Guidelines for Certified Writing Courses
Core Curriculum Development Committee

General

A Certified Writing course is more than a course whose writing element has been expanded. It is, rather, a course that employs writing to aid the learning process, under the assumption that students learn through the process of writing.

Specific Requirements

Following are the requirements for a certified writing course:

1. The course may have no more than 25 students enrolled per section.

2. The course must include at least 20 pages of writing, including drafts, per student.

3. At least one major assignment must employ the draft/rewrite process, wherein the instructor provides feedback on the paper to the student, who then acts on those comments and resubmits the work later.

4. Each writing assignment and its purpose must be clearly described in the syllabus.

5. The criteria for each writing assignment must be specified.

6. Essay examinations may count for no more than 30% of the total amount of writing in the course. (i.e., there can be as many essay exams as are appropriate, but, in the determination of page totals, they may count for a maximum of 30% of the 20 page writing minimum).

Commentary

- Historically, the CCDC has been most receptive to proposals wherein these criteria are clearly set forth (e.g., assignments on separate pages, subheaded, or otherwise clearly delineated, rather than mentioned in passing).

- The ideal feedback is narrative feedback from the instructor, either written or verbal. The Writing Center's assistance is important and encouraged, but cannot be a substitute for the instructors feedback.

- What constitutes "writing" is open to reasonable definition. A page of draft or finished product is the traditional measure of writing; freewriting, journal pages, e-mail or other electronic commentary, Web documents, and other forms may count toward the page total. For example, two pages of outline may count as one page of finished text (one page of text here is defined as approximately 250 words).