

To: Deans, Associate Deans, and Department Chairs  
Date: October 1, 2014  
RE: Institute Writing Policy: Impact of Recent Changes

A number of deans and department chairs have posed questions about the recent changes to the Institute Writing Policy. The following information is meant to offer guidance and encouragement as deans and chairs meet with faculty about course and program curricula. Anyone with additional questions should contact Dr. David Martins, University Writing Program Director.

## Revision to Institute Writing Policy

In May, 2014, the Academic Senate revised its policies concerning curriculum development (D1.0), which now includes the Institute Writing Policy (D1.5). As the policy currently states, undergraduate students have the following “writing intensive” requirements:

The Writing Across the Curriculum Program requirement entails three writing intensive (WI) credit-bearing courses.

1. One introductory WI course in the first year, "FYW: Writing Seminar" or other so-designated First Year Writing (FYW) course with approval of the First Year Writing Program Director.
2. One course or sequence of courses in the student's degree program (WI-PR).
3. A third WI course. Ideally this is a general education course (WI-GE), but it may also be a second WI-PR course.

As explained in policy, every effort should be made to distribute these courses over the student's time at RIT (e.g. FYW in the first year, a second WI course in years 2 or 3, and a WI-PR course in year four).

This re-articulation was intended to allow students flexibility in satisfying the three WI requirements. For example, assuming they have satisfied the FYW requirement, students who double major would satisfy the two remaining WI requirements as they complete the requirements for each degree. Similarly, students who change degree programs after completing one WI-PR course, would satisfy the second WI requirement, needing only to complete their new program's WI-PR course to complete all three WI requirements.

## New procedure from D1

Academic Senate revision of policies concerning curriculum development also requires changes to the procedure by which courses are proposed and approved as Writing Intensive. Further information about revised processes is found in RIT policy D1.0, and will be updated on the Institute Writing Committee (IWC) webpage. Additionally, please consult your college representative to the IWC if you have questions about this revised process. College Representatives are:

- KGC OE – Steven Day
- GCCIS – Matthew Fluet
- NTID – Pamela Kincheloe
- COS – Carl Lutzer
- CAST – Yossi Nygate
- CLA – Eric Nystrom

- SCB – Michael Palanski
- CIAS – Sarah Thompson
- CHST – Nancy Valentage

### **Retroactive approval**

The “WI” attribute is added to courses that have gone through the IWC approval process. The IWC has been approving WI designation for courses as they have been proposed, and is still in the process of approving courses. Although a rare case, students may be granted retroactive WI credit for a course that is in the review process but has not yet been approved, as long as the curriculum when the student took the class is the same curriculum being forwarded for WI designation.

### **Building Capacity for WI-GE**

In spring, 2014, the Institute Writing Committee presented a plan to the Academic Senate for building seat capacity for WI-GE courses that would be adequate to the yearly demand for such courses. The strategies presented as a part of that plan include attention to advising issues as well as identifying current courses that could be designated as WI or creating new courses that could also be designated as WI. Some of those strategies are immediately actionable, others are will be implemented during this academic year.

### **Request for Proposals**

The IWC requests proposals for new or existing courses that satisfy the WI criteria and will work with the University Writing Program (UWP) to identify GE-approved courses that currently satisfy WI criteria without pedagogical or curriculum changes. Additionally, the IWC and UWP are interested in working with faculty who are willing to modify GE-approved courses that currently satisfy most WI criteria. The UWP is committed to offering support to faculty teaching GE-approved courses that are not yet WI, or who want to develop WI courses that will also be considered for GE-approval. Interested faculty should be referred to Dr. David Martins, Director of the University Writing Program.

### **Section-specific WI-GE designation**

Based on feedback from department chairs, the IWC and UWP are working with chairs, advisors and the Registrar’s Office to create a procedure by which departments would be able to offer specific sections of a GE-approved course as WI-GE. This procedure will be put in place before students enroll in spring 2015 for fall 2015 classes.

### **AP credit review**

Current AP credit policy and practice is in place. The Academic Senate has charged the IWC to review the AP credit for WI courses. Anyone interested in issues concerning AP credit for WI courses should contact Dr. Michael Polanski, IWC co-chair, and Dr. David Martins, UWP Director.