

## **Departmental Proposal for Integrating Writing into Courses Academic Year 2006-2007**

The Writing Board, established by the Provost with support from the Undergraduate Council, is charged with developing a long-term plan for establishing Writing in the Disciplines (WID) at UMBC. The creation of this board is in response to one of the recommendations put forth by the Honors University Task Force.

Together, the Writing Board and the Provost's Office will provide departments with the opportunity to develop a plan for integrating more writing into departmental courses. (For more suggestions about what writing-intensive courses should include, review the attached guidelines at the end of this proposal form.)

Interested departments should complete the Proposal Form and return it to Jill Randles, ADMN 412 or via e-mail at [jrandles@umbc.edu](mailto:jrandles@umbc.edu). The Writing Board will review all proposals and select three departments to be awarded a small grant of \$5,000.00 to offset the costs of implementation.

**DUE DATE: For AY2006-2007 is Friday, March 31, 2006**

### **General Information:**

- A. Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Department Chair: \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Chairperson's E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Chair indicates that the process of investigating the integration of writing into departmental course offerings will be an experience involving most, if not all, members of the department.

- 1. What does the department need in order to develop an initial plan for integrating more writing opportunities into departmental courses?**  
For example, will the department meet as a whole (or select a committee) to outline specific steps needed to produce a departmental plan acceptable to all faculty? Who will review your current curriculum to identify courses where more writing could be integrated? How will the faculty assess the techniques and strategies currently used to teach writing in your department? Will the faculty hold in-house workshops to examine the department's writing component? Will the department bring in a well-known person in your discipline who has implemented writing-intensive courses successfully at his or her institution? Will the department consult with others on campus, such as with those departments that are already integrating writing intensive courses into their curriculum or members of the Writing Board who have expertise in writing, to discuss their experiences and identify best practices at UMBC?

**2. Please speculate on the kinds of things your plan might include (related to your course offerings), how you would enact it, and how you would assess its success.**

For example, will there be increased writing in several required courses? In each year of the major? In senior seminars? Will books or other materials about writing in your discipline be used in the class? Will a variety of types of writing be included in all courses, or separated into components of various classes? Will the instructors be trained and supported? How will instructors monitor their students' progress? Will students be asked to evaluate their improvement in writing?

**3. When will you be able to report to the Writing Board that your plan has been enacted and assessed?**

For example, when will the faculty meet to discuss writing in your department? When do you expect to implement writing strategies in courses? When will faculty determine the effectiveness of the proposed changes?

**Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses**  
**Center for Teaching, Learning, and Writing at Duke University**  
<http://www.ctlw.duke.edu/>

Guidelines for the W Courses: The aim of the Writing-in-the-Disciplines program is to engage undergraduates in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly research. This means that the work students do as writers needs to be a visible and integral part of a writing-designated course. Students in such courses should thus expect to:

**Write frequently throughout the term**

Students should be given regular practice in and comments on their writing. Assignments might take various forms, including, for instance, a series of brief response papers, or several mid-length papers, or a longer research project divided into sections.

**Discuss the work they are doing as writers at various points during the term**

Students might present papers seminar-style to the class, collaborate on assignments, post research on the web, or otherwise read and respond to one another's work.

**Reflect on and improve their work as writers**

Students might revise some of their writings in response to comments from their instructor, or write a series of papers in response to a set of linked topics or issues, or draft proposals for or submit sections of longer projects, or expand short response papers into longer essays.

**Consider the roles and uses of writing in the discipline they are studying**

Students might analyze the structures of various genres of writing (critical essay, lab report, research article, policy memo, etc.), become familiar with standard forms of

documentation, or discuss some of the characteristic styles of argument and discourse in the field.

The sort of course that would not fit these guidelines would be one, for instance, in which the only appearance of writing was a research paper due at the end of term, or one in which writing was used largely as a means of evaluation - that is, a course in which essays or papers were occasionally assigned in the place of tests or other projects but which did not provide occasions for students to discuss or revise their work as writers. The key is to imagine a course in which student writing is, itself, a focus of study. So long as that criterion is met, our hope is that faculty will develop courses that are as diverse as possible in the topics they explore, the forms of critical and scholarly writing they encourage, and the modes of inquiry, research, and conversation they provoke.