

Reading/Writing Enhancement

Reading/Writing Enhanced (RWE) Course Description: Reading and writing are inextricably linked and are essential components to the learning process and development in the disciplines. RWE courses incorporate frequent reading and writing assignments in ways that help students learn both the subject matter of the courses and discipline-specific ways of thinking and writing. These courses will create a writing environment that is fostered by pre-writing, multiple drafts, feedback, revision, and reflection. RWE courses are taken after the successful completion of the first year writing sequence of General Education, RWR I and RWR II.

RWE Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of an RWE course, students will be able to:

- Develop and complete an inquiry-based project within the disciplines through multiple drafts and revisions
- Critically read a variety of texts in order to analyze rhetorical situations within the discipline, including audience expectations and genre conventions
- Use writing as a form of thinking and problem-solving within the disciplines
- Demonstrate the appropriate use of resources in the field (including incorporation of ideas and documentation)
- Identify and demonstrate written conventions within the discipline (structure, mechanics, punctuation)
- Respond to feedback through revision

RWE Course Requirements: To be designated as reading and writing enhanced, a course must fulfill the following minimum requirements. Exceptions to some of these requirements may be made for faculty who present compelling pedagogical reasons to adjust these requirements.

1. Faculty will devote significant time to instruction on writing in the course and on how to complete assignments successfully. Writing assignments must be an integral, ongoing part of the course, and the writing assignments must constitute a substantial and clearly understood component of the final course grade. Assignments must be structured and sequenced in such a way as to help students improve their writing. Instructors in RWE courses should not just assign writing; they should help students succeed with and learn from that writing.

The writing assigned in class should be a combination of low stakes writing and high stakes writing. The term "low stakes writing" refers to writing-to-learn activities and other forms of writing that receive varying levels of developmental response by the instructor but do not count as a significant portion of the grade for the course. Often these assignments are graded only for completion. "High stakes writing" is assessed and used to grade a student's performance on the written component and the course content. (It is often useful to think of the two as practice or rehearsal versus a performance or game.)

Examples of assignments and instruction that would be appropriate: pre-writing (writing to learn), discussing organization and arrangement, giving feedback toward revision, reflection assignments, peer review, writing in the discipline-specific genres (different types of assignments), responding to and incorporating the writing of others (appropriate to the discipline), discussing written conventions, discussions of writing in progress and evaluation criteria.

2. Students will read multiple texts incorporating a variety of reading strategies. Reading activities of this type may include the following: having students read their own writing and the writing of their peers, pre-reading and identifying print apparatus, evaluating texts as models, responding to questions about a text, locating the main idea or central argument of a text, general discussion of text, determining patterns across a variety of text, putting texts in conversation with each other, reading in class and out of class, reading responses, or teaching reading annotation.

3. Graded writing assignments represent at least a third of the grade for the course. Graded writing assignments might include: short papers, take home exams, journals, longer papers, informative reports, response papers, lab reports, summaries, case studies, editorial writing, blog posts, annotated bibliographies.

4. Students should produce a minimum of 15 double-spaced pages of writing. The total number should come from multiple writing assignments. The instructor can choose to divide pages across different assignments. The following models are provided for reference.

Model #1

- One 3-page paper, with draft and revision
- One longer paper (c. 10 pages), with proposal, draft, and revision
- Three one-page papers (faculty reads and responds with comments)

Model #2

- Two 2-page papers, one of which is revised
- One 6-page paper, revised
- One 6-page group project
- One 2-page reflection paper

Model #3

- Five 1-page response papers
- One 10-page paper, with a draft and revision; developed from one or two of the response papers

Model #4

- Two 5-page papers, one revised
- A graded journal (faculty reads and responds to content)