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## **Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Policy**

### **1.0 Overview**

- 1.1** The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) was implemented by the CSU in 1977 and has undergone several CSU revisions, the most recent of which is Executive Order 665 implemented in the fall of 1998 and italicized in the sections below.
- 1.2** The GWAR obliges all CSU campuses to certify the writing proficiency of all undergraduate and graduate students before their degrees are granted.
- 1.3** The University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be responsible for seeing that the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) is implemented and administered at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). Procedures for implementing and administering the GWAR may be amended or altered without necessitating a new Presidential Memorandum.
- 1.4** The GWAR program reports to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the Office of Academic Affairs.

### **2.0 CSU Policy and CSUDH Implementation: GWAR at the Baccalaureate Level**

- 2.1** Competence in Writing Skills at the Upper Division Level
  - 2.1.1** Executive Order 665: *“All students subject to the degree requirements of the 1977-78 or subsequent general catalogs must demonstrate competence in writing skills at the upper division level as a requirement for the baccalaureate degree, and if not previously met in the CSU, for a second bachelor’s degree.”*
  - 2.1.2** Undergraduate CSUDH students may meet the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement in any of the following ways:
    - 2.1.2.1** By completion of one of the approved **GWAR-certifying** courses at the upper division level with a grade of "C" or better.
    - 2.1.2.2** By satisfying a Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement

(GWAR) course before matriculating to CSUDH.

- 2.2** Campus Matriculation
  - 2.2.1** Executive Order 665: *“Students shall be matriculated at the CSU campus where they satisfy the GWAR.”*
  - 2.2.2** CSUDH shall allow students in distance learning programs to meet the requirements at other CSU campuses or CSUDH.
- 2.3** Certification Transferability
  - 2.3.1** Executive Order 665: *“Certification of graduation writing competence shall be transferable from one CSU campus to another.”*
- 2.4** Implementing Changes and Periodic Review
  - 2.4.1** Executive Order 665: *“Campuses shall submit annually to the Chancellor’s Office as requested a description of any changes in campus provisions for the implementation of the GWAR. Campus GWAR programs shall be subject to periodic review and evaluation at least every five years under the supervision of the Advisory Committee of Student Writing Skills.”*
  - 2.4.2** CSUDH shall respond to the Chancellor’s Office as requested. The University Writing Committee (UWC) will submit assessment materials regarding the GWAR program to USLOAC on an annual basis.

### **3.0 CSU Policy: GWAR at the Graduate Level**

- 3.1** Writing Proficiency as a Condition for Graduate Program Admission
  - 3.1.1** Executive Order 665: *“Campuses may require demonstration of writing proficiency as a condition for admission to a graduate program.”*
  - 3.1.2** CSUDH shall accept this option with the understanding that the graduate program shall require GWAR certification of all its applicants, including those who graduated from campuses outside the CSU.
- 3.2** Additional Demonstration of Writing Proficiency
  - 3.2.1** Executive Order 665: *“Campuses may require additional demonstration of advanced-level writing proficiency as a condition for admission to a graduate program and/or award of the graduate degree.”*
  - 3.2.2** CSUDH shall grant graduate programs greater flexibility in satisfying the GWAR. The UWC shall review and approve or disapprove all such variations.
- 3.3** Pathways to Satisfy the GWAR: Graduate Level (GL) Requirements
  - 3.3.1** Graduate students who earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in the United States satisfy the GWAR: GL.
  - 3.3.2** Graduate students who earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited non-U.S. institution where English is a primary language of instruction to satisfy the GWAR: GL.
  - 3.3.3** Graduate students who earned a four (4) or above on the analytical writing component of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) or the

- Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) satisfy the GWAR: GL.
- 3.3.4 Students coming from baccalaureate programs offered in non-English speaking university settings can qualify to enter a graduate program by meeting university admissions standards as outlined in the online course schedule and catalog.
  - 3.3.5 If in the future a graduate program would like to add an additional requirement for GWAR certification in their area it would need to meet the requirements for GWAR certifying courses at the undergraduate level.

#### 4.0 Responsibilities of Various Campus Entities Regarding the GWAR

- 4.1 The Academic Senate shall review and recommend approval for changes in policy and implementation of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).
- 4.2 The Office of Academic Affairs has administrative authority over the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement program.

#### 5.0 University Writing Committee (UWC) Service and Composition

##### 5.1 Committee Charge

- 5.1.1 The UWC initiates and/or reviews all policy proposals pertaining to GWAR and submits formal recommendations to the Academic Senate for review and approval.
- 5.1.2 The UWC implements and oversees policies governing GWAR requirements and standards and shall **review and approve courses for GWAR certification as part of the curriculum review process.**
- 5.1.3 The UWC administers and assesses the elements of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.

##### 5.2 Committee Composition

- 5.2.1 The UWC's approved charge indicates that the WAC Coordinator shall serve as Chair and engage in on-going consultation with all stakeholders regarding the GWAR implementation.
- 5.2.2 One faculty member from each of the following Colleges and Units elected by the faculty of those Colleges:
  - 5.2.2.1 College of Arts & Humanities (excluding English Department faculty)
  - 5.2.2.2 The University Library
  - 5.2.2.3 College of Business Administration & Public Policy
  - 5.2.2.4 College of Education
  - 5.2.2.5 College of Health, Human Services, & Nursing
  - 5.2.2.6 College of Natural & Behavioral Sciences
  - 5.2.2.7 The Director of the Writing Center, alongside the WAC Coordinator, provides essential disciplinary expertise in the

cultivation of a robust culture of writing at CSUDH. The approved Position Description for the Writing Center Director includes standing membership on the UWC.

- 5.2.2.8** One faculty member, with disciplinary experience working with multilingual students, elected by the Academic Senate.
- 5.2.3** As a university-wide deliberative body, the UWC seeks an inclusive, multi-disciplinary membership, including non-tenure track faculty. As Colleges and other equivalent academic units might be re-named, re-structured, or grow in number, the policy will not have to be revised when such changes occur.
  - 5.2.3.1** One member of Associated Students Incorporated (ASI) with undergraduate standing elected by ASI Leadership.
  - 5.2.3.2** One member of ASI with graduate standing elected by ASI Leadership.
  - 5.2.3.3** The Director of the University Advisement Center.
  - 5.2.3.4** The Chair, or designee, of the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate.
  - 5.2.3.5** The Chair, or designee, of the General Education Committee.
  - 5.2.3.6** The Chair, or designee, of the University Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee.
  - 5.2.3.7** One faculty member of the Graduate Council elected by the faculty of the Council.
  - 5.2.3.8** One faculty member from the English Department elected by the department faculty.
  - 5.2.3.9** The Composition Coordinator of the English Department. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies (ex officio).
- 5.2.4** Committee Service
  - 5.2.4.1** Service on the committee of the elected members shall be in staggered two-year terms with the terms of newly added members to be determined by lot at the first UWC meeting of each academic year.
- 5.2.5** Committee Chair
  - 5.2.5.1** The Chair of the Committee reports on the committee's activities to the Academic Senate during its regularly scheduled meetings at the request of the Chair of the Academic Senate.

## **6.0 Certification by Course – Undergraduates**

- 6.1** All certifying courses must emphasize writing in disciplinary academic discourse(s), with ample writing activity and instructor feedback and must be reviewed by the University Writing Committee (UWC) for approval as part of the university's curriculum review process.
- 6.2** GWAR-certifying courses shall address these requirements and general

outcomes:

- 6.2.1** GVAR-certifying courses shall engage in writing related to disciplinary discourse communities by identifying the norms, goals, and the historically and socially constructed features of the discourse's practices and artifacts. They shall further:
  - 6.2.1.1** Be capped at 25 students per section;
  - 6.2.1.2** Require ten to twelve pages of formal writing in the genres and forms that constitute the activities and discourse of defined disciplines;
  - 6.2.1.3** Require ten to twelve pages of informal writing that scaffold and build toward the required pages of formal writing, which may include write-to-learn activities (students using writing to discover and develop their own ideas and understanding of concepts, new vocabulary, disciplinary theories, etc.), peer-to-peer feedback, reflective writing on their own processes, reader response, etc.;
  - 6.2.1.4** Engage students in a robust writing process throughout the course, which shall include pre-writing/generating and developing ideas, reading and research, drafting, peer feedback/collaboration, instructor feedback, and ample opportunity for revision in light of the iterative process prior to summative assessment of their writing;
  - 6.2.1.5** Total a minimum of 3 credit units OR a minimum of 2 ½ hours of weekly instruction; and
  - 6.2.1.6** Require students to pass with a **grade of C or better** in order to satisfy GVAR.
- 6.3** The UWC will be responsible for keeping the above stated requirements and outcomes consistent with current best practices and scholarship in the field of Writing Studies and Writing Across the Curriculum.
- 6.4** Faculty who teach GVAR-certifying courses will be required to complete a brief (approximately 30 minute) online module that provides a detailed explanation of the requirements for GVAR-certifying courses outlined in section 6.2.1.

**Approved:** Dr. Michael E. Spagna, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Date:** November 23, 2020