



ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY

May 4, 2016

TO: Leslie Wong, President
San Francisco State University

FROM: Troi Carleton, Chair 
Academic Senate

RE: Senate Policy 014: Written English Proficiency

SOURCE COMMITTEE:

Academic Policies Committee

SENATE ACTION:

At its meeting on Tuesday, May 4, 2016, the Academic Senate approved **S16-014: Written English Proficiency**.

We solicit your concurrence. Thank You.

cc: Sue V. Rosser, Provost and VP for Academic Affairs
Daniel Ojeda, University Counsel
Deborah Vandommelen, Faculty Coordinator, Learning Assistance Center
Jennifer Summit, Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning
Ann Hallum, Dean of Graduate Studies
Morris Head, Senior Coordinator, Campus Academic Resource Program
Kimberley Altura, Director, Undergraduate Advising, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education
Juliana Van Olphen, Director, WAC/WID Program
All College Deans

cc: All Associate Deans, and Department Chairs

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

APPROVED:  Date: 5-6-16



SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy #: S16-014
Supersedes: S12-014
Senate Approval: 05/03/2016
Presidential Approval: 05/06/2016
Effective: 05/06/2016
Last Review: Spring 2016
Next Review: Spring 2021

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Rational

This policy revises Academic Senate Policy #S12-14 in pursuit of several goals.

- 1) In response to a request by the Department of Biology, we propose changing the minimum passing grade for GWAR-designated courses from a “C” to a “C-,” with departments or programs having the option to continue to require a passing grade of “C” or to set prerequisites such that students cannot proceed in the major without earning a specific grade in their GWAR course. This change would make GWAR grading consistent with ENG 214 grading, which will remain A, B, C, C-/NC; it would also mitigate a situation in which grades on objective examinations in GWAR classes are preventing students from progressing in their majors.
- 2) Because enrollment management has made requiring students to take ENG 214 between 24 and 60 units impractical, and because insufficient pedagogical rationale for requiring that constraint exists, we propose eliminating that requirement.
- 3) In light of growing popularity of International Baccalaureate (IB) programs and their content and rigor, we propose allowing IB exam results to meet requirements for first- and second-year composition as detailed below.
- 4) References to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies have been changed to the Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning.
- 5) References to the AVP of Academic Planning and Educational Effectiveness have been changed to the Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning or the Dean of Graduate Studies as appropriate.

The most recent revisions in Spring 2016 additionally address some typos or inaccuracies in the wording of the previous policy.

Author/Source

APC

Responsible Unit

Office of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning

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 all 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.

UNDERGRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH POLICY

A. Lower Division

All newly admitted undergraduate students who are subject to the 48-unit General Education Program requirements must complete the appropriate written English (or “composition”) course requirements listed below.

I. First-Year Composition Requirement

Three equivalent pathways satisfy the first-year composition requirement: ENG 104/105, First-Year Composition (Stretch); ENG 114, First-Year Composition; and ENG 209, Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS).

Only those students who can demonstrate one of the following have met the first-year composition requirement:

1. A score of 3 or higher on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
2. A score of 4 or higher on the Language A: Literature (HL) or on the Language A: Language and Literature (HL) examinations of the International Baccalaureate Program.
3. 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 select ENG 104-105 to satisfy the first-year composition requirement must enroll in their first semester and complete these courses before their second year of enrollment.

Students who select ENG 114 are strongly advised to enroll in their first semester, and must complete the course before their second year of enrollment. Students with a qualifying score on the SFSU-CMST (formerly ESLPT) or a directed self-placement decision of CMS (Composition for Multilingual Students) may take ENG 209 to satisfy the University's First-Year Composition requirement.

Students who earn a grade of CR or C- or better in the ENG 104-105 sequence satisfy the first-year composition requirement and are eligible to enroll in a second-year composition course. Students who receive a grade of NC in ENG 105 must enroll in and earn a grade of CR or C- or better in ENG 114 to satisfy the first-year composition requirement.

Students who earn a grade of CR or C- or better in ENG 114 satisfy the first-year composition requirement.

Students with a qualifying score on the SFSU-CMST (formerly ESLPT) or a directed self-placement decision of CMS (Composition for Multilingual Students) may take ENG 209 instead of ENG 104-105 or ENG 114. Students who earn a grade of CR or C- or better in ENG 209 satisfy the first-year composition requirement. First-time freshmen who do not qualify for ENG 209 may take ENG 201 and ENG 208 their first semester, and ENG 202 and ENG 212 their second semester. Students who complete these four courses with a B+ or better, and with their instructor's recommendation, have met the first-year composition requirement and can accelerate directly into ENG 310, the second-year composition requirement for multilingual students.

For AY 2015-2016, grading on all written composition courses will be either ABCC-/No Credit or Credit/No Credit.

II. Placement into First-Year Composition Courses

All newly admitted undergraduate students who must complete First-Year Composition will be placed into courses using directed self-placement. Directed self-placement is a placement method that provides students with information and advice about their placement options and places the ultimate decision in the students' hands. Students will receive directed self-placement information and advising prior to registration, and will select placement into the appropriate First-Year Composition course prior to freshman orientation.

All self-identified multilingual students who self-place into the Composition for Multilingual Students (CMS) option will receive additional advising, in conjunction with the SFSU-CMST (Composition for Multilingual Students Test, formerly English as a Second Language Placement Test [ESLPT]), in order to determine their placement into the most appropriate CMS course.

As required by CSU policy, 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. However, the results of the EPT will not be used to determine placement. EPT-exempt students must still complete directed self-placement to select their first-year course.

International students will not participate in directed self-placement. These students will be placed into appropriate First-Year Composition courses upon advisement.

III. CSU Entry-level Proficiency Requirement

First-time freshmen who were not able to show English proficiency at entry shall attain such proficiency during their initial college year of study at San Francisco State University.

IV. Second-Year Composition Requirement

The second -year composition requirement is a General Education basic subjects foundation course in composition, logic, style, and rhetoric. Only students who can demonstrate one of the following have met the second-year composition requirement.

1. A score of 3 or higher on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
2. A score of 4 or higher on the Language A: Literature (HL) or on the Language A: Language and Literature examinations (HL) of the International Baccalaureate Program.
3. 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 ENG 114 or its equivalent is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all second-year composition courses. Students who self-identify as multilingual speakers may enroll in ENG 310 as a second-year composition requirement course substitute only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU CMST (formerly ESLPT) examination and the approval of the CMS Coordinator.

B. 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 undergraduate who are first-time college students or returning students in Fall 2015 or later will satisfy the Graduate 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. Individual departments or programs may choose to raise the passing grade for GWAR designated courses to a C; this information should be included in the bulletin.

II. Supplemental Instruction for GWAR Courses

All students have the option for supplemental instruction to optimize their success in GWAR courses.

Students who have already met the second year composition requirement may select one of three options:

1. Enroll directly into a GWAR course without supplemental instruction;
2. Enroll in Grammar for Writers (ENG 418) or Grammar and Editing for Multilingual Writers (ENG 415) concurrent with a GWAR course;
3. Enroll in Second Year Composition, Multilingual (ENG 215) prior to, or in conjunction with, a GWAR course.

Students may seek advising with their major advisors and/or the CMS program regarding their options for supplemental instruction prior to registration in a GWAR course; further information can be found at <http://wac.sfsu.edu>.

III. GWAR-Designated Course Enrollment Requirements

Students must have satisfied the lower-division writing requirements (see above) and earned at least 48 semester-unit credits 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 GVAR-designated courses to their declared majors with upper-division status, unless those courses are certified in the general education program.

IV. Implementation

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

Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Course Criteria

The Academic Senate approves the following Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) course criteria for the purpose of facilitating the transition to a new way to fulfill the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement. The Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP) will submit an assessment report on the implementation of the GWAR courses, the GWAR policy, and the GWAR-course criteria to the Academic Senate no later than October 1st, 2014.

GWAR-course Criteria:

Criterion #1, Class Size: Courses satisfying the GWAR should have an enrollment maximum of 20-25 students. In rare cases, if departmental conditions warrant, and a rationale is provided to justify the exception, CWEP may approve a course that exceeds the maximum.

Criterion #2, Number of Pages/Words: The overall assignments for the course will include a minimum of 15 pages, meaning the equivalent of 4000 words, of formal writing that demonstrates upper-division written English proficiency within the given discipline.

Criterion #3, How Writing Will Affect the Final Grade: At least 60% of the grade in GWAR courses must be based on written assignments and take-home essay exams (e.g., exams designed to allow for revision), which are evaluated for both content and quality of writing.

Criterion #4, Revision of Assignments: GWAR courses must include substantive revision of major, graded, written assignments in response to feedback.

Criterion #5, Types of Assignments: GWAR courses should include a variety of writing assignments that are sequenced and / or distributed throughout the semester, rather than concentrated at the end.

Criterion #6, In-class Attention to Writing: GWAR course syllabi should reflect significant class time devoted to instruction in writing conventions within the given discipline.

Criterion # 7, Number of Units: GWAR courses, or course sequences, should be at least 3 units.

V. 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 or by passing a writing assessment. Students in this category who take but fail the writing assessment can satisfy the GWAR by earning a C- grade or higher in a GWAR-designated course or ENG 414.

SFSU undergraduates who were first-time college students or returning students prior to Fall 2008 but did not maintain continuous enrollment will have satisfied 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.

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

Students who have fulfilled the GWAR requirement established by their major’s department, college, or program will not have to take a second GWAR-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 GWAR requirement established by their primary major will not have to take a second GWAR-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 GWAR requirement at another CSU campus will not have to take a GWAR-designated course at SFSU unless that course is needed to fulfill the requirements of their major.

VI. 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 Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning. Such review and evaluation reports shall be presented to the Academic Senate by the WAC/WID Specialist.

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 Dean of Graduate Studies, 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 writing 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 writing proficiency of students, it will be expected to consult with CWEP in a timely fashion prior to approval.

The Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning 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 Education and Academic Planning 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 Education and Academic Planning, the Dean of 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:
6. Facilitate 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; and
 - development and distribution of guidelines and materials to assist faculty members in enhancing both the content and pedagogy of written communication in English.
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 Education and Academic Planning 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 Director;
- the Composition Director (or designee);
- the Coordinator of Composition for Multilingual Students (or designee);
- one (1) faculty member from the English Department, elected according to its established procedures;
- one (1) faculty member from the Library who has expertise in information competence, elected according to the Library's established procedures;
- one (1) faculty member from each College, to be elected according to established procedures;
- The committee may choose to add up to two (2) faculty members as regular voting members if it concludes this will add special competencies to its membership, assist in the solicitation of the widest possible range of views, or otherwise increase its productivity. These members are in addition to those members specified above;
- one (1) undergraduate and one (1) graduate student selected by the Associated Students; and
- the Director of the Learning Assistance Center (or designee).

Non-Voting Members:

- the Dean of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning;
- the Dean of Graduate Studies (or designee);
- one (1) member of the Academic Senate Educational Policies Council (EPC); and
- one (1) member of the Academic Affairs staff to be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and to serve as staff to the committee.

All elected faculty members will serve for three-year staggered terms. In the event that a member of the committee is replaced before the expiration of her/his term, the replacement member shall serve out the remainder of the term only. 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.