**Customizable Template**

This template is for brainstorming ideas that will end up in your formal Department Writing Plan (DWP). The WAC Director will guide you through the document step-by-step.

Although it’s called a “plan,” your first published version will really be more of an outline of what your department or program *already does*. As part of this “plan,” you’ll do a baseline assessment of senior writing samples, we’ll write up a list of recommendations for instructors to consider implementing in their classrooms over the two years following your plan’s publication, and then you will assess a new group of seniors. Then, you’ll revise your document into a second version that shows what you’ve been doing to improve assessment results and what you “plan” to do to continue that momentum.

This process will occur biennially to allow some time for student skills to catch up with instructional adaptations. This is the “loop closing” that makes assessment worthwhile.

**SECTION #1: DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC WRITING CHARACTERISTICS:**  
What kinds of writing do people in your discipline do in their first jobs out of college? How would you describe that writing (what are the features or characteristics of it)?

**SECTION #2: DESIRED WRITING ABILITIES:**  
With what writing abilities or skills should students in this department’s majors graduate?[[1]](#footnote-1) What do students need to be able to do as writers in their first jobs out of college in your field?

**SECTION #3: INTEGRATION OF WRITING INTO UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM:**  
How does the department show that writing is valued in the curriculum through coursework? How does the department show that writing is valued in the discipline extra-curricularly (e.g., writing contests, student publications, speaker series)? This section should also include a syllabus statement; a syllabus statement should declare your department or program’s commitment to improving students’ communication skills in all of their coursework.

**SECTION #4: PROCESS USED TO CREATE THIS WRITING PLAN:**  
How, and to what degree, were stakeholders in this department (faculty members, instructors, affiliates, teaching assistants, undergraduates, others) engaged in providing, revising, and approving the content of this Writing Plan?

**SECTION #5: Course Outcomes and Activities Chart**

The course outcomes chart is meant to be customizable. Its goal is to help you easily see where writing is being taught and what kind of writing is being taught at what levels of the curriculum. What skills are students getting, where, and when? You can adapt or revise the titles of the columns as you wish. Look at the published WAC plans to see how other departments have customized this chart by adding different columns and section headings between rows.

List all courses with your department or program prefix.

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| Course | Expected Writing Outcomes  (these might be explicitly listed in the course objectives, or implicit through the assignments) | Writing to Learn Activities  (these are ungraded daily, low-stakes, short activities for learning/processing content) | Professional or Academic Genres  (major assignments that demonstrate understanding of course content; academic genres are those assigned only in school, such as essays or reading responses; professional genres are those specific to a discipline or career field) |
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**SECTION #6: ASSESSMENT**

How will you assess your seniors’ writing? In this last step, the WAC Director will help you design an assessment protocol and rubric based on the writing skills and abilities that you identified in the first two sections.

1. Examples include but are not limited to: identify writing situations that call for different types of responses, demonstrate command of material, produce collaborative documents with other writers, evaluate and respond to peers’ writing, effectively arrange/organize text, recognize and self-edit errors, produce discipline-specific texts, demonstrate coherence and cohesion in written texts, design visually effective texts using appropriate technologies, synthesize and integrate insights from other texts and/or across projects, articulate a writerly identity [↑](#footnote-ref-1)