Writing Program Curriculum Guidelines: Formatting and Approval Guide

Definition/Purpose of Curriculum Guidelines

The primary purpose of Curriculum Guidelines is to provide information for Writing Program faculty, especially when designing and revising syllabi. Because Curriculum Guidelines are published on the Writing Program website, they are also a means by which we represent our curriculum to other interested parties within our campus community and beyond. In some circumstances, guidelines may be used in faculty review processes.

Useful information found in Curriculum Guidelines may include established course premises, required materials, assignment and coursework descriptions, and learning outcomes. Guidelines should be clear and specific enough to provide meaningful assistance to faculty who may be redesigning a syllabus or teaching it for the first time, although never restrictive of any reasonable interpretation of specific course curricula reflecting stated outcomes. Whether used for course planning or review, guidelines are meant to be a useful tool with generally agreed upon recommendations, not a set of rigid rules. New and revised guidelines should take into account how courses were originally proposed, as well as how current instructors interpret a given course. In the cases of 105, 107, and 109 series courses, they also should take into account the general Curriculum Guidelines for a given course set (listed as "Writing 105A-Z," etc., on the WP website).

Approval Procedure

Any revisions to Curriculum Guidelines should first be approved by all faculty who regularly teach or otherwise have an interest in a given course. Revised Curriculum Guidelines will then be formally approved by the relevant curriculum committees (105, 107, 109, etc). After the course committee approves a set of Curriculum Guidelines, the committee chair(s) will then forward the guidelines to the larger Curriculum Committee for final approval.

Document Template

Although individual courses may have specific sub-sectional needs, in general, Curriculum Guidelines should include the following sections:

1. Course Title
2. Prerequisites
3. [Catalog Description](#)
4. Course Description: A detailed, 1-2 paragraph description of the course written in the present tense (i.e., "The course prepares students for X.")
5. Curricular Premises: This is different from Prerequisites and Course Description. Relevant background may include information on the preparation students generally have when they arrive at this course, what it aspires to teach students to do, and how it fits in with other courses in the Writing Program and across the University.

6. Course Requirements: Subsections should include: Texts and Assignments. These categories are somewhat flexible in terms of individual course planning, but instructors should aim for requirements that fulfill the overall outcomes and complement suggested guidelines.
7. Outcomes: A list of approximately 6-10 learning outcomes tailored to the individual course, and consistent with the learning outcomes for the course set (e.g., 105, 107, 109).