 20:1 student to instructor ratio. Because of the workload, faculty teaching WI classes need to be, minimally, taught as 3CR full term course, with teaching loads factored accordingly. Faculty need to maintain ownership/control over the shape of the course. At least 60% of student grades determined through evaluation of written work, and with at least 40% of student grades depending upon "high stakes" writing assignments, at least one of which must require drafts and revision.

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