

Revised Guidelines and Recommendations for Writing II Courses

Overview

In general, UCLA's Writing II Program is built on the assumption that writing is integral to thinking, learning, identity, and society. The better one writes, therefore, the better equipped one becomes to lead a well-examined, self-expressive life, and to be a good citizen.

With this in mind, the goal of Writing II is to improve the writing proficiency and range of first- and second-year students by building on skills acquired in Writing I. Writing II courses teach students to write with disciplinary principles in mind, and require students to revise their written work by refining their ideas and the quality and clarity of their expression, preserving subtlety, energy, and a personal voice. Students produce fifteen to twenty pages of revised prose in Writing II courses. They receive ample guidance in this endeavor, both from their instructors in draft comments and conferences and from their peers in class discussions. They learn to assess their writing's effectiveness by evaluating its focus, organization, content, and expression.

Writing II faculty and TAs also emphasize the rhetorical, stylistic, formal, and discipline-specific qualities of each course's required readings. These materials are used as teaching aids to sensitize students to the challenges and rewards of writing well. In other words, readings in a Writing II course are not purely a matter of "content."

Description and Specifications

- *Writing II uses the subject matter of lower-division courses given by departments or programs to teach expository writing appropriate to the discipline or field in question.
- *Writing II courses should be offered in a variety of formats, from lecture classes with multiple sections to single-class courses. Courses that will qualify for Writing II credit include small writing courses (e.g., English 4W, English Composition 100W – designed primarily for Transfer Students), writing-intensive Honors Collegium seminars, lecture courses that emphasize writing instruction (e.g., Comparative Literature 2AW-DW), and other lecture courses created or modified to emphasize the development of student writing.
- *Sections of Writing II shall have no more than twenty students; each instructor (or TA) will be responsible for one section only, except in the Cluster courses, where each GSI will normally be responsible for two sections of no more than twenty students each.
- *When appropriate, Writing II courses should take advantage of new technologies.
- *Writing II courses must be offered for a letter grade and carry *Impacted* course status. Students will be dropped from their sections if they miss the first two meetings of the course.
- * Summer Sessions Writing II courses must be taught by instructors who have had experience teaching Writing II courses

*Writing Programs faculty will train Writing TAs and will participate in teaching Writing II courses.

Expectations and Purpose

Writing II courses should assume a basic level of writing competence students have learned in Writing I through ESL and English 3 courses. However, it remains important to devote close attention to word-choice, to the development of an argument, to the structure of paragraphs and essays as a whole, and to the rhetoric of the sentence. Whereas the primary purpose of the first writing requirement is to teach academic writing in a generic sense, the primary purpose of this second writing course is to increase student awareness of disciplinary conventions and engage them in increasingly complex writing tasks. Doing so requires them to understand the discipline's rhetorical modes and to use that understanding to make progressively more ambitious, logical and persuasive arguments, analyze evidence, describe research, and evaluate differences of ideology, theory, and perspective.

Integration of Writing and Course Content

Writing should be a means for students to discover, explore, and demonstrate knowledge of the course subject matter. Therefore, discussion of writing should be integrated into both faculty lectures and TA discussion sections. This may include addressing rhetorical topics, writing assignments, and student writing as well as the assigned reading.

Writing and Reading Assignments

The sequence of writing assignments should be designed to help students build their writing skills through the quarter. It should introduce students to the discipline's various genres and modes of discourse. Short informal writing exercises such as reading-response journals and prewriting exercises should complement this more formal writing. The nature and length of reading assignments should be appropriate to a course whose central objective is to teach writing skills.

Revision and Writing Evaluation

Students in these courses should write three to four analytical papers resulting in fifteen to twenty pages of revised work. Revised work means that the student writes a second, perhaps a third, draft based on the instructor's and/or peers' evaluation of the previous draft. While the quality of final revisions should be the most important evaluative criterion, a student's engagement in all parts of the writing process may influence the final grade.

TA Training and Mentoring

TAs assigned to Writing II will receive training and mentoring from Writing Programs faculty in credit-bearing courses (numbered 495). New TAs will be trained during or prior to the quarter they are teaching; continuing Writing II TAs are mentored during the quarter they are teaching. The purpose of the training and mentoring is to prepare graduate student instructors to teach writing, and to guide them to efficient, effective, and ethical resolutions of tasks and problems that may arise in these courses.