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## **Please Note:**

**This policy has been superceded by Academic Senate Policy #F10-14.**

**Academic Senate Policy #S09-14**

### **UNIVERSITY POLICY ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

*(n.b.: This policy incorporates revisions to the upper-division section, approved by the Academic Senate on 28Apr2009, and the graduate section, approved on 12May2009)*

*(Formerly policies S07-14; F06-14; S06-14\*; S03-14\*; and S03-14B)*

#### **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**

## **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.

## **II.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.

## **II.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.

## **II.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:

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.

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**

### **I. Fulfilling the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)**

As prescribed in CSU policy, "All students subject to the degree requirements of the 1977-78 or subsequent general catalogs must demonstrate competence in writing skills at the upper division level as a requirement for the baccalaureate degree and, if not previously met in the CSU, for a second baccalaureate degree" (EO 665). SFSU undergraduates who are first-time college students or returning students in Fall 2008 or later will satisfy the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) by earning a C grade or higher in an upper-division GWAR designated course in their major department, college, or program.

### **II. GWAR Designated Course Enrollment Requirements**

Students must have satisfied the lower-division writing requirements (see above) and earned at least 48 semester-units credit prior to enrollment in a GWAR designated course.

Students should pass a GWAR designated course, with a C grade or higher, before they have completed 90 units.

Departments, colleges and programs may restrict enrollment in GWAR designated courses to their declared majors with upper-division status, unless those courses are certified in the general education program.

### **III. Implementation**

Departments will indicate supplemental writing courses and support services for students who self-identify or are identified as under-prepared for GWAR courses.

CWEP is charged with the responsibility for approving GWAR designated courses. Other responsibilities and functions of CWEP are described elsewhere in this policy.

It is expected that most departments, colleges, and programs will have GWAR designated courses approved by CWEP and scheduled for matriculated students by Fall 2010. Departments or programs for majors that do not meet that deadline must submit a GWAR proposal to CWEP no later than Fall 2010.

### **IV. Exceptions**

SFSU undergraduates who were first-time college students or returning students prior to Fall 2008 and maintained continuous enrollment can satisfy the GWAR either by earning a C grade or higher in a GWAR designated course in their major or by passing the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET). Students in this category who take but fail the JEPET can satisfy the GWAR by earning a C grade or higher in ENG 414, 410, or 411.

SFSU undergraduates who were first-time college students or returning students prior to Fall 2008 but did not maintain continuous enrollment can satisfy the GWAR by passing the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET) before January 2011. Students in this category who take but fail the JEPET can satisfy the GWAR by earning a C grade or higher in ENG 414, 410, or 411 before January 2011.

Undergraduates who were first-time college students prior to Fall 2008 but did not maintain continuous enrollment and did not pass the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET) or earn a C grade or higher in ENG 414, 410, or 411 before January 2011 must satisfy the GWAR by earning a C grade or higher in a GWAR designated course in their major.

All students whose declared major is in a department, college, or program that does not have a CWEP approved GWAR designated course when they achieve upper-division status will be able to satisfy the GWAR by passing the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET). Students in this category who take but fail the JEPET can satisfy the GWAR by earning a C grade or higher in ENG 414, 410, or 411. However, students in this category who have not satisfied the GWAR through JEPET (or ENG 414, 410, or 411) by the time that a GWAR designated course is approved for their major and

scheduled, must satisfy the GVAR by earning a C grade or higher in that GVAR designated course.

“Continuously enrolled” is defined as matriculated attendance in at least one semester or two quarters each calendar year.

Students who have fulfilled the GVAR requirement established by their major’s department, college, or program will not have to take a second GVAR designated course if they change majors unless that course is needed to fulfill the requirements of the new major.

Students with double majors who have fulfilled the GVAR requirement established by their primary major will not have to take a second GVAR designated course unless that course is needed to fulfill the requirements of the second major.

Pursuant to E.O. 665 Section II.C.5, students who fulfilled the GVAR requirement at another CSU campus will not have to take a GVAR designated course at SFSU unless that course is needed to fulfill the requirements of their major.

## **V. Assessment**

In accordance with E.O. 665, the GVAR program shall be subject to periodic review and evaluation, at least every five years, by CWEP and the Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines (WAC/WID) specialist, in consultation with the Academic Senate and the Associated Vice President for Academic Planning and Educational Effectiveness (AVP for AP&EE). Such review and evaluation reports shall be presented to the Academic Senate by the WAC/WID Specialist. The first progress report is due no later than October 1st, 2011.

# **GRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY**

All students in graduate programs at SFSU must demonstrate Level One (entry) and Level Two (exit) writing proficiency in accordance with university, departmental and or programmatic guidelines.

## **I. Level One Written English Proficiency**

Prior to admission, departments and programs must assess graduate students’ written English proficiency as being appropriate for pursuing graduate studies in their disciplines. Each graduate program shall file a plan with the Division of Graduate Studies that describes how Level One writing proficiency will be assessed and specifies criteria for evaluation. Departments and programs may choose one or more assessment methods from the following range of possibilities:

- writing samples;
- personal statements;
- a passing score on a department or program administered exam;
- a score of at least 4.0/6.0 on the GRE or GMAT Analytic Writing Assessment;
- a score of at least 4.5/6.0 on the essay test of the paper-based [PBT] TOEFL (a minimum score of 24/30 on the Writing section of the Internet-based test [iBT] TOEFL);
- a score of at least 6.5/9.0 on the IELTS writing test, or a concordant score on the Pearson Test of English.

Departments and programs should develop rubrics for assessing writing samples, personal statements, and department- or program-administered exams.

If students have not met Level-One proficiency prior to admission, they may be admitted conditionally, and must be informed that their admission will involve specific remediation and may cause them to incur additional expenses and time to degree. Departments and programs admitting students below stated standards must submit a general support plan for such students to the Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP). Upon CWEP approval, the plan must be filed with the Division of Graduate Studies specifying appropriate educational resources to help students meet the Level One requirement. Such resources might include:

- discipline-specific writing courses;
- department or program administered tests;
- Learning Assistance services; and
- writing and editing courses designed for non-native speakers of English.

If a program recommends conditional admission for a student that it deems not able to meet the stated written English proficiency standards expected of its graduate students, then the program must advise the student about appropriate educational resources for acquiring the expected writing skills. It is the program’s responsibility to provide appropriate educational resources and to remove conditions for admission.

Students admitted conditionally or not meeting stated written English proficiency standards must meet Level One written English proficiency by the end of their second semester. Students must meet Level One written English proficiency prior to advancing to Level Two.

## **II. Level Two Written English Proficiency**

Upon review of the plan by the Associate Vice President of Academic Planning and Educational Effectiveness, each

graduate program shall file a plan with the Division of Graduate Studies that describes how Level Two writing proficiency will be assessed, specifies criteria for evaluation, and describes the process for students who do not pass the Level Two assessment on their first attempt. The Culminating Experience may be the most appropriate vehicle for satisfying Level Two proficiency, or graduate programs may develop other discipline-specific methods.

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

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 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 maintains communication and consults as appropriate with standing academic and administrative committees, departments, programs, colleges, and the Academic Affairs officers and the academic deans. Similarly, when any subset 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 the following:

1. Recommend appropriate actions to implement University policy on undergraduate written English proficiency. Recommendations regarding the undergraduate written English proficiency requirements will be made to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and to official policy-making bodies in accordance with established university policies and procedures and practices;
2. Recommend appropriate actions to implement University policy on graduate written English proficiency. Recommendations regarding the graduate written English proficiency requirements will be made 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 or successor bodies) 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 for instructors interested in improving the quality of student writing across the curriculum;
  - workshops on cultural and linguistic diversity; and
  - development and distribution of guidelines and materials to assist faculty members in enhancing both the content and pedagogy of written communication in English.
6. 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;
7. 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;
8. Submit an annual report to the Academic Senate summarizing committee activities.

Recommendations for changes in policy shall be submitted to the appropriate standing academic policy committees (e.g., EPC, APC, CRAC, GEC or successor bodies) 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:

- The Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines Coordinator;
- the Composition Coordinator (or designee);
- the Coordinator of Composition for Multilingual Students (or designee);
- one faculty member from the English Department, elected according to its established procedures;
- eight faculty members, one representing each College, elected by their respective Colleges through established procedures;
- one undergraduate and one graduate student selected by the Associated Students;
- one tenured English or ESL 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; and
- 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 Senate Educational Policies Council (EPC);
- one representative from the Library who has expertise in information competence, selected according to the Library's established procedures;
- a student services professional who is in direct contact with students and has experience with student issues related to writing, elected by the Student Services Professional electorate;
- 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 GET Coordinator (or designee);
- the JEPET Coordinator (or designee); and
- the Reading Coordinator (or designee).

Each of the nine elected faculty members will serve for a three-year term, with the initial members drawing straws for 3 one-year terms, 3 two-year terms, and 3 three-year terms. In the event that a member of the committee is replaced before the expiration of her/his term, the replacement shall serve out the remainder of the term, so that the nine elected committee members shall continue to have staggered terms. The Associated Students members may stand for re-election or re-appointment for one successive term only. The committee shall elect one of its members as Chair for a one-year term at the first meeting following spring elections and the seating of new members.

\*\*\*Revised policy approved by the Academic Senate at its meetings on

April 28 (upper-division) & May 12, 2009 (graduate)\*\*\*