

Report of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee
to Faculty Senate, Deans and Departments
Fall, 2014

The Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee (UCRC) reviewed syllabi representing 51 sections of undergraduate courses that have been approved for one or more attributes (Core, Integrated Writing, Service Learning and/or Multicultural Competence) during fall semester, 2014.

Syllabi from ALL sections of the following courses were requested; the UCRC reviewed those that were provided by faculty: AFS 2000, ATH 2500, CS 1000, CST 2210, CST 2320, CST 2410, CST 2420, CST 2430, CST 2510, EC 2900, ED 2100, ENG 2050, MUS 2900, RST 2710, SW 2720, URS 2000, WMS 2000.

All courses were approved for WSU Core in one or more elements and for Multicultural Competence. Most, but not all, of the courses were Integrated Writing in the Core. Two members each independently reviewed assigned syllabi and provided feedback via a Qualtrics survey. Any discrepancies in findings were resolved by a third member.

Findings

Does the syllabus identify the course as being part of the WSU Core?

Yes: 86%; No: 14%

Are the correct learning outcomes for the approved Core element(s) listed on the syllabus?

Yes: 86%; No: 14%

Does the syllabus identify the course as being approved for Multicultural Competence?

Yes: 31%; No: 69%

Are the approved multicultural competence learning outcomes listed on the syllabus?

Yes: 29%; No: 71%

Does the syllabus correctly identify the course as being integrated writing (in the Core)?

Yes: 96%; No: 4%

Are the correct IW learning outcomes listed on the syllabus?

Yes: 89%; No: 11%

For IW courses: Does the amount of writing meet the requirements for an IW in the Core (2000 words)?

Yes: 64%; Not sure : 31%; No: 5%

For IW courses: Do students receive feedback on their writing and have an opportunity for re-write?

Yes: 37%; Not sure: 56%; No: 7%

For IW courses: Does writing count sufficiently toward the final grade such that students cannot pass the course if they don't successfully complete the writing assignments?

Writing accounts for at least 35% of course grade: 67%

Writing accounts for less than 35% of course grade: 18%

Syllabus states you cannot pass course without writing: 6%

Unable to determine 9%

A summary spreadsheet of course reviews is attached. The committee asks that department chairs and deans share this information with appropriate faculty so that syllabi can be revised and improved as needed.

Recommendations by Committee

1. Strongly encourage faculty to use a standardized format for course syllabi so that important information is included (course attribute(s), appropriate learning outcomes, grading criteria).
2. Encourage chairs to review their course syllabi and counsel faculty who have missing information.
3. Discuss how to write appropriate syllabi at New Faculty Orientation.
4. For Integrated Writing courses, make sure feedback is provided by the instructor (and also possibly peer review by classmates) and students are given an opportunity to re-write.