

**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 departments 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 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.

**Undergraduate General Education 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.

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

1. Enrollment is 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 revision **either as a series of short papers or as a longer project. All paper assignments are carried out in stages throughout the semester.**

**Process:**

Departments should submit qualifying course syllabus to the Associate Dean for Curriculum along with the Writing Intensive Course Proposal and attached material.

*General Education Curriculum Committee February 24, 2004, Revised October 2007*

*Z/academic/writing across the curriculum*