

Addendum to the Course Proposal Writing-Centered Designation

To assist the Academic Programs Committee in reviewing your proposal for a course to receive a Writing-Centered designation, please respond to the questions below. The principles of Writing-Centered courses and the essential features of a Writing-Centered Course are included in this document for your reference.

Principles

Below is a list, excerpted from the Writing Program approved by the Faculty in March 1995, of principles informing what the program description calls "writing-centered" courses. It is recognized in the program description that these principles may be reflected in a variety of teaching practices. It is also indicated in the program description that it is not necessary, and may not even be desirable, for instructors to read and respond to all of the writing assigned in a writing-centered course; however, to make it feasible for them to read and respond to a significant amount, it may be appropriate to limit the size of writing-centered classes to 25 students.

1. That learning a discipline involves learning the discourse of that discipline, and that such learning is more effectively accomplished when the discourse conventions (including requirements for evidence, stylistic usages, etc.) are explicitly taught;
2. That effective writing in any field is achieved through individually variable but generally recursive processes involving substantive revision, and that students can be aided in developing effective writing processes through explicit attention to process and through assignments giving adequate time for an extended process and providing opportunities for feedback well before the finished work is due;
3. That learning the facts, concepts, methods, etc. of a disciplinary field may be facilitated by writing, and that informal private writing (as in a journal) and both expressive writing and "poetic" writing (i.e., writing where the aesthetic function of language is paramount) may help students to integrate new information and ideas into their thinking;
4. That both the learning of discipline-specific material and the development of writing abilities may be facilitated by affording students opportunities to have their writings seriously read (not just "corrected") by various readers, including their peers.

Please answer the following questions about essential features of a writing-centered course:

1. What informal writing will be assigned and integrated into the course to help students generate and integrate new information and ideas? Please indicate the nature and approximate number of informal writing assignments.
2. What formal writing will be assigned? Formal writing in writing-centered courses must be produced in drafts and revisions must be informed by feedback, both from instructor and peers. Please indicate the nature and number of formal writing assignments.
3. What occasions for reading and responding to the writing of peers will be assigned?

Please submit your Writing-Centered application with either the New Course Proposal or Course Change form to the Academic Programs committee, care of Marsa Terrell.