

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
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**S19-3, University Policy, University Writing:  
Requirements/Guidelines, University Writing Committee**

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

**Legislative History:**

At its meeting of March 25, 2018, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator White for the Curriculum and Research Committee. This policy recommendation changes the name, membership and charge of the current Writing Requirements Committee. On August 23, 2019, President Mary A. Papazian approved University Policy S19-3.

On May 4, 2020, President Mary A. Papazian approved Amendment A to University Policy S19-3. Amendment A modifies the membership of the University Writing Committee.

On April 25, 2023, President Cynthia Teniente-Matson approved and signed Amendment B to University Policy S19-3. Amendment B modifies Sections 1 and 3.

On December 18, 2023, President Cynthia Teniente-Matson approved and signed Amendment C to University Policy S19-3. Amendment C modifies Section 2.

Amendments A, B, and C are incorporated below:

Resolved: That [S94-7](#), [S95-5](#), and [F15-6](#) be rescinded and replaced with the following, effective immediately, and be it further

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

Resolved: That the currently titled “Writing Requirements Committee” be renamed “University Writing Committee.”

*Rationale: Writing requirements and guidelines at the university level are currently contained in three policies: S95-5, F15-6 (an amendment to the previous),*

and S94-7 (for graduate-level writing), as well as in the [Guidelines for General Education \(GE\), American Institutions \(AI\), and the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement as per S14-5](#). In addition, SJSU is obligated to abide by CSU policies, specifically [Executive Order 665](#).

## **S19-3, University Policy, University Writing: Requirements/Guidelines, University Writing Committee**

- 1. Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR), undergraduate level.**
  - a. Demonstration of competence in written communication shall be a requirement for graduation with any bachelor's degree. Competence shall be demonstrated by satisfaction of the university requirement for Writing in the Disciplines (WID). Students shall satisfy the WID requirement either by passing a course approved as provided below in (c), or by satisfying the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) prior to matriculation at San José State University, or through credit for prior learning as applicable. Completion of General Education lower-division requirements for written communication and a formal placement mechanism shall be the prerequisites for taking the WID course.
  - b. Normally, students shall satisfy the WID requirement as soon as possible after completion of 60 units. Departments should include a WID course (100W) between 60 units and 90 units in their curricular roadmaps. The Provost or designee may allow WID courses (100W) to appear in the roadmap after 90 units if they find that curricular patterns and requirements in particular majors justify the postponement.
  - c. Courses fulfilling the WID requirement:
    - i. Every department (or equivalent unit) responsible for an undergraduate degree program shall either offer an upper-division Writing in the Disciplines (100W) course for its majors or designate for its majors, by agreement with that department, such a course offered by another department. College deans

shall coordinate department offerings to assure that students will be accommodated. The primary responsibility for offering such courses is that of the major department and college. A department shall not designate a course in another college without notice to and consent of both college deans.

- ii. Courses satisfying the WID requirement are submitted for approval to the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) in the same manner as lower division GE and SJSU Studies courses. For approval, GEAC must be satisfied that the proposed course will require substantial appropriate writing, that a high standard for successful completion of the course will be maintained and that the course complies with all other applicable criteria. GEAC shall periodically review all approved courses and may recommend withdrawal if, in GEAC's judgment, sufficiently high standards have not been maintained or the course has otherwise become deficient. The University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be consulted for advice at GEAC's request

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

- a. Every department (or equivalent unit) responsible for a graduate degree program shall include a course that satisfies GWAR in the program requirements and overall units unless they have an approved alternative writing assessment (section 2.d). If a student's GWAR is fulfilled as described in section 2.b, and the mechanism of fulfillment reduces the number of units the student completes in the degree, the required units shall be made up with a departmentally-approved course, so that the unit count for the program is identical regardless of a student's pathway for completion of the GWAR.
- b. Fulfillment of the GWAR shall be a requirement of classified graduate students as a condition necessary for advancement to candidacy for the award of the graduate degree. Master's and doctoral degree requirements may be considered separately. Fulfillment of the GWAR shall be established by:
  - i. Satisfactory completion of a course approved by the College of Graduate Studies of at least three graded units

- in which a major written report is required. The course should be completed prior to advancement to candidacy; or
- ii. Approval by the Department and College of Graduate Studies of a professional publication written in English for which the candidate was a primary author; or
  - iii. Completion of a master's or doctoral program with a substantive writing requirement at an accredited university in which the primary language of instruction is English unless a department requires additional documentation of writing proficiency.
  - iv. Satisfactory completion of an alternative writing assessment as described in 2.d.
- c. Courses proposed to satisfy the graduate-level GWAR must be approved by the College of Graduate Studies. Courses will use guidelines developed by the College of Graduate Studies in consultation with Graduate Studies and Research and University Writing Committees. The College of Graduate Studies shall review and recertify these courses at the time of the course's home Department's Program Planning Process. Approved courses may be recommended for withdrawal by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies if sufficiently high standards have not been maintained or the course has otherwise become deficient. The University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be consulted for advice at the request of the College of Graduate Studies.
  - d. Departments with graduate programs may develop an alternative writing assessment to satisfy the GWAR in place of an approved course. The alternative writing assessment must be designed to ensure that every student graduating with a graduate degree from the program has achieved satisfactory graduate-level proficiency in writing according to disciplinary standards, as determined by the evaluating department. Such alternative writing assessments (e.g., series of assignments across courses, or a portfolio developed over the course of the graduate program) must include a mechanism to assess the student's writing proficiency and a process whereby a student who does not meet the standard can work to meet the standard. Alternative writing assessments will align with a set of guidelines developed by the College of Graduate Studies (CGS) and the University Writing Committee (UWC) in consultation with the Graduate Studies and Research (GS&R). Proposals for an alternative writing assessment should be submitted to CGS, who will seek review by the UWC before determining whether to approve

the proposal. Alternative writing assessments, once approved, are reviewed and recertified at the time of the home department's program planning process. Satisfactory completion of an alternative assessment shall be reported to the Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations office for use as part of candidacy and graduation review.

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

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

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

The UWC may sponsor workshops and training programs for instructors of approved courses and shall use these and other appropriate means to provide guidance on composition standards throughout the University.

The UWC will be consulted as necessary for the following:

- assessment of the writing core competency
- placement of students in writing classes
- supplementary writing support for students
- writing in General Education and GVAR courses, especially Areas A2, A3, and R; and writing in capstone and other courses as part of a student's degree program

- b. Committee membership:

The University Writing Committee shall be a university committee reporting to the Curriculum & Research Committee and be composed of the following members:

- College dean (EXO; UWC Chair; Appointed by the Provost)
- SJSU Writing Programs Administrator (WPA) (EXO)
- SJSU Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director (EXO)
- Writing Center director (EXO)
- Coordinator of Multilingual Writing Support Services (EXO)
- Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education or designee (EXO)
- Director of Testing (EXO; non voting)
- Dean, College of Graduate Studies or designee (EXO)
- 2 faculty, Humanities & the Arts, with one from the Department of Linguistics and Language Development
- 1 Faculty, College of Business
- 1 Faculty, College of Education
- 1 Faculty, College of Engineering
- 1 Member, General Unit
- 1 Faculty, College of Health and Human Sciences
- 1 Faculty, College of Humanities & Arts • 1 Faculty, College of Science
- 1 Faculty, College of Social Science
- 1 Faculty, University Library
- 2 students, one undergraduate that has satisfied University Written Communication II, one graduate student that has satisfied graduate writing requirements.

ii. Recruitment and appointment of members. Faculty members will serve a 3-year term with the possibility of renewable for one additional 3-year term if selected. Student members will serve a renewable 1-year term. Recruitment to serve on the UWC will be done through the normal Committee on Committees process for the seats designated for faculty members and students. When there are multiple applications for a seat, the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate will select individuals to serve. In considering potential UWC members, attention should focus on the person's experience including that they have taught an undergraduate writing course. At least two faculty must have experience teaching a writing course either at the masters or doctoral level. iii. Interim appointments. When a seat will be vacant for no more than 1 semester (e.g., sabbatical) an interim appointment can be made following normal Committee on Committee processes. Any seat that

will be vacant for a year or more will require a replacement for the remainder of the term associated with that seat. iv. Replacing members. If a member is absent from three regularly scheduled committee meetings in an academic year, the chair of the UWC may request that the Associate Vice Chair of the Senate initiate action to recruit a replacement. If a member repeatedly does not perform assigned committee duties, the chair of the UWC may request that the Associate Vice Chair of the Senate initiate action to recruit a replacement.