**Eastern Mennonite University Writing Program**

**Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses**

The following assumptions, requirements, and criteria were developed by the writing committee and revised and approved by the General Education committee. These criteria are to be used by programs in the identification and development of courses they wish to have identified as WI (Writing Intensive) courses.

**Assumptions:**

1. Good writing promotes success within and beyond the university experience.
2. Writing is a way of learning because writing teaches students to observe carefully, think critically and clearly, and express themselves effectively.
3. Writing in a variety of forms, including composing for audio or visual communication, is essential, with particular forms varying by discipline.
4. Learning to write well requires practice over time.
5. Writing is improved when expectations are clearly communicated – for instance, when the assignment is consistent with the cognitive level expected and when the criteria for judging quality are identified.
6. Writing improvement is dependent on feedback.
7. All faculty use a writing standard/grid to assess student writing.
8. All faculty share the teaching of writing.
9. Students value writing when it is assigned frequently by all faculty and when it is clear that faculty value writing – for instance, when student work is read carefully, helpful and timely feedback is provided, and writing quality is considered in grading.
10. EMU faculty members are willing to improve their teaching skills in the area of writing.

**EMU Core Writing Requirements:**

* Students are required to complete College Writing or Advanced Writing or to satisfy requirements of same.
* Students are required to complete two additional writing-intensive courses or one Writing Intensive course plus one Communication Intensive course.

**Criteria for a course to be identified as a WI course:**

1. Enrollment is typically limited to 20 students.
2. Course builds on the information literacy component of the writing and advanced writing courses, with assistance from the library staff.
3. Course requirements incorporate writing assignments written at the highest cognitive levels (analysis, synthesis and evaluation).
4. Course schedule incorporates the writing process. Course requirements include at least 10-12 pages (for lower-level courses) and 12-15 pages (for upper level courses) of formal writing with opportunities for feedback and revision either as a series of short papers or as a longer project. All paper assignments are carried out in stages throughout the semester.
5. Professors will identify an assignment or choice of assignments for students to add to the Communication Showcase in their EMU portfolios, ideally one that demonstrates the culmination of their writing process. They will provide space and accountability for adding the work to the portfolio.

**Process:**

Departments should submit qualifying course syllabus to the Writing Program Director and EMU Core Director for review and approval.

*General Education Curriculum Committee February 24, 2004, Revised March 2023 by Writing Committee.*