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## UNIVERSITY POLICY ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

REVISED Academic Senate Policy

#F06-14

*(formerly policies S03-14 & 14B)*

### **OVERVIEW**

This document describes the formal University program in written English proficiency. It also highlights the special role and responsibility of instructors of undergraduate and graduate composition courses as well as the charge and the membership of the University Committee on Written English Proficiency.

The development of student writing skills is both central to the mission of the University and dependent on the full and active participation of faculty from all segments of the academic community. Although major responsibility for teaching English composition has historically resided within the English Department, the University's written English requirements apply to students, spanning a broad spectrum of academic majors and interests.

The University Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP) was established to encourage and support broad and effective faculty participation in the teaching and assessment of student writing. Towards these ends, the committee sponsors a wide array of services and activities in support of curricula and programs that foster the teaching, learning and assessment of written English; these services, activities and programs should be sensitive to the needs of a multi-cultural diverse student population. Furthermore, the committee endorses the principle that test development, procedures and instruments should reflect thoughtful and humanistic consideration of all people, be sensitive to the multi-cultural and ethnic diversity of our students, and to the extent possible be valid, reliable and free of bias.

## UNIVERSITY POLICY ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

# **UNDERGRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH POLICY**

## **Lower Division**

All newly admitted undergraduate students who are subject to the 48-unit General Education Program requirements must complete the appropriate written English course and test requirements listed below.

### 1. Undergraduate Entry Level Placement Tests (EPT and ESLPT):

All newly-admitted undergraduate students must take the California State University English Placement TEST (CSU-EPT) during their first semester of attendance at SFSU, except those with an approved EPT test or course exemption. The results of the EPT will not affect admissions eligibility. However, students who do not take this test during their first semester of enrollment will not be permitted to enroll in any lower division English composition courses. Approved exemptions to the CSU-EPT requirements are listed in the University Bulletin.

In addition to taking the CSU-EPT, all non-native speakers of English who wish to enroll in ESL courses must also take the SFSU-ESLPT (English-as-a-Second Language Placement Test) before the end of their second semester of instruction. Non-native speakers may consult the ESL Program Coordinator or the Testing Office for the SFSU-ESLPT schedule. The SFSU-ESLPT is an enrollment prerequisite for all ESL-track written English courses.

### 2. Developmental Written English Instruction:

Both native and non-native speakers of English who do not pass the CSU-EPT and/or the SFSU-ESLPT may be eligible for one or more of the developmental options listed below. Enrollment in these courses will depend on students' scores on these tests as well as the recommendations of the ESL Coordinator and/or the Coordinator of Writing Skills Program.

#### A. Native speakers of English:

All entering freshmen who are native speakers of English and score between 142 and 150 on the CSU-English Placement Test (EPT) must take English 51: Introduction to College Writing I, concurrently with English 121: Effective College Reading II. Students should take these courses in their first semester of enrollment at SFSU. These one-semester courses assist students in developing reading/writing abilities to the level required for entry into English 114.

All entering freshmen who are native speakers of English and who score 141 or below on the CSU-EPT must take English 48: Introduction to College Writing I concurrently with English 118: Effective College Reading II in their first

semester of enrollment at SFSU. They must take English 51: Introduction to College Writing I, concurrently with English 121: Effective College Reading II in their second semester. This two-semester sequence of courses assists students in developing reading/writing abilities to the level required for entry into English 114.

Units and grades earned in writing courses numbered below 100 **DO NOT** count toward meeting graduation requirements. Successful completion of the developmental English sequence by those students needing it is an enrollment pre-requisite for English 114 and 214.

#### B. Non-native speakers of English:

Students who are non-native speakers of English and who choose to take the ESL Program courses must take the ESL Placement Test to qualify for entry into ESL courses equivalent to English 114 (English 209: ESL: Composition I) and 214 (310: ESL Composition: II). Students who elect to fulfill their English requirements in the ESL Program may also be advised to take English 212: ESL Advanced Grammar for Writing, based on their ESLPT scores. EPT scores are not used in qualifying or placing students in the ESL Program.

Transfer and international students whose ESLPT scores fall below the qualifying scores for English 209 are required to take two concurrent courses: English 204: ESL Reading and Study Skills, and English 208: ESL Grammar for Writing I. First-time freshmen who are permanent residents or citizens, and who have attended high school in the United States, may take English 201 and English 202: ESL Intensive Academic English. This course is a two-semester sequence; English 208 is taken concurrently in either the first or second semester.

#### 3. English 114:

Students should take English 114, a foundation course in college-level composition skills, prior to completing 30 units of courses work. Only those students who can demonstrate one of the following are exempt:

- a. A score of 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
- b. Completion of an equivalent college-level course elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

Taking the CSU-EPT is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all English 114 courses as well as all ESL Program composition courses. Taking the SFSU-ESLPT is also an enrollment prerequisite for all ESL Program written composition courses.

Students who are non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 209 as an English 114 substitute, only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT exam and the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

#### 4. English 214:

English 214 is a GE Basic Subjects foundation course in composition, logic, style, rhetoric and literature. Students normally take English 214 after completing 24 semester units and prior to completing 60 semester units, unless they have one of the following exemptions:

- a. A score of 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
- b. Completion of an equivalent college-level courses elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

For native speakers of English, successful completion of English 114 or its equivalent is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all 214 courses. Students who are non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 310, as an English 214 substitute, only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT examination and the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

#### 5. Alternate 214 Courses:

The existing alternate 214 courses are like English 214, fundamental writing courses in which a subject matter area (e.g., music) serves primarily as a vehicle for the teaching/learning of writing and composition skills rather than discipline-specific content. The design and pedagogy of 214 alternates should focus primarily on writing and composition skills. In order to achieve this goal, all active alternate English 214 courses shall be periodically reviewed by the University Committee on Written English Proficiency.

Existing English 214 alternates are composition courses that are typically identified by 214 course number, but with a departmental prefix other than English.

Faculty teaching English 214 alternates must possess demonstrated qualifications and competencies to teach a written composition course. The appointing department chair and college dean, in consultation with the Dean of the College of Humanities and the Chair of the English Department, are responsible for the assessment of these qualifications before the person is assigned to teach any written composition courses.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies will serve as a liaison with department chairs and college deans to ensure that goal, and, if necessary, to resolve conflicts.

For native speakers of English, successful completion of English 114, or its equivalent, is a prerequisite for enrollment in all English 214 alternate course sections.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either A, B, C, No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

## **UNDERGRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH POLICY**

### **Lower Division**

All newly admitted undergraduate students who are subject to the 48-unit General Education Program requirements must complete the appropriate written tests and English course requirements listed below.

#### **I. Undergraduate Entry Level Placement Tests (EPT and ESLPT):**

All newly-admitted undergraduate students must take the California State University English Placement TEST (CSU-EPT) prior to their first semester of matriculated attendance at SFSU, except those with an approved EPT test or course exemptions listed in the University Bulletin. The results of the EPT determine placement into lower division classes for all non-exempt students.

All self-identified non-native speakers of English who wish to enroll in Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS) courses must also take the SFSU-ESLPT (English-as-a-Second Language Placement Test) with the exception noted in section II. B. below.

#### **II. First-Year Composition Requirement:**

Three equivalent pathways satisfy the First-Year Composition Requirement: Integrated Reading-Writing, Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS) or ENG 114.

##### **A. Integrated Reading-Writing (IRW)**

1. All entering freshmen who score 141 or below on the CSU-EPT must take the ENG 104-105 course sequence, except that entering freshmen who self-identify as non-native speakers of English may take either the ENG 104-105 sequence or courses in the Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS) program (see section II. B. below).

2. All entering freshmen who score between 142 and 150 on the CSU-English Placement Test (EPT) must take ENG 106, except that entering freshmen who self-identify as non-native speakers of English may take either ENG 106 or courses in the Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS) program (see section II. B. below).

The ENG 104-105 course sequence or ENG 106 must be completed within the first year of enrollment. Because the goals of the First-Year Experience (FYE) courses are accomplished in the ENG 104-105 sequence and ENG 106, students who successfully complete the ENG 104-105 sequence or ENG 106 will not receive credit towards graduation for other FYE courses.

Grading in all composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit (CR/NC). A grade of CR or C- or better in the ENG 104-105 sequence or ENG 106 satisfies the First-Year Composition Requirement. Students who receive credit for these courses will proceed to ENG 214. Students scoring 150 or below on the EPT who receive a grade of NC for ENG 105 or ENG 106 must enroll in ENG 114. Students who do not complete the ENG 104-105 course sequence or ENG 106 within one year are out of compliance with CSU Executive Order 665 and will be disenrolled from the University. They may be readmitted after successfully completing equivalent coursework elsewhere.

##### **B. Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS):**

Entering freshmen who self-identify as non-native speakers of English, have received EPT scores of 150 or below, and have attended high school in the U. S. may take CMS courses to satisfy the First-Year Composition requirement upon advisement. They do not have to take the ESLPT. Students must successfully complete this requirement in their first year.

##### **C. English 114:**

Students who score 151 or above on the EPT should take English 114, a foundational course in college-level composition skills, prior to completing 30 units of course work. Only those students who can demonstrate one of the following are exempt:

1. A score of 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;

2. Completion of an equivalent college-level course elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

Students who self-identify as non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 209 to fulfill the First-Year Composition

Requirement only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT exam and the approval of the CMS Coordinator.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit.

### III. English 214:

English 214 is a General Education Basic Subjects foundation course in composition, logic, style, rhetoric and literature. Students should take English 214 after completing 24 semester units and prior to completing 60 semester units, unless they have one of the following exemptions:

A. A score of 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;

B. Completion of an equivalent college-level courses elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

Successful completion of English 114 or its equivalent is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all 214 courses. Students who self-identify as non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 310 as an English 214 substitute only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT examination and the approval of the CMS Coordinator.

### IV. Alternate 214 Courses:

The existing alternate 214 courses, as with English 214, are fundamental writing courses in which a subject matter area serves as a vehicle for the teaching/learning of writing and composition skills rather than discipline-specific content. The design and pedagogy of 214 alternates should focus primarily on writing and composition skills. In order to achieve this goal, all active alternate English 214 courses shall be periodically reviewed by the University Committee on Written English Proficiency.

Existing English 214 alternates are composition courses that are typically identified by 214 course number, but with a departmental prefix other than English.

Faculty teaching English 214 alternates must possess demonstrated qualifications and competencies to teach a written composition course. The appointing department chair and college dean, in consultation with the Dean of the College of Humanities and the Chair of the English Department, are responsible for the assessment of these qualifications before the person is assigned to teach any written composition courses.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies will serve as a liaison with department chairs and college deans to ensure that goal, and, if necessary, to facilitate resolution of conflicts.

For native speakers of English, successful completion of English 114, or its equivalent, is a prerequisite for enrollment in all English 214 alternate course sections.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either A, B, C, No Credit or Credit/No Credit.

## Upper Division

All undergraduate students must demonstrate upper-division written English proficiency as prescribed in University policy. To meet this requirement, students must take the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET) after completing 48 semester units of course work, and before completing 80 semester units. If a student has not taken JEPET before s/he completes 80 units, s/he will lose registration priority, beginning the following semester, until s/he has taken JEPET.

To be eligible to take this examination, students are required to have passed English 114 and 214, or their equivalents. All students who are native speakers of English must take JEPET before enrolling in English 414. Those who pass JEPET will have satisfactorily completed the upper-division written English proficiency requirement. Those who fail JEPET must successfully complete English 414, a course that offers students extensive practice in expository writing. Students who do not pass JEPET must take English 414 the semester immediately after they take JEPET. If a student has not taken English 414, or an appropriate ESL course, during the semester immediately after s/he has taken and failed JEPET, the student will lose his/her registration priority, beginning the following semester, until s/he has enrolled in ENG 414. The successful completion of English 414 satisfies the upper-division requirement for those who do not pass JEPET. Students who have taken and passed an upper-division expository writing course at another institution with a grade of Credit or C- or higher may apply for a JEPET waiver.

Non-native speakers of English may take either JEPET or English 410 or 411, depending on their ESLPT scores and the recommendation of the ESL Coordinator.

Non-native speakers and bilingual students who elect to take JEPET and do not pass may take English 410 or 411 only with the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

Grading on all upper-division written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

## **GRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY**

All students in programs of graduate study at SFSU must demonstrate entry-level and exit-level writing proficiency in accordance with the "Guidelines to Establish English Writing Proficiency for Graduate Students."

### **1. Entry-level Writing Proficiency**

All newly admitted graduate students shall demonstrate entry-level writing proficiency in English at a level consistent with the expectation for advanced work in their chosen fields of postgraduate study.

To assess the entry-level writing proficiency of newly-admitted graduate students, departments shall employ one of the following evaluation options:

- a. Require students to take the SFSU Graduate Essay Test (GET);
- b. Require students to submit scores on an acceptable and nationally-recognized graduate-level examination that requires an expository writing sample;
- c. Require students to submit to the Department Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator or Committee Chair expository writing completed in one of the department's required courses during the first term of enrollment for evaluation of entry-level writing proficiency;
- d. Require students to take a graduate-level writing examination calling for expository prose administered and proctored by the department/program to which the student has been admitted;
- e. Require students to submit for departmental review a portfolio of expository essays other expository writings, or equivalent written creative work.

This assessment of a student's entry-level writing proficiency will be conducted prior to or during the student's first semester of enrollment in the graduate program (emphasis in the original text). Students who pass an approved examination or successful completion of the assessment processes stipulated above will have satisfied the graduate entry-level writing proficiency requirement.

Graduate students who do not demonstrate entry-level writing proficiency shall be required to remediate their deficiencies before the end of their second semester of graduate study (emphasis in the original text), in a manner approved by their departments.

### **2. Assessment of Exit-level Writing Proficiency**

Graduate students shall demonstrate exit-level writing proficiency by one or more of the following methods:

- a. Writing an acceptable Master's thesis;
- b. Writing a substantial paper in a culminating course or seminar;
- c. Successfully completing a comprehensive written examination administered by their department/program;
- d. Successfully completing a discipline-based project, creative work, or other activity that requires extensive writing.

Departments that cannot certify the completion of the exit-level graduate writing proficiency requirement, either before approving the Graduate Approved Program, or by exercising one of the culminating-experience options described above, shall submit a reasonable alternate plan to the Dean of the Graduate Studies.

## **UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (CWEP)**

### **CHARGE**

Many committees and programs at SFSU participate in activities designed to support the written proficiency of our students. CWEP, however, deliberates on the way in which the campus as a whole pursues the writing proficiency of its students, and serves as a "clearing house" for these all-University literacy efforts. CWEP is also responsible for promoting the participation of all SFSU faculty in achieving this goal.

Since CWEP proposes reviews and provides recommendations regarding policy and procedures on writing proficiency, it is important that it maintain communication and consult as appropriate with standing academic and administrative committees, departments, programs, colleges, and the Academic Affairs Cabinet and Council of Academic Deans. Similarly, when any of the aforementioned bodies is considering modifications to practice or policy affecting the written proficiency of students it will be expected to consult with CWEP in a timely fashion prior to approval.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies and/or the Dean of the Graduate Studies (or their designees to CWEP), as appropriate, will be responsible for ensuring that this consultation takes place, most especially when it affects implementation of campus-wide writing-proficiency policies. Proposed changes to such policies should be developed with broad consultation as described above, before submission to the Academic Senate.

The specific functions of CWEP include:

1. Recommend substantive and/or procedural changes in the implementation of the undergraduate written English proficiency requirements to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and to official policy-making bodies in accordance with established university policies and procedures and practices;
2. Recommend substantive and/or procedural changes in the implementation of the graduate written English proficiency requirements to the Dean of the Graduate Studies and to official policy-making bodies in accordance with established University policies, procedures and practices;
3. Serve as consultant on undergraduate and graduate written English proficiency to appropriate standing academic policy committees (e.g., APC, CRAC, EPC, GEC) and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee;
4. Serve as consultant in the implementation of undergraduate and graduate written English proficiency to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Dean of the Graduate Studies and the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee;
5. Serve as a subject-matter resource and liaison to faculty members and/or department/program chairs who seek assistance in developing writing components in their programs. The committee, on its own or jointly, may sponsor and consult on the following kinds of activities to strengthen, enhance, and improve student writing proficiency across the curriculum in both undergraduate and graduate programs:
  - Workshops focusing on such topics as grading, holistic evaluation, pedagogical strategies, and other competency areas to enhance the overall quality of instruction in courses having a substantial written English component.
  - Workshops for instructors interested in improving the quality of student writing across the curriculum;
  - Workshops on cultural and linguistic diversity;
  - Development and distribution of guidelines and materials to assist faculty members in enhancing both the content and pedagogy of written communication in English.
6. Evaluate proposals and make suggestions for improvement of disciplinary writing components, including assessment procedures, upon written request from program faculty. Copies of CWEP's written recommendations will be submitted to the appropriate department chair, college dean and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and/or the Dean of the Graduate Studies;
7. Submit an annual report to the Academic Senate summarizing committee activities.

Recommendations for substantive policy changes shall be submitted to the appropriate standing academic policy committees (e.g., EPC, APC, CRAC, GEC) and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or her/his designee. Recommendations for routine procedural modifications shall be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or her/his designee.

## **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**

CWEP will consist of the following members:

Voting Members:

- Three faculty members from the English Department, including one designated member from the composition program faculty and one designated member from the ESL Program faculty, elected by the English Department according to its established procedures;
  - Two faculty members from areas other than the English Department, elected at large by the university faculty;
- One faculty member from areas other than the English Department who has expertise in literacy issues, elected at large by the university faculty;
  - One undergraduate and one graduate student selected by the Associated Students;
  - One tenured English Department faculty member invited by the committee from one of the major feeder community colleges, for a one-year renewable term, who will serve as the community college liaison to the committee;
- The Coordinator of the Learning Assistance Center (or designee).

Non-Voting Members:

- The Dean of Undergraduate Studies or designee,
- The Dean of Graduate Studies or designee,

· One member of the Academic Affairs staff to be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and to serve as staff to the committee,

- The ESL Coordinator (or designee),
- The GET Coordinator (or designee),
- The JEPET Coordinator (or designee),
- The Reading Coordinator (or designee),

Each of the six elected faculty members will serve for staggered three-year terms. The Associated Students members may stand for re-election or re-appointment for one successive term only. The committee will elect one of its members as Chair for a one-year term.

**\*\*\*Revised Policy Unanimously Approved by the Academic Senate at its meeting on November 28, 2006\*\*\***

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