
Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement
[Supersedes PM 79-10]

University Composition Committee

1. Overview

The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) as instituted by The California State University requires all CSU campuses to certify the writing proficiency of all undergraduate and graduate students before their degrees are granted. The GWAR Coordinator and the University Composition Committee shall be responsible for seeing that the GWAR is implemented and administered at CSUDH. Achieving the goals of the GWAR is a university-wide responsibility, not a departmental one.

CSUDH students may meet the GWAR in one of two ways: by successful completion of the Graduation Writing Examination (GWE) or by successful completion of one of the approved writing certification courses.

2. Charge

The University Composition Committee and the GWAR Coordinator have the responsibility to implement and administer the GWAR. The Committee and Coordinator report to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Committee and Coordinator shall

- Review and oversee the implementation of all policies and procedures associated with the GWAR, such as, but not limited to, the scoring guide, the appeals process, the granting of more time to non-native speakers of English on the GWE, and the testing calendar. Recommendations for changes to policies must be submitted to the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate.
- Review and revise, if necessary, the criteria that govern all GWAR certification courses.
- Oversee all certification courses that satisfy the GWAR and examine the effectiveness of all courses that satisfy the GWAR. The University Composition Committee and the GWAR Coordinator, working together, are empowered to remove a course from the list of GWAR certification courses if that course does not meet the criteria for GWAR courses.

- Review all proposals from departments and programs wishing to offer courses that would satisfy the GEAR. If a proposal is not approved, an explanation of the reasons for that decision shall be sent to the proposer.
- Administer the Graduation Writing Examination (GWE) and the Composition Cooperative (the end-of-the-semester essay examination administered in all certification courses).
- Review the items in the pool of prompts approved for the GWE and the Composition Cooperative, examine the item history of each, and delete those that have not worked well. A Test Development Committee shall be convened at regular intervals to insure the addition of fresh prompts to the pool.
- Conduct a periodic review and revision, as needed, of such published material as the Graduation Writing Examination (GWE) and catalog copy.
- Design a plan for the collection of statistical information such as readers' statistics and the pass rates for each administration of the GWE and Composition Cooperative.
- Develop programs that facilitate writing across the curriculum.
- Develop linkages with two-year colleges in the Los Angeles area. Such linkages may involve the inclusion of community college faculty to serve as GWE readers and workshops designed to inform two-year college faculty of the GEAR standards.
- Work with appropriate Academic Affairs administrators and university committees to set the student fee for the GWE. The fee for the GWE should be set at a level to assure that the costs of GEAR administration and GWE grading are completely self-supporting.

3. Committee Membership

The University Composition Committee shall be made up of the following members, effective with the 1994-95 academic year:

- One full-time faculty member from the College of Arts and Sciences elected by the faculty of the college, but not to include any faculty member of the English Department.
- One full-time faculty member from the School of Education elected by the faculty from the school.
- One full-time faculty member from the School of Health elected by the faculty of the school.
- One full-time faculty member from the School of Management elected by the faculty of the school.
- Two full-time faculty members from the Department of English elected by the faculty of the department.
- The Coordinator of the Writing Adjunct in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program.

- The Composition Coordinator in the English department.
- The University Coordinator of General Studies.
- The GWAR Coordinator, who shall serve as the chair of the committee.

The elected members of the committee shall serve two-year terms, except that the newly re-constituted committee shall, at its first meeting in Fall, 1994, arrange to stagger these terms so that one half of the elected faculty shall serve an initial two-year term and the other half of the elected faculty will serve an initial one-year term.

4. GWAR Coordinator

The office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences shall send out a campus-wide announcement inviting applications for the GWAR Coordinator position from CSUDH faculty who have expertise in the teaching and assessment of writing and skill at administering programs. A GWAR Coordinator Selection Advisory Committee, comprised of faculty experienced in the teaching of writing, shall be appointed by the CAS Dean or his/her designee to review the applications and to recommend three applicants, in ranked order, to the CAS Dean, who shall make the final appointment.