

Missouri S&T

Writing Intensive (WI) Course Guidelines

(Revision 2025)

Overview and Rationale

The goal of Missouri S&T's Writing Intensive (WI) courses is to enhance students' learning through substantial engagement with writing as a process of inquiry, problem-solving, and communication. WI courses are not designed to provide remedial instruction in basic writing skills; rather, they integrate writing deeply into the learning of disciplinary content. Writing Intensive courses promote critical thinking, deepen disciplinary knowledge, and improve communication skills crucial for professional success.

Writing Intensive courses directly support Missouri S&T's North Star Goals by:

- **Prioritizing Student Success:** WI courses promote active learning strategies that help students develop essential communication, reasoning, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional excellence.
- **Elevating Research and Creative Work:** Through writing-to-learn approaches and field-specific research projects, WI courses foster students' ability to engage with and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their disciplines.
- **Enhancing Campus Reputation and Impact:** By embedding high-quality, discipline-specific writing into the curriculum, WI courses ensure that S&T graduates are prepared to lead, innovate, and communicate effectively in their professional communities.

Faculty proposing a WI course must demonstrate how the course will engage students in the process of drafting, receiving feedback, revising, and producing polished final written products. The instructor's professional commitment to writing as a mode of learning is essential.

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Application for WI Certification

Faculty applying for WI certification must submit:

- A course syllabus clearly identifying WI elements,
 - Sample writing assignments (with attention to process and revision),
 - A completed WI Application Form,
 - A plan for GTA supervision (if applicable),
 - A brief explanation of the course's GenAI policy.
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Core Principles of WI Instruction

1. Writing as a Mode of Inquiry and Learning

Writing serves as a fundamental tool for exploration and understanding. In WI courses, students engage in writing tasks that prompt them to analyze concepts, synthesize information, and construct knowledge. This process-oriented approach encourages students to view writing not merely as a means of communication but as a method for deepening their comprehension of subject matter.

2. Emphasis on the Writing Process and Revision

WI courses prioritize the writing process, recognizing that effective writing emerges through drafting, feedback, and revision. Students are encouraged to view their initial drafts as starting points, with subsequent revisions serving to refine their ideas and arguments. This iterative process fosters critical thinking and allows students to develop their writing skills progressively.

3. Integration of Multimodal Communication

Recognizing the evolving landscape of communication, WI courses incorporate various modes of expression beyond traditional text. Students may engage in creating visual, digital, or oral presentations, such as infographics, videos, or podcasts, to convey their ideas effectively. These multimodal assignments are designed to meet the same rigorous standards of critical engagement and revision as written work.

4. Discipline-Specific Writing Conventions

WI courses are tailored to reflect the writing styles and conventions of specific academic disciplines. Students learn to produce work that adheres to the genres, formats, and rhetorical strategies prevalent in their fields of study. This focus prepares students for professional communication within their chosen field.

5. Constructive Feedback and Collaborative Learning

Effective WI instruction involves providing students with timely, constructive feedback from instructors, peers, and writing centers. This feedback guides students in refining their work and encourages collaborative learning environments where students can engage in meaningful discussions about their writing.

Required WI Course Elements

Category	Requirement
Faculty Leadership and Student Support	Faculty-Led Instruction: WI courses must be designed and taught by regular faculty who oversee all major writing assignments and evaluations. Graduate Assistants and Tutors: GTAs, undergraduate assistants, or embedded tutors may assist with feedback, mentoring, or preliminary grading under close faculty supervision; final responsibility rests with the faculty member.
Class Size and Support Structures	Standard WI Class Size: Capped at 20 students per instructor for traditional courses without additional support. Large Enrollment WI Classes (Lecture + Lab/Recitation/Tutor Support Models): WI certification possible if: • Mandatory labs/recitations are capped at 20 students each, led by trained GTA, librarian, or instructor. • Writing Center-supported tutoring is integrated into the writing/revision process. • Structured feedback cycles involve GTAs, tutors, or peer mentors using common rubrics and under faculty supervision.
GTA/Tutor Training and Supervision	GTAs and tutors must complete WI training workshops or equivalent certification. Faculty must establish and enforce clear grading guidelines (e.g., rubrics, norming sessions). Faculty supervise grading quality and verify final grading consistency across graders and sections.

Writing Load, Revision, and Assessment Requirements

Writing Intensive (WI) courses must require students to complete a substantial body of work in written, visual, digital, or multimodal forms. This work should demonstrate sustained engagement with the processes of composing, revising, and communicating complex ideas.

Writing Load	Details
Minimum Word Count	Students must complete at least 6600 words (approximately 20 pages) across the course, including discussions, drafts, revisions, and final versions.

Multimodal Equivalents	Visual, digital, or audio projects count toward writing load if they require equivalent time-on-task , conceptual complexity , and communication demand . For example: ● Research posters, infographics, or data visualizations with captions ● Websites, e-portfolios, or digital storytelling ● Multimedia reports or video essays ● Technical diagrams with written explanations ● Research presentations
Portfolio Approach	Students may compile multiple smaller projects (textual, visual, digital) to collectively demonstrate critical thinking, argumentation, and research communication.
Revision Expectations	Students must substantively revise at least 2600 words or an equivalent major project component. Revision includes rethinking, restructuring, and expanding content.

Revision & Assessment Details

Revision and Feedback	Substantial revision is required. Drafts must receive feedback from instructors, GTAs, the Writing and Communication Center, or peers. Feedback must support major idea refinement, not just surface editing.
Distribution of Writing	Assignments must be distributed throughout the semester , not concentrated at the end, to support continuous learning and revision cycles.
Assessment Weight	Writing must account for at least 50% of the final course grade . In rare cases, writing may account for no less than 30% with disciplinary justification.
Complexity of Assignments	At least one major assignment must require critical engagement , such as: ● Evaluating multiple viewpoints ● Performing original research ● Arguing a position ● Justifying methodological choices

Instruction Expectations Details

GenAI Integration Policy	Faculty must define clear guidelines for the ethical use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools in the course syllabus and assignment descriptions.
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Faculty Development Requirement	Faculty must attend a WI workshop within one year of assignment to a WI course. A refresher workshop, seminar, or approved professional development is required every five years.
GTA Training	Graduate Teaching Assistants assisting with WI courses must complete WI-specific training before providing writing instruction or feedback.

Programs and Models Consulted

University/Program	Program Description
University of Missouri (Mizzou) – Writing Intensive Program	Mizzou’s WI Program requires that students complete two WI courses for graduation. Courses emphasize writing as a learning tool and require substantial revision, instructor feedback, and integration of writing throughout the semester. Faculty must undergo training and submit WI course proposals for certification.
Iowa State University – Communication Proficiency/Writing Intensive Courses	Iowa State integrates writing throughout the curriculum by embedding WI requirements in major coursework. Each student must take at least two WI courses, including one at the 300+ level. Emphasis is placed on discipline-specific writing and revision based on instructor feedback.
University of Minnesota – Writing-Intensive Curriculum	The University of Minnesota requires multiple WI courses at both lower and upper-division levels. WI courses must include substantial writing assignments, multiple drafts, and opportunities for revision based on instructor feedback. Faculty participate in WI workshops for certification.
Texas A&M University – Writing Intensive Courses in the Major	At Texas A&M, WI courses are taken within a student’s major. Each department customizes its WI offerings to discipline-specific communication standards. Faculty must demonstrate how writing and revision are integral to course design and undergo WI-focused training.
University of North Carolina at Charlotte – Writing in the Disciplines (WID) Program	UNC Charlotte’s WID Program requires students to complete writing-intensive coursework as part of their major. Courses must meet word count expectations, include iterative writing and revision processes, and align writing tasks with disciplinary expectations. Faculty development workshops are required for instructors.

University of California, Davis –
Writing Across the Curriculum
(WAC)/WI Program

UC Davis uses a WAC model that emphasizes writing instruction across all majors. WI courses focus on developing students' critical thinking, research, and discipline-specific communication skills. Faculty receive support and guidelines to integrate writing and revision effectively into course designs.

Virginia Tech – Writing Intensive
(WI) Requirements

Virginia Tech requires students to complete WI courses within their major field. Courses must include opportunities for significant revision, and writing must constitute a major portion of the course grade. Faculty participate in WI training and use structured assessment rubrics.