

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**  
**Amendments to Regulations on General Education Writing Courses**

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

CEP recommends the adoption of the two following modifications to the regulations of the Santa Cruz Division governing general education requirements in the undergraduate program. These modifications are required in order to establish the revised first-year curriculum jointly developed by the Council of Provosts and the Writing Program faculty in ongoing consultation with both CEP and the Committee on Planning and Budget to take effect in fall 2005. They have our strong support and endorsement.

**No additional courses and no additional requirements are mandated by these modifications. There has also been no change to the writing-intensive (W) requirement or to any other aspect of the general education requirements.**

The revised program has been designed to make considerably better use of current structures, courses, and resources. The goals of this proposed revision include reorganizing the college core courses explicitly as coordinated writing courses, while retaining the individual substantive foci and styles of each college. The proposed changes will make UCSC's first-year requirements in reading and writing consistent with composition requirements at most UC campuses and, by making possible far better coordination of a two-quarter writing sequence, will improve the effectiveness of writing instruction for all entering students.

The Council of Provosts and the Writing Program faculty fully endorse the proposed legislation:

The Council of Provosts (COP) and the Writing Program faculty both strongly support the revised regulations, which are necessary to implement the "Proposed Changes to UCSC's Composition General Education Requirement and Writing Instruction in the First Year: Integrating College Core Courses with Writing." [See Appendix for the full text of the proposal.] The proposal seeks to improve the quality of freshman writing instruction by enhancing the uniformity of writing standards both in all college core courses and in the subsequent writing program courses and developing a better articulated, more effectively integrated two-quarter sequence of writing instruction. COP and the Writing Program will be submitting the necessary course approval request forms during the 2004-05 academic year for implementation beginning in fall 2005.

The change in the titles for the courses are:

- College core courses → C1. Introduction to University Discourse: [Individual college core course title]  
 Students who are able to demonstrate strong writing skills will be placed in special sections of C1 that will simultaneously satisfy the college requirement and C2.

[The college core course, retitled C1. Introduction to University Discourse, will continue to be a college graduation requirement for all entering frosh.]

- Writing 1, Composition and Rhetoric → C2. Rhetoric and Inquiry: [Individual college core course or Writing Program course title]

[Writing 1 currently satisfies the composition general education requirement. C2. Rhetoric and Inquiry will replace Writing 1, and contingent on approval of the new courses by CEP, be designated composition general education courses.]

CEP proposes the following amendments to regulation 10.2.2.1.D to enact the revised first-year writing curriculum.

<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<p><b>10.2.2.1</b> <b>D. Writing courses.</b> Two five-credit hour courses or the equivalent in writing are required in addition to satisfaction of the Subject A requirement. One of these shall be an English Composition course stressing essay development. The other shall be a Writing-intensive course which provides instruction and substantial practice in writing within the context of any academic subject.</p> <p><b>E. Arts course.</b> One five-credit hour course or the equivalent is required in the performance, theory, or history of the arts.</p>	<p><b>10.2.2.1</b> <b>D. <u>Composition Writing</u> courses.</b> <del>Two five-credit hour courses or the equivalent in writing are required in addition to satisfaction of the Subject A requirement. One of these shall be an English Composition course stressing essay development.</del> <b><u>Students who enter the University of California, Santa Cruz, in fall 2005 or thereafter are required, in addition to satisfying the Subject A requirement, to complete a sequence of two five-credit hour courses or the equivalent in composition and rhetoric. These courses shall usually be taken in a student's first year and must be completed before the student enrolls in the 7th quarter.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Students admitted prior to fall quarter 2005 are required to complete one five-credit course in English Composition in addition to satisfying the Subject A requirement.</u></b></p> <p><del>E. The other shall be a Writing-intensive course.</del> <b><u>One five-credit hour course or the equivalent that</u></b> which provides instruction and substantial practice in writing within the context of any academic subject.</p> <p><b>(Renumber)</b> <b><u>F. Arts course.</u></b> One five-credit hour course...</p>

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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## Appendix

### PROPOSED CHANGES TO UCSC'S COMPOSITION GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT AND WRITING INSTRUCTION IN THE FIRST YEAR: INTEGRATING COLLEGE CORE COURSES WITH WRITING

#### Summary

The Council of Provosts and the Writing Program propose changes to first-year writing instruction at UCSC and to the Composition general education requirement that will improve writing instruction for a large portion of first-year students – and especially for roughly the top 20% -- without reducing the quality of instruction for students whose needs are already being well met and without damaging the community building and effective school-to-college transitional aspects of the current college core courses.

Implementing these changes requires no new resources except possibly a small amount of money for faculty development and mentoring graduate students. Modest potential savings may be realized by streamlining college core course hiring processes, by creating the possibility that slightly more students might be exempted from taking an additional composition course after completing a core course, and by slightly increasing the number of students who satisfy the Subject A requirement as a result of writing instruction in a core course.

To these ends, we propose a new two-quarter freshman composition requirement (C1 and C2) that, for most students, would be satisfied by College Core in fall quarter (Introduction to University Discourse) and Writing 2 in winter or spring quarter (Rhetoric and Inquiry). Under this system, students who have placed out of the C1 requirement (by obtaining a writing-placement exam score of 10 or above, by obtaining a 4 or 5 on the AP English Exam, or by passing a composition class at a community college) would be placed in sections of college core courses that satisfy the C2 requirement and, upon passing the C2 core course, will have completed the freshman composition requirement. The remaining students would be divided into C1 sections of the core course designed for those who have satisfied the Subject A requirement and those who have not. Students would fulfill the C1 requirement once they have both satisfied the Subject A requirement and have passed a C1 course or its equivalent. Hence, all first-year students in fall quarter would take their own, distinctive college core course in small seminar-sized sections (as they do now). However, they all would be appropriately placed in different sections according to their writing abilities. The differences between the current system and the proposed system are presented visually in the figure (p. 6) in which the three levels of freshman writing preparation are labeled UA (Subject A Unsatisfied), SA (Subject A Satisfied) and SC (Composition 1 Satisfied).

Finally, we propose a more formal collaboration between the Colleges and the Writing Program to work together in establishing goals and standards for Core classes and Writing 2 and in coordinating the hiring, mentoring, and evaluating of the faculty who will teach these courses. Preliminary discussions have already begun and have resulted in conceptual agreement that C1 courses, titled "Introduction to University Discourse," would emphasize developing students' writing, reading, and speaking abilities in the context of the conventions and expectations of university discourse. C2 courses, titled "Rhetoric and Inquiry," would build upon those abilities with emphasis on developing students' mastery of the craft of writing, their rhetorical sophistication, and their ability to use writing in research and critical and creative inquiry.

#### Overview

This proposal is motivated by two fundamental observations. The first is that the current system of college core courses followed by Writing 1 does many things extremely well, as evinced by the 2002 CEP report and the interim report of the Senate Special Committee on the Colleges (4/03). The second is that the students who are least well served by the current first-quarter writing experience are those who already write well. (How mismatched these students are to the average students who have satisfied Subject A was made clear

this fall by the experience of those who taught honors sections of the core course.) This proposal maintains all the positive aspects of the current system and provides a superior learning experience for the students whose writing skills are good enough that they enter UCSC having placed out of the Composition requirement (currently Writing 1).

This proposal is an enhancement of the proposal submitted to Dean Goff by Writing Program Lecturer Maria Cecilia Freeman in May of 2003. Lecturer Freeman's proposal was outlined in the AI&R Committee proposal document as Scenario II. Organizationally, we propose to trifurcate the seminar sections of the college core course based on the abilities and needs of the entering students. We would have UA (Unsatisfied Subject A) seminar sections, SA (Satisfied Subject A) seminar sections, and SC (satisfied composition) seminar sections. All frosh within a single college's core course would share the same college-theme-based large lectures but would be provided writing instruction appropriate to the level of individual students in the small seminar-sized sections.

The simplest implementation of this proposal is to charge the UA and the SA seminar sections with preparing their students for the course currently known as Writing 1 and charge the SC seminar sections to teach writing at the current Writing 1 level. Currently, the UA seminar sections make tutoring available to accelerate UA students' progress, since they have further to go to be prepared for Writing 1 than do the students who have already satisfied the Subject A Requirement. From a placement and pedagogical standpoint, we propose that students who are currently placing out of Writing 1 should place out of the "standard" core sections into special Writing 1 seminar sections aligned with the core thematic material. This guarantees a more consistent standard of writing for our students (all students must take a class that meets UCSC's current standards for Writing 1) and an enhanced writing standard for our best students (from SA core level to Writing 1 level). Below, we show how modest cost savings can be obtained even with an overall improvement in the writing education UCSC provides for all its students.

### **Administrative and Curricular Issues**

As stated in the overview, we propose to formalize the two-course core/Writing 1 sequence as UCSC's freshman composition requirement. In this document we will refer to the new sequence of courses as C1 ("Introduction to University Discourse," taught in most sections of college core courses) / C2 ("Rhetoric and Inquiry," taught in advanced sections of core courses and Writing 2) to distinguish it from the old sequence. These titles should become the actual course titles, thereby highlighting Writing 2's status as the second in a sequence.

The two primary and obvious benefits of this system are:

1. All of UCSC's first-year students take the second in the sequence of writing courses, (Writing 2 or its equivalent SC core section), ensuring that everyone has a minimum writing competency before progressing further through the curriculum, and
2. The advanced students in college core courses will have a class that challenges them and provides a better learning experience than some are receiving now.

To get these two benefits requires three changes in policy. First, the UA and SA college core course sections must be given a Composition (C1) designation so that they are what is placed out of by a placement exam score or by a community college freshman composition course. Second, it will be necessary to add to the general education requirements the regulation that students must take Writing 2 (or its equivalent) to satisfy the C2 requirement and graduate. (Also the Writing Program must submit a course approval request to CEP to change its current Writing 1 courses to Writing 2.) Third, CEP must receive descriptions of the advanced (SC) sections of College Core for approval to satisfy the C2 requirement.

More subtle benefits, which actually may prove more important than the two listed above, have to do with sharing the administration of the C1/C2 sequence between the Colleges and the Writing Program. Greater cooperation between the Colleges, through the Council of Provosts, and the Writing Program can serve to

strengthen and standardize the quality of writing instruction in the core courses and improve the first-year learning experience for all students, regardless of their level of preparation upon entering UCSC.

More specifically, the Colleges and Writing together will

- refine and clarify the goals of college core courses as writing courses, confirming a common understanding of the role of academic literacy in the core courses while preserving variety in content and disciplinary orientation; that is, adopting a common understanding of the responsibility of the various core courses to introduce students to reading, writing, and critical thinking at the university; and
- coordinate core course goals with those of Writing 2.

On the basis of these goals, the Colleges and the Writing Program can collaborate:

- to describe common practices in core course instruction, so as to ensure a consistent level of quality in the writing instruction, as well as offering substantial practice in writing;
- to define standards and develop common methods for assessing students' progress at significant points in their first year, building on work on assessment already begun by the Writing Program;
- to develop methods for evaluating the effectiveness of different course models, identifying what works and what does not;
- to establish common criteria or goals, and if possible shared processes, for hiring instructors;
- to attract and retain excellent instructors by offering year-long appointments;
- to plan improved orientation of new instructors and ongoing faculty development, both within and across colleges;
- to provide sections of Writing 2 that build upon the material developed in each of the core courses.

This collaboration could be more easily coordinated if freshman writing instruction at UCSC were under the same organizational umbrella. The current system has the Writing Program and the Colleges controlled by entities with frequently conflicting priorities. The Council of Provosts sees major advantages to having both units under a single organization whose responsibility is undergraduate education. At the very least, current impediments to faculty members' teaching both in college core courses and for the Writing Program must be removed.

### **Placement and Cost Issues**

If there are no changes in current writing placement requirements, these improvements in writing instruction would be cost neutral. There would be the same number of core enrollments per freshman and the same number of Writing 1/Writing 2 enrollments per freshman (if we count the SC core sections as core, not Writing 2). However, the proposed writing sequence is different enough that we propose changing the writing placement criteria to better reflect the new structure. However, as the analysis below shows, there will be only small cost savings in doing so.

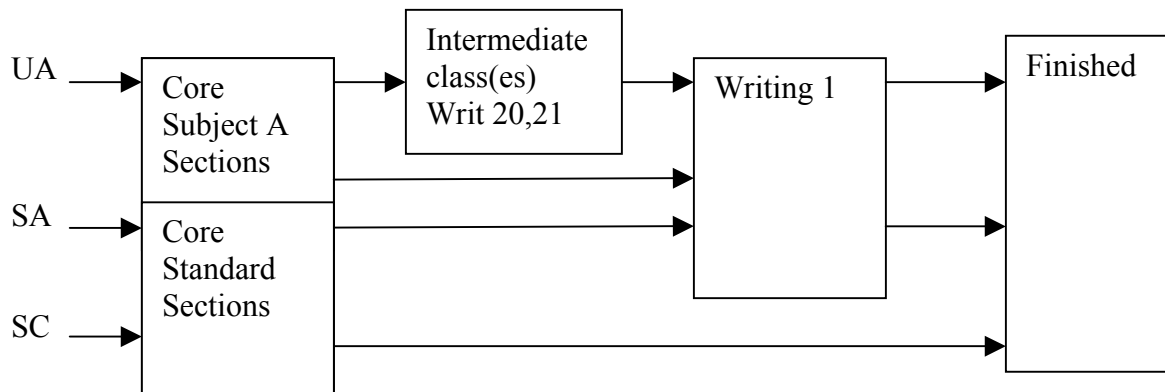
We first consider placement out of SA (C1) sections of core into the SC (C2) sections of core. The most obvious thought about placement raised by the new requirements is that since SC students are no longer placing completely out of freshman writing instruction, perhaps the threshold for placement out of the C1 requirement (currently the C requirement satisfied by taking Writing 1) could be lowered. Put another way, the exam score that places students out of the SA sections of core could be slightly lower than what we use to place students out of the current Writing 1.

Currently, students satisfy the C requirement in one of three ways before entering UCSC: score 4 or 5 on the AP English exam, score 11 or 12 on the writing placement exam, or pass a composition class at a community college. A writing placement exam score of 8, 9, or 10 places a student into an SA section of core. Allowing a score of 10 to place the student into an SC section would increase the number of SC sections by about five (and thus reduce the number of winter/spring Writing 2 sections by about five) for the campus, with a

savings of approximately \$40,000 dollars a year with the current number of freshmen. (Scoring a 3 on the AP English exam satisfies the Subject A requirement, thereby placing a student out of the UA section and into the SA section of core, so it would be inappropriate to lower the AP English exam score to a 3 to place more students into the SC section of core.)

In addition, if the quantity of writing instruction in core courses is increased and the quality of writing instruction improved, there may be a small but nonetheless possibly significant increase in the number of UA students who satisfy the Subject A requirement or SA students who could satisfy the C2 requirement by examination at the conclusion of their fall quarter core courses.

Current System



Proposed System

