

## *The Writing Intensive Course*

### *Offered through The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Pilot Program*

SUNY College at Old Westbury ♦ Updated Fall 2013

### *What is a “Writing Intensive Course”?*

Writing Intensive courses are being offered at SUNY College at Old Westbury as part of the Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) Pilot Program. Writing Intensive courses are the same courses regularly offered at the college, but they are modified to include such elements as more frequent writing, the revision of writing, and discussions about writing. To help define “writing intensive courses,” many programs set a minimum number of words or pages that students are required to write for the class, spread out across the weeks of the semester.

Types of writing assignments range from

- more formal (high stakes) assignments such as essays, research papers, lab reports, summaries, etc.
- more informal (low stakes/writing-to-learn) assignments such as learning journals, online discussion board entries, lecture summaries, response journals, and “One Minute Essays.”

Because writing intensive courses are also grading and feedback-intensive courses, the enrollment cap is usually between 15 and 20 students. This also allows for additional instructor-student interaction.

### *What are the requirements for a “Writing Intensive” course in the SUNY College at Old Westbury Writing across the Curriculum Pilot Program?*

Our writing intensive courses have the following requirements:

1. **Amount of Writing:** Students produce a minimum of 30 pages of writing, or 9,000 words per semester, preferably a mix of informal “writing-to-learn” exercises and more formal writing assignments.
2. **Frequency of Writing:** Some form of writing is required each week, whether in or out of class, whether short, low stakes or longer, high stakes assignments.
3. **Emphasis on Revision:** At least one assignment, but preferably more, is done in at least two drafts with instructor comments on each draft.



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4. **Discussions about writing:** Some class time is devoted to discussion, lessons, and/or workshops in writing/discipline-specific writing. This can include in-class workshops run by Jody Cardinal, the Director of the Writing Center.
5. **Emphasis on standards appropriate for the course and level of students:** At least 15 pages or 4,500 words will be commented on and evaluated by the instructor. The instructor's comments and evaluation provide feedback on the overall patterns in a student's writing, *not* on every sentence or paragraph. The Pilot Program Score Sheet and other resources on grading are available.

***Other Features Include:***

**Lower seat cap to handle grading:** Seat cap is 15 to 20 students in most writing intensive courses.

**Assessment:** A new assessment program is in place for 2013-2014 that is designed to be efficient and effective.

**Instructor Training and Support:** When they first join the Writing across the Curriculum Pilot Program, writing intensive course instructors receive a one-time training stipend for undergoing WAC training. Instructors who return to the program have access to on-going training and resources. The Pilot Program also offers workshops and resources for all instructors on the SUNY College at Old Westbury campus.

### ***About the Writing across the Curriculum Pilot Program***

The Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) Pilot Program was put into place in Spring 2012 to collect input and data from instructors and students that will be used to design a structured Writing across the Curriculum Program for the college.

The Pilot Program coordinates a series of writing intensive courses from across the campus each semester, provides writing intensive instructor training, makes available writing resources for students, and offers resources on WAC pedagogy to all faculty members at the college. Members of the WAC Pilot Program form an Advisory Council that provides feedback and input on the development of a Writing across the Curriculum Program for SUNY College at Old Westbury.

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