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7 **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**
8 **University Writing: Requirements/Guidelines and Support**
9 **by the University Writing Committee**
10

11 Rescinds: [S94-7](#), [S95-5](#), and [F15-6](#)

12
13 Resolved: That [S94-7](#), [S95-5](#), and [F15-6](#) be rescinded and replaced with the
14 following, effective immediately, and be it further

15
16 Resolved: That graduate students admitted for Fall 2020 and after will be held to the
17 requirements stipulated in Section 2, and be it further

18
19 Resolved: That the currently titled "Writing Requirements Committee" be renamed
20 "University Writing Committee."

21
22 *Rationale: Writing requirements and guidelines at the university level are currently*
23 *contained in three policies: S95-5, F15-6 (an amendment to the previous),*
24 *and S94-7 (for graduate-level writing), as well as in the [Guidelines for](#)*
25 *[General Education \(GE\)](#), [American Institutions \(AI\)](#), and the [Graduation](#)*
26 *[Writing Assessment Requirement as per S14-5](#). In addition, SJSU is*
27 *obligated to abide by CSU policies, specifically [Executive Order 665](#).*

28
29 *This policy proposal encapsulates requirements and guidelines in all of the*
30 *above-mentioned except GE courses. A single policy is more easily*
31 *accessible and digestible to the campus community. For this purpose,*
32 *prior policy is kept largely intact. However, after extensive review by the*
33 *current Writing Requirements Committee about its own charge and*
34 *membership, some changes have been made. In brief:*

- 35
36
 - *New name for the committee: University Writing Committee (UWC).*
 - *New committee status: reporting directly to the Senate Curriculum*
37 *& Research Committee, rather than the Board of General Studies*
38 *(Sec. 3.b.1).*
39

- *Committee membership updated to include the Writing Center Director and Coordinator of Multilingual Writing Support Services (Sec. 3.b.1).*
- *Committee mission: Formerly a body charged largely with 100W course certification and re-certification via BOGS, the UWC will now be an overseeing / consultative / advisory committee, in keeping with its actual practice in recent years (Sec. 3.a.i).*

Undergraduate-level writing requirements (Sec. 1) are mostly the same (with minor changes to office titles, etc.) as in S95-5, except for the section charging Board of General Studies with approval of courses (Sec. 1.c.ii). Graduate-level writing requirements (Sec. 2) have changed from S94-7 as outlined below.

Student success orientation: *the above-described modifications to the UWC committee charge partially de-centralize the responsibilities for teaching writing, allowing departments and colleges to make their own pedagogical decisions around that teaching. This move is grounded in the principle that the personnel actually doing the teaching are better equipped to assess and serve their students and therefore better able to help students succeed. Modifications to the graduate-level requirements help to ensure more writing support for graduate students in their disciplines.*

An earlier draft of this proposal was passed unanimously by the Writing Requirements Committee on October 5, 2018 for referral to the Senate. The Writing Requirements and Organization and Governance committees have been consulted throughout the entire process.

Approved: 03/18/2019

Vote: 9-0-1

Present: Thalia Anagnos, Marc d'Alarcao, David Emmert, Cynthia Fernandez-Rios, Susana Khavul, Cara Maffini, Winifred Schultz-Krohn Pam Stacks, Lynne Trulio, Brandon White

Absent: Anand Ramasubramanian, Gwendolyn Mok

Workload Impact: There will be an increase in workload for the College of Graduate Studies as it develops guidelines for GVAR at the graduate level.

Financial Impact: None anticipated

82 UNIVERSITY POLICY

83 University Writing: Requirements/Guidelines and Support by the University
84 Writing Committee (UWC)

85
86 **1. Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR), undergraduate**
87 **level.**

88 a. Demonstration of competence in written communication shall be a
89 requirement for graduation with any bachelor's degree. Competence shall be
90 demonstrated by satisfaction of the university requirement for Written
91 Communication II (Area Z). Students shall satisfy the Written Communication
92 II requirement either by passing a course approved as provided below in (c),
93 or, if permitted by the requirements of their major, by passing at the
94 designated level the Writing Skills Test (WST) provided for below in (d), or by
95 satisfying the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)
96 prior to matriculation at San José State University. Completion of General
97 Education lower-division requirements for written communication and
98 passage of the WST shall be prerequisites for taking the Written
99 Communication II course.

100 b. Normally, students shall satisfy the Area Z requirement as soon as possible
101 after completion of 60 units. The Provost or designee shall take appropriate
102 measures to assure that students satisfy the requirement before completion
103 of 90 units. In exercising this authority, the Provost or designee may allow
104 satisfaction of the requirement after completion of 90 units if s/he finds that
105 curricular patterns and requirements in particular majors justify the
106 postponement and also give adequate assurance that the requirement will
107 be duly satisfied.

108 c. Courses fulfilling Area Z:

109 i. Every department (or equivalent unit) responsible for an
110 undergraduate degree program shall either offer an upper-division
111 writing workshop (Written Communication II) course for its majors
112 or designate for its majors, by agreement with that department,
113 such a course offered by another department. College deans shall
114 coordinate department offerings to assure that students will be
115 accommodated. The primary responsibility for offering such
116 courses is that of the major department and college. A department
117 shall not designate a course in another college without notice to
118 and consent of both college deans.

119 ii. Courses satisfying the Written Communication II requirement are
120 submitted for approval to the Board of General Studies in the same
121 manner as all other GE and SJSU Studies courses. For approval,

122 the Board must be satisfied that the proposed course will require
123 substantial appropriate writing, that a high standard for successful
124 completion of the course will be maintained and that the course
125 complies with all other applicable criteria. The Board shall
126 periodically review all approved courses and may recommend
127 withdrawal if, in the Board's judgment, sufficiently high standards
128 have not been maintained or the course has otherwise become
129 deficient. The University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be
130 consulted for advice at the Board's request.

131 d. Writing Skills Test (WST):

- 132 i. If permitted by the requirements of a major, the Writing Skills Test
133 referred to above in (a) may also serve as a waiver examination for
134 Written Communication II. The UWC shall designate the score on
135 the WST necessary to satisfy the Written Communication II
136 requirement.
- 137 ii. The specific form and content of the WST and the minimum passing
138 score shall be as approved by the Board of General Studies on the
139 recommendation of the UWC.
- 140 iii. The WST shall be administered by the Testing Office at least twice
141 a semester and once each summer. Students taking the WST shall
142 pay a fee sufficient to cover the costs of providing, administering,
143 and grading the test.
- 144 iv. The Provost or designee shall appoint a faculty member
145 recommended by the UWC as Writing Skills Test Coordinator. The
146 duties of the Coordinator shall include appointment and training of
147 faculty or other readers for the essays.

148
149 **2. Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR), graduate level.**

- 150 a. Every department (or equivalent unit) responsible for a graduate degree
151 program shall include a GWAR course in the program requirements and
152 overall units. If a student's GWAR is fulfilled as described in section 2.b,
153 the required units shall be made up with a departmentally-approved
154 elective course, so that the unit count for the program is identical
155 regardless of a student's pathway for completion of the GWAR.
- 156 b. Fulfillment of the GWAR shall be a requirement of classified graduate
157 students as a condition necessary for advancement to candidacy for the
158 award of the graduate degree. Master's and doctoral degree requirements
159 may be considered separately. Fulfillment of the GWAR shall be
160 established by:

- 161 i. Satisfactory completion of a course approved by the College of
162 Graduate Studies of at least three units in which a major report is
163 required. The course should be completed prior to advancement to
164 candidacy; or
165 ii. Approval by the College of Graduate Studies of a professional
166 publication for which the candidate was a primary author; or
167 iii. Completion of a master's or doctoral program at an accredited
168 university in which the primary language of instruction is English
169 unless a department requires additional documentation of writing
170 proficiency.
171
- 172 c. Courses proposed to satisfy the graduate-level GVAR must be approved
173 by the College of Graduate Studies. Courses will use guidelines
174 developed by the College of Graduate Studies in consultation with
175 Graduate Studies and Research and University Writing Committees. The
176 College of Graduate Studies shall review and recertify these courses
177 every three years. Approved courses may be recommend for withdrawal
178 by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies if sufficiently high
179 standards have not been maintained or the course has otherwise become
180 deficient. The University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be consulted for
181 advice at the request of the College of Graduate Studies.
182

183 **3. University Writing Committee (UWC) Charge and Membership**

- 184 a. Charge: The charge of the UWC shall be to develop and support writing
185 instruction at SJSU. To do this, the UWC shall study and support the
186 teaching of writing at all levels, all across the curriculum. The UWC shall
187 be a resource for the teaching and learning of writing all across campus, in
188 support of student writers' university careers from beginning to end.
189

190 Members of the UWC serve a vital role as representatives of their colleges
191 and departments. UWC members shall communicate with faculty
192 members in their home colleges and departments, keeping them informed
193 of the activities of the UWC; act as conduits between their colleges and
194 departments and the UWC, helping the committee understand the various
195 (and varied) needs of departments and programs on campus; and help
196 develop policies and programs to address these needs.
197

198 The UWC may sponsor workshops and training programs for instructors of
199 approved courses and shall use these and other appropriate means to

200 provide guidance on the uniformity of composition standards throughout
201 the University

202

203 The UWC will be consulted as necessary for the following:

- 204 • assessment of the writing core competency
- 205 • writing as part of the Directed Self-Placement program
- 206 • writing in General Education and GWAR courses, especially
207 Areas A2, A3, and R; and writing in capstone and other
208 courses as part of a student's degree program

209

210 b. Committee membership.

211 i. The University Writing Committee shall be special agency reporting
212 to the Curriculum & Research Committee, and be composed of the
213 following 19 members:

- 214 • College dean (EXO; UWC Chair; Appointed by the Provost)
- 215 • SJSU Writing Programs Administrator (WPA) (EXO)
- 216 • SJSU Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director (EXO)
- 217 • Writing Center director (EXO)
- 218 • Coordinator of Multilingual Writing Support Services (EXO)
- 219 • AVP, Undergraduate Studies or designee (EXO)
- 220 • Director of Testing (EXO; non voting)
- 221 • Dean, College of Graduate Studies or designee (EXO)
- 222 • 2 faculty, Humanities & the Arts, with one from the
223 Department of Linguistics and Language Development
- 224 • 1 faculty each from all other colleges.
- 225 • 1 faculty, University Library
- 226 • 2 students, one undergraduate that has satisfied University
227 Written Communication II, one graduate student that has
228 satisfied graduate writing requirements.

229

230 ii. Recruitment and appointment of members. Faculty members will
231 serve a 3-year term with the possibility of renewable for one
232 additional 3-year term if selected. Student members will serve a
233 renewable 1-year term. Recruitment to serve on the UWC will be
234 done through the normal Committee on Committees process for the
235 seats designated for faculty members and students. When there
236 are multiple applications for a seat, the Executive Committee of the
237 Academic Senate will select individuals to serve. In considering
238 potential UWC members, attention should focus on the person's
239 experience including that they have taught an undergraduate

240 writing course. At least two faculty must have experience teaching
241 a writing course either at the masters or doctoral level.

242 iii. Interim appointments. When a seat will be vacant for no more than
243 1 semester (e.g., sabbatical) an interim appointment can be made
244 following normal Committee on Committee processes. Any seat
245 that will be vacant for a year or more will require a replacement for
246 the remainder of the term associated with that seat.

247 iv. Replacing members. If a member is absent from three regularly
248 scheduled committee meetings in an academic year, the chair of
249 the UWC may request that the Associate Vice Chair of the Senate
250 initiate action to recruit a replacement. If a member repeatedly does
251 not perform assigned committee duties, the chair of the UWC may
252 request that the Associate Vice Chair of the Senate initiate action to
253 recruit a replacement.