

Overview 2016 WSCUC Task Force Report on Written Communication

WSCUC standard for Written Communication: “Communication by means of written language for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes. Written communication may appear in many forms, or genres. Successful written communication depends on mastery of the conventions of the written language, facility with culturally accepted structures for presentation and argument, awareness of audience, and other situation-specific factors.” (WSCUC 2013 Accreditation Handbook)

CSUDH’s Institutional Learning Outcome for Communication: “Having completed general education and disciplinary specific curriculum at the baccalaureate level, a CSUDH graduate will... communicate clearly and collaborate effectively in a range of social, academic, and professional contexts, both orally and in writing.” (<http://www4.csudh.edu/academic-affairs/student-learning/>)

Indirect Assessment Measure #1: **Faculty Teaching Practices Survey** (223 of 824 faculty; 27.1%)

100- & 200-level GE courses	300- & 400-level GE courses	100- & 200-level major courses	300- & 400-level major courses
Assignments link to CLOs: 90% PLOs: 86.5%	Assignments link to CLOs: 91% PLOs: 91%	Assignments link to CLOs: 96% PLOs: 88%	Assignments link to CLOs: 93% PLOs: 85%
Explain concept/use of academic genres: 62%	Explain concept/use of academic genres: 66%	Explain concept/use of academic genres: 75%	Explain concept/use of academic genres: 62%
Students write in style/format of discipline: 73%	Students write in style/format of discipline: 63%	Students write in style/format of discipline: 75%	Students write in style/format of discipline: 90%
Students write in one or more acad. genre: 46%	Students write in one or more acad. genre: 44%	Students write in one or more acad. genre: 50%	Students write in one or more acad. genre: 57%

Indirect assessment measure #2: **Writing Across the Curriculum Student Survey** (1,632 of 16,106 students; 10.08%)

92% of all students surveyed favorably assessed themselves as writers

(15% = “Excellent”; 51% = “Proficient”; 26% = “Generally competent”)

83% agree or strongly agree that writing is important to their major

63% agree or strongly agree that their instructors care about improving their writing

67% agree or strongly agree that they are comfortable approaching instructors for writing support.

Direct assessment measure #1: **Sample student papers** from composition courses (ENG 095, 099, 108, 109, 110, 111, 350); **298 samples** from over **100 courses** (80% of all possible samples)

Overall direct assessment findings

- 48% of all samples were rated “Exceeds, “Exceeds / Meets,” or “Meets” expectations overall
- 26% of all samples were rated “Meets / Approaches Meeting expectations” overall
- 26% of all samples were rated “Approaches Meeting expectations” or “Does Not Meet expectations” overall
- Slightly over half of all samples (52%) did not clearly fall into the “Meets expectations” category overall

Though CLOs vary from course to course, the following types of outcomes had the relatively weakest ratings across all courses:

- Order sentences into coherent paragraphs
- Order paragraphs into a coherent composition
- Write a composition virtually free from errors in mechanics and usage

The following types of outcomes had the relatively strongest ratings across all courses:

- Use accurate diction appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience of a composition
- Show familiarity with the principle modes of academic discourse
- Write effective expository prose using academic frameworks (i.e., definition, cause & effect, analysis)

Recommendations:

- **Engage faculty in developing assignments and teaching materials that support student learning in all assessment domains with particular focus on effective approaches to student error and structuring the parts of a composition coherently;**
- **Emphasize the importance and benefits of offering students authentic writing opportunities through faculty development opportunities;**
- **Conduct rotating, multi-year direct assessment of composition courses to determine if revised PLOs, CLOs, and SLOs are being met;**
- Systematically align Program, Course, and Student Learning Outcomes with faculty expectations and student need in consultation with all stakeholders, with immediate focus on ENG 111 and 350;
- Provide baseline funding and other types of support for the on-going assessment of written communication.

Direct assessment measure #2: **Sample student papers** from WI courses; **130 samples** from **26 courses** were submitted, a **63% submission rate**. Of these samples, approximately 90 were rated.

Direct assessment findings by domain:

	Demonstrates Critical Thinking	Reflects Disciplinary Conventions	Communicates Clearly	Overall Assessment Rating
Meets expectations or higher	58%	52%	57%	69%
Meets/Approaches Meeting expectations or lower	42%	48%	43%	31%

Recommendation: that the WAC Coordinator and UWC develop a two-year assessment plan for Writing Intensive Courses, including:

- using faculty and student writing survey data as a starting point for identifying courses that emphasize writing in the discipline;
- **revising the WI policy to emphasize the program’s qualitative PLOs rather than quantitative measures for course approval;**
- **using identified courses as the basis for building faculty buy-in for WI courses and increasing the density of WI-designated courses.**

Task Force Committee Members:

Helen Oesterheld, Associate Professor of English and Task Force Chair
 Siskanna Naynaha, Associate Professor of English and WAC Coordinator
 Timothy Chin, Department Chair and Professor of English
 David Sherman, Professor of English and SIL Program in English Coordinator
 Thomas Giannotti, Professor of English and Director of Composition
 Peggy Ozaki, Assistant Director, Toro Learning Center
 Timothy Caron, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Humanities
 G. Keong Leong, Associate Dean, College of Business Administration and Public Policy
 Glenn DeVoogd, Associate Dean, College of Education
 Ben Zhou, Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Services and Nursing
 Hamoud Salhi, Associate Dean, College of Natural and Behavioral Science