Recommendations from the FA Student Writing Task Force
December 2011

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Committee Members:

Queen Booker  Heather Camp  Kristie Campana
Kellian Clink  Kirsti Cole  Brandon Cooke
Nancy Drescher  Dick Liebendorfer  Ron Nickerson
Joshua Preiss  James Rife  Pat Sexton
Jennifer Veltsos
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Executive Summary

In Fall 2010, a university task force was assembled to report on the status of writing at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The committee’s charge was to make curricular recommendations that would support the academic and professional writing development of undergraduate and graduate students at this institution. Our committee identified three key areas that need to be modified to improve student writing on campus: support for faculty, support for students, and the writing-intensive program. Specifically, we recommend:

- Creating a half-time University Writing Director position within the Center for Faculty Development to oversee the writing-intensive program and to help faculty in all disciplines incorporate writing/writing instruction into their courses.
- Supporting the proposal of the Assessment and Evaluation sub-meet and confer, which states that writing/writing-intensive assessment should be an action portfolio project for the institution as part of its involvement in the Higher Learning Commission Academy.
- Improving the quality and reputation of the Writing Center by strengthening/formalizing the qualifications and training of the Writing Center Director and his/her staff. Particular effort should be made to ensure that Writing Center personnel have the training and resources to address the needs of language learners and graduate student writers.
- Increasing the usage of the Writing Center by placing it in more convenient and visible locations, by establishing a fuller online presence, and by launching a stronger publicity campaign.
- Increasing coordination between the Writing Center and Minnesota State University, Mankato faculty.
- Moving the writing-intensive requirement out of general education and into a graduation requirement.
- Changing the current two-course writing-intensive requirement into a three-course requirement, with two lower-division courses and one upper-division course required.
- Working toward the long-term goal of having students complete the new upper-division requirement within their majors; in the interim, allowing students to fulfill the upper-division requirement in any department.
- Applying a full time equivalent multiplier and faculty workload multiplier to writing-intensive courses.
- Establishing a cross-disciplinary University Writing Committee to support the writing-intensive requirement. Responsibilities would include recommending writing-intensive courses to the appropriate university curricular sub-meets and playing a key role in writing-intensive assessment.
- Revising the current writing-intensive course requirements and writing-intensive course competencies.
Introduction

In Fall 2010, a university task force was assembled to report on the status of writing at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The committee’s overarching charge was to make recommendations in response to the following question:

_How should the undergraduate and graduate curricula at Minnesota State University, Mankato be structured to ensure that all undergraduate students at MSU, M are given ample opportunity to develop sound writing skills that enable them to succeed in their respective professions?_

In interpreting the charge, the task force defined “curricula” broadly, consisting of institutional policies that determine how, where, when and to whom writing instruction is delivered as well as structures designed to support the teaching and learning of writing at this university. An extensive review of the writing curricula led us to identify three key areas that would need to be modified to improve the writing situation at Minnesota State University, Mankato: faculty support, student support, and the writing-intensive requirement. This report details the changes proposed for each area and provides a rationale for the recommendations set forth.

We acknowledge that the recommendations we propose under each area are substantial. Through our research, we came to realize that large-scale changes to the writing curricula would be required to impact something as complex and far-reaching as student writing. While instituting such changes requires a significant investment from the university, we nonetheless advocate for these changes, believing that students’ writing development merits such an investment. Writing plays a vital role in students’ intellectual growth and professional achievement and thus deserves a strong commitment from the institution. We recommend that faculty and administrators act quickly and decisively to take advantage of key opportunities for writing improvement as well as invest in careful long-term planning to help formulate an ambitious yet pragmatic vision for writing instruction at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The recommendations of this task force support this goal.
Section I. Support for Faculty
Support for faculty around the teaching of writing is inadequate. Minnesota State University, Mankato lacks a centralized, visible site capable of supporting the institution’s writing-intensive requirement and, more generally, equipped to provide resources to teachers (in any course, in any discipline) who want to integrate writing into their teaching. Without such a site, faculty members are more likely to be uninformed about best practices in writing instruction and unaware of practical, effective ways to incorporate/teach writing in content courses.

Recommendation 1: Create a University Writing Director Position
We recommend creating a half-time University Writing Director position within the Center for Faculty Development to help faculty in all disciplines incorporate writing/writing instruction into their courses (see Appendix A for a sample position description). The person in this position would also oversee the writing-intensive requirement. We propose that the Writing Director be responsible for developing and coordinating faculty workshops, department consultations, online resources, and periodic assessment related to the teaching of writing.

Rationale

- A 2010 study of writing across the curriculum programs in the United States and Canada indicates that 66% of programs have a director who oversees “the program” (i.e. faculty development programming, individual consultations, writing-intensive assessment, etc.). Other institutions have a writing across the curriculum committee that oversees the institution’s writing-intensive activities. Our current program lacks either kind of leadership and would benefit from greater oversight, organization, and vision.

- The study further indicates that long-standing writing across the curriculum programs “[place] the WAC program in the [institutional] hierarchy to show their cross-departmental—and, in a plurality of universities, cross-college—mission” (547). This placement is strategic and appears to impact the longevity of the writing across the curriculum program: the authors explain, “While a substantial majority of the leaders of older programs reported to an academic vice president or a college or division head (62 percent), fewer than 50 percent of the younger programs reported to these upper administrators. These findings reinforce the idea that programs are more sustainable when the leadership is connected more closely to the administrative center” (559). Locating the Writing Director in the Center for Faculty Development would support the sustainability of the writing across the curriculum program.

- The Center for Faculty Development will be a visible, respected office on campus, counteracting the low visibility and lack of legitimacy that have undermined the effectiveness of faculty-oriented programs in the past. The Center for Faculty Development would offer respect and publicity to the writing across the curriculum program, increasing its impact on faculty.

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The Center for Faculty Development could provide a centralized location for print and electronic faculty resources on writing instruction, thereby increasing accessibility to quality resources.

**Recommendation 2: Participate in the HLC Writing Portfolio Project**

We recommend supporting the proposal of the Assessment and Evaluation sub-meet and confer, which states that writing-writing-intensive assessment should be an action portfolio project for the institution as part of its involvement in the Higher Learning Commission Academy. This project would involve designing, implementing and evaluating an assessment plan for writing/the writing-intensive curriculum.

**Rationale**

The writing-writing-intensive assessment action portfolio project proposed by the Assessment and Evaluation sub-meet and confer could provide information about student writing and faculty writing instruction that would benefit future faculty development initiatives.

**Section II. Support for Students**

The Center for Academic Success Writing Center is currently the institution’s provider of one-on-one writing support for students. However, the status and visibility of the Writing Center undermines its ability to fully support student writers. Many faculty members are unfamiliar with the services offered by the Writing Center or have concerns about the quality of tutoring. Students, meanwhile, perceive attendance as a punishment reserved for the remedial writer. Furthermore, many language learners report that the services do not help them improve their writing.

**Recommendation 1: Improve Writing Center Staffing**

We recommend improving the quality and reputation of the Writing Center by strengthening/formalizing the qualifications and training of the Writing Center Director and his/her staff. Particular effort should be made to ensure that Writing Center personnel have the training and resources to address the needs of language learners and graduate student writers.

Specifically, we recommend the following:

- The Writing Center should be separated from the Center for Academic Success and relocated to the English department. The Writing Center Director should hold a tenure-line position in the English department (see Appendix B for a sample position description). Appropriate preparation for this position would consist of a PhD in Composition Studies or a related field, preferably with an emphasis in Writing Center theory and practice, and research and administrative experience in writing center work. Training and experience working with language learners, and a vision of how the Writing Center might meet the needs of graduate students, is also essential.
• New tutors should be required to enroll in a semester-long, credit-bearing course, taught by the Writing Center Director, on the theory and practice of tutoring writing. The curriculum for this course should include instruction in working with specific writing populations (e.g. graduate students, language learners, distance learners).

• Faculty should be involved in the tutor recruitment process. The Writing Center Director should solicit recommendations from faculty on a yearly basis, and recommended students should be personally invited to apply for a position with the Writing Center.

Rationale

• The National Writing Centers Association’s “Position Statement on Professional Concerns of Writing Center Directors”\(^2\) states that the writing center director role requires specialized training and deserves professional status. The statement argues that “[d]irectorships should be considered faculty and administrative positions rather than staff positions” and that “[d]irectorships should include access to promotion, salary, tenure, and travel funds equivalent to that provided for other faculty and administrators” (37). Housing the Writing Center in the Center for Academic Success precludes the directorship at Minnesota State University, Mankato from meeting these standards.

• Across the country, demand for Writing Center directors who have specialized training is increasing. Writing centers are currently being staffed by “third generation” directors who “have formal training directly in program administration or directing writing centers” (Hesse ix).\(^3\) In contrast to previous generations, directors increasingly specialize in writing center administration and enroll in the growing number of writing center administration graduate courses offered at PhD granting institutions (Hesse; Jackson, Leverenz and Law).\(^4\)

• Research on current writing center directors reinforces this finding. A 2001 survey of writing program administrators and writing center directors reported that 57% of writing center directors survey respondents had a composition/rhetoric specialization. This number is up significantly from a previous study, carried out in the 90’s, which indicated that only 10% of writing center directors held this specialization. The 2001 study also

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\(^{3}\) Doug Hesse, Preface in *Administrative Problem Solving for Writing Programs and Writing Centers*, ed. Linda Myers-Breslin (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1999).

\(^{4}\) Rebecca Jackson, Carrie Leverenz, and Joe Law, “(RE)shaping the Profession: Graduate Courses in Writing Center Theory, Practice, and Administration” in *The Center Will Hold: Critical Perspectives on Writing Center Scholarship*, ed. Michael Pemberton (Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 2003).
suggested that possessing this expertise may facilitate more effective working relationships with the composition (ENG 101) program (Balester and McDonald 77-78).  

- In addition to enabling stronger credentialing of the Writing Center Director, separating the Writing Center from the Center for Academic Success would increase the visibility of the Writing Center, thereby facilitating greater usage.

- Raising tutor qualifications provides multiple benefits. Strang identifies fifteen advantages of the “professional tutors” who staff the writing center at his institution—among them, instructor confidence in writing center services swells; non-traditional students are more comfortable working with the staff; expertise in teaching particular populations (e.g. language learners) is brought into the writing center; quality of tutoring improves; and the stability of writing center operations increases.  

- Involving faculty in the tutor recommendation process would help ensure that the Writing Center Director has talented applicants and can support the goal of raising the prestige of the writing tutor position.

**Recommendation 2: Increase the Usage of the Writing Center**

We recommend increasing the usage of the Writing Center by placing it in more convenient and visible locations, by establishing a fuller online presence, and by launching a stronger publicity campaign. We also recommend that the Writing Center strengthen and clarify the services it provides and student populations it serves. Specifically, we recommend the following:

- The Writing Center should be moved out of the basement of Memorial Library into a more central location on campus (e.g. on the main floor of Memorial Library, in the Centennial Student Union).
- The Writing Center should pilot satellite sites (e.g. college dorms, 7700 France) that offer unique tutoring hours that will be better suited to the populations they serve.
- The Writing Center should develop a stronger online presence. The current website contains general information about the Writing Center and tutor consultations. However, the website should also provide information about other types of writing-related services the Writing Center offers (for both students and instructors) and include links to helpful writing resources.

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• The Writing Center should expand its offerings of online consultations for writers. Funding for hardware and software should be supplied to support the development of online tutoring services.

• The Writing Center should engage in stronger publicity efforts. This might include, but is not limited to, having a page in the university catalogue, speaking with parents and students during orientation, presenting at new faculty orientation and visiting First-Year Experience classes. These points of contact should emphasize that all writers can benefit from Writing Center consultations, and that such consultations are beneficial at any stage in the writing process.

• The Writing Center should develop and highlight services it offers for specific student populations. For example, promotional materials might showcase tutors’ specialized training in working with language learners, describe the graduate-level writing support that is available, and/or advertise synchronous online writing consultations.

• The Writing Center should establish a Writing Fellows program, in which tutors are paired with specific courses and provide customized tutoring services for the students enrolled in the course.

Rationale

• Establishing a more prominent, central location for the Writing Center would increase the likelihood that faculty and students would know about and recommend/use its services. Convenient satellite locations/times would increase the likelihood that the Writing Center would be utilized to its fullest potential.

• Olson, Moyer and Falda at Ohio State University identified several pertinent issues that undermined the impact of their writing center.7 First, the writing center was in the basement of a campus hall, preventing students from being aware of its existence. Second, the writing center was affiliated with a study skills program, which led students to associate it with remediation. Third, the atmosphere at the writing center lacked professionalism. By taking deliberate steps to counteract these problems, the writing center coordinator was able to address many of the weaknesses of the center identified in the initial assessment.

• Online services are necessary to ensure that the Writing Center adequately serves all Minnesota State University, Mankato students. Off-campus and distance learners make up a growing contingent of the student body. The Writing Center needs to be able to accommodate this population. As Thurber observes, “As universities seek new ways of reaching nontraditional students and increasingly emphasize delivery of courses to

7 Olson, Jon, Dawn Moyer and Adelia Falda. “Student Centered Assessment Research in the Writing Center” in Writing Center Research: Extending the Conversation, eds. Paula Gillespie, Alice Gillam, Lady Falls Borwn and Byron Stay (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002), 113-134.
remote sites, writing centers must increase student access to the instructional support they require.”

- At other institutions, online writing center services are growing. At Minnesota State University, Moorhead, students can schedule a tutor consultation online. At Bemidji State University, online tutoring in writing is an option. The Minnesota State University, Mankato Writing Center is at the beginning stages of developing online tutoring services. The Writing Center needs to take steps to ensure that it leads the way in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system in employing technology to assist student writers.

- A report from Aljuhail and Ahmadi at the American University of Kuwait indicates that incorporating a Writing Fellows approach led to an almost twofold increase in writing center visits within a four-year time span. 

**Recommendation 3: Increase Writing Center-Faculty Coordination**

We recommend increasing coordination between the Writing Center and Minnesota State University, Mankato faculty. Specifically, we recommend the following:

- The Writing Center Director should establish a more effective process for gathering and sharing information about student writers with tutors and teachers. Such information might include what writing assignment the student is working on; whether the student is a non-native speaker and/or international student; and which writing issues were addressed during a given consultation. We recommend that funding be provided to purchase software (e.g. AccuTrack) or other supplies that would facilitate this communication.

- The Writing Center Director should expand its faculty-oriented program offerings. Classes offered in conjunction with the Center for Faculty Development, a workshop series, and/or a certificate program are examples of the kind of faculty-directed programs the Writing Center could develop.

- A seat should be reserved for the Writing Center Director on the proposed University Writing Committee (a recommendation for the establishment of such a committee is detailed in Section III).

- Faculty and student perspectives about/experiences with the Writing Center should be routinely assessed, and findings should be appropriately distributed.

**Rationale**

- Fitzgerald and Stephenson note the importance of relationship-building in administering an effective writing center. In particular, the authors underscore the importance of

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8 Thurber, Jamie. “Synchronous Tutoring: Bringing the Gap in Distance Education,” in *Taking Flight with OWLS: Examining Electronic Writing Center Work*, eds.James Inman and Donna Sewell (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000), 164.

9 Hanouf, Aljuhail and Ahmadi, Kheiriyeh, "Redefining the Visibility of a Writing Center" (presentation, Middle East-North Africa Writing Centers Alliance Conference, Al Ain. 19 February 2009).
ensuring that faculty understand the purpose, goals, and services of the writing center in order for operations to run smoothly.\textsuperscript{10}

- The more tutors know about the backgrounds of the students with whom they are working, the better they can customize their tutoring to meet students’ needs. Likewise, the more the Writing Director understands about the backgrounds of students, the more he/she can develop professional development resources that inform tutors about the particular needs of various student populations.

- Johnston and Speck suggest that Writing Center Directors can help faculty design appropriate writing assignments, assess student writing quality, and effectively use peer response groups.\textsuperscript{11} At their institution, the Writing Center offered programs for faculty on collaborative writing, grading writing, language learners’ writing, and identifying “good” writing. Faculty found these workshops informative and tended to be more supportive of both the Writing Center and writing across the curriculum initiatives as a result.

**Section III. Writing-Intensive Program**

The current writing-intensive requirement is part of the general education program. This placement violates the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities transfer curriculum guidelines and restricts most writing-intensive courses to lower-division courses. These courses can reinforce lessons learned in English 101, but they are unable to provide advanced, discipline-specific writing instruction that would benefit students in their careers.

Additionally, the current competencies and approval requirements for writing-intensive courses are vague, offering instructors limited guidelines for developing effective writing-intensive courses.

Finally, Minnesota State University, Mankato does not possess the leadership typical of effective writing-intensive programs. As a result, support and oversight of the writing-intensive program is inadequate.

**Recommendation 1: Restructure the Writing-Intensive Program**

We recommend that the writing-intensive program be restructured to strengthen the teaching of writing at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Specifically, we recommend the following:


The university’s writing-intensive requirement should be moved out of general education and made into a graduation requirement.

The current two-course writing-intensive requirement should be changed into a three-course requirement, with two lower-division courses and one upper-division courses required.

The university should work toward the long-term goal of having students complete the new upper-division requirement within their majors; in the interim, we advise the university to allow students to fulfill the upper-division requirement in any department.

A full time equivalent multiplier and faculty workload multiplier should be applied to writing-intensive courses.

A cross-disciplinary University Writing Committee should be established to support the writing-intensive requirement. Responsibilities would include recommending writing-intensive courses to the appropriate university curricular sub-meets and playing a key role in writing-intensive assessment. The University Writing Director (position described in Section I) should chair this committee.

The current writing-intensive course requirements and writing-intensive course competencies should be revised (see Appendices D and E).

Rationale

Writing instruction should be reinforced across the curriculum to support students’ growth as writers. This belief is in line with current writing development research, which indicates that college students improve as writers over time, with growth occurring as they tackle new, challenging and meaningful writing tasks through the course of their college careers.\(^\text{12}\)

Students benefit from early reinforcement of the writing principles taught in English 101 in lower-division writing-intensive courses. Given that more than fifty lower-division writing-intensive courses are already approved, the infrastructure is in place to maintain a two-course lower-division writing-intensive requirement.

An upper-division course requirement would provide students with advanced instruction and practice in writing. This course would introduce students to academic or professional genres related to their disciplines and to the purposes and audiences writing serves for particular fields. Students would find such courses relevant and engaging; faculty would be acknowledged for the upper-division writing instruction that many are already

providing; and employers would value the attention paid to workplace writing skills in upper-division content courses.

- The recommended revisions to the current writing-intensive course approval requirements would increase the visibility of writing support services on campus and help Minnesota State University, Mankato achieve the clarity reflected in writing-intensive approval requirements in place at other institutions\textsuperscript{13} (see Appendix D).

- The recommended revisions to the current writing-intensive course competencies would clarify and strengthen the existing competencies and provide important distinctions between lower- and upper-division writing-intensive courses (see Appendix E).

Section IV. Implementation

We recommend the following timeline for instituting the changes recommended here:

Fall 2012  The current two-course writing intensive requirement is changed from a general education to a graduation requirement.

Spring 2013  A University Writing Director and University Writing Committee is established. Revised writing-intensive course approval requirements are adopted. Revised writing-intensive course competencies are adopted. Departments submit a self-assessment of their current writing-intensive courses, detailing the ways in which these courses will meet the revised writing-intensive approval requirements and course competencies.

Fall 2013  Responsibility for oversight and assessment of writing-intensive courses shifts to the revised structure and the Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Policy committee. Course proposals are submitted to identify upper-division writing-intensive courses. A Writing Center Director search begins.

Fall 2014  A new upper-division writing-intensive requirement goes into effect.

\textsuperscript{13} Townsend cites the following typical guidelines for WI courses: class size or instructor-to-student ratio, who teaches, page or word count, revision expectations, how writing will affect grade, assignment recommendations, standard teaching techniques, and support services. Martha Townsend, “Writing Intensive Courses and WAC” in \textit{WAC for the New Millennium: Strategies for Continuing Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Programs}, eds. Susan McLeod, Eric Miraglia, Margot Soven, and Christopher Thaiss (Urbana: NCTE, 2001).
The Writing Center is separated from the Center for Academic Success and removed from the basement of the library. The Writing Center Director begins his/her position.

Spring 2015 New Writing Center initiatives take full effect: faculty are involved in the tutor recruitment process, satellite locations are established, a stronger publicity campaign is launched, online resources are expanded, a process for gathering and sharing information is developed. The HLC writing/writing-assessment action project is concluded.

Fall 2015 A course on the theory and practice of tutoring writing becomes a requirement for Writing Center tutors. Faculty-oriented programming is offered by the Writing Center.

Spring 2016 A Writing Fellows program is piloted.

Section V. Assessment
As part of our charge, we have been asked to provide recommendations pertaining to writing assessment. Ultimately, the University Writing Director and Writing Center Director will be responsible for planning and executing an ongoing assessment program. However, we have provided some initial recommendations for assessment below.

- Until a leadership structure is in place to oversee the writing-intensive program, the General Education and Diversity Committee should be responsible for assessing writing. Information gathered from its assessment work would provide baseline measures that could be used as comparative data in future writing assessment projects.

- The University Writing Director should play a leadership role in the writing-intensive assessment process. Working with the proposed University Writing Committee and the Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Policy committee, the Writing Director would:
  - Set a schedule for conducting ongoing assessment of writing and for communicating findings.
  - Identify meaningful research questions to guide the assessment process.
  - Work with faculty across disciplines to design and implement writing-intensive assessment activities.
  - Consult the literature on writing assessment for guidance in the assessment process.
  - Recommend ways that findings could be used to improve the writing-intensive program.
  - Carry out research to identify areas of writing deficiency in recent graduates of Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- The Writing Center Director would play a leadership role in assessing faculty and student writing support provided by the Center. Working with the proposed University Writing Committee, the Writing Center Director would solicit feedback from faculty and students to assess:
  - Faculty and student awareness of Writing Center services
  - Needs analysis concerning common strengths and deficiencies among students
  - Specific needs among particular student populations (e.g. non-native speakers, graduate students, international students, distance learners, and generation 1.5 students)
  - Student satisfaction with Writing Center consultations
  - Faculty input into effectiveness of tutoring as evidenced by before/after visits
  - Additional services or workshops that students and/or faculty believe would be helpful or informative
Appendix A: University Writing Director Position Description (Example)

Tim Peeples, PhD
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs
Professor, English/Professional Writing and Rhetoric
Elon, NC 27244
336.278.5613

Director, Writing Across the Curriculum
Elon University

Elon University seeks a faculty leader at the rank of associate or full professor to expand, enhance and direct the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program. The Director will have opportunity and support to advance the breadth and quality of the teaching and learning of writing across the university.

While Elon has supported WAC-oriented faculty development and curricula for over two decades, this position marks a substantial new commitment to writing within and across the disciplines, grounded in the University’s strategic plan and its emerging Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) focused on writing. The successful candidate will hold a tenured or tenure-track faculty appointment in the department of his or her discipline.

The WAC Director will:
• Work with departments and interdisciplinary programs across campus to deepen the teaching, learning and assessment of writing in the disciplines and across the curriculum;
• Consult with individual faculty to enhance writing instruction;
• Lead workshops and other faculty development programs that build capacity for and community around excellence in the teaching of writing;
• Advance and support scholarship on the teaching and learning of writing;
• Collaborate with and/or lead programs and initiatives at Elon to improve student writing;
• Advocate for writing excellence at the university;
• Connect Elon with regional, national and international organizations and initiatives on writing and writing program administration.

The successful candidate should possess:
• A strong record of teaching and scholarship related to writing and/or writing program administration;
• Experience facilitating writing initiatives within and across departments and interdisciplinary programs;
• A compelling vision for a robust and sustainable WAC program at Elon;
• Relevant administrative and faculty development experience;
• Expertise in assessment of writing and WAC;
• Demonstrated excellence in creating environments that encourage innovation and scholarly activity related to writing, teaching, and learning;
• Connections to national or international collaborative networks in writing, WAC and/or faculty development;
• A PhD in writing and rhetoric or a related field.
The Director will report to the Assistant Provost. The Director, in a full-time position, will work closely with a wide range of university constituencies, including the Writing Center, the College Writing program, General Studies, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and the new QEP initiative. The Director will teach one course per academic year in his or her discipline or in the General Studies Program.

**To apply**, candidates should submit a current vita and a cover letter that:
- Explains your preparation for and interest in being the WAC Director at Elon;
- Highlights your excellence in teaching and scholarship related to writing and/or writing program administration;
- Outlines your expertise in faculty development related to writing and/or WAC.

Submit materials to Assistant Provost Peter Felten, chair of the search committee, at employment@elon.edu. Questions about the position should be directed to wacsearch@elon.edu. For full consideration, candidates should submit application materials before January 25, 2012. The Director will begin work at Elon during the summer of 2012.

Elon is a private liberal arts university of 6,000 students in central North Carolina. Elon is widely recognized as a national model of student engagement with its small classes and outstanding programs in study abroad, undergraduate research, and academic service-learning. For more on Elon University, visit www.elon.edu.

Elon University is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse faculty, staff, and student body and welcomes applicants from underrepresented groups.
Appendix B: Writing Center Director Position Description 1 (Example)

Composition/Rhetoric Writing Center Director

Eastern Oregon University invites applications for a full-time, nine-month tenure-track appointment, at the Assistant Professor level as Writing Center Director. The appointment begins September 16, 2011. The successful candidate will teach a 200-level Methods of Tutoring course, which trains peer tutors, and a developmental composition course. The director hires, trains, schedules, supervises and evaluates peer tutors as facilitators of one-to-one writing instruction in an on-campus setting, and supervises the online writing lab. In addition, the Writing Center Director promotes the services of the Center and works with faculty across the curriculum though consultations and workshops. Eastern Oregon University is an equal opportunity employer and educator, committed to building a diverse and inclusive community and learning environment. The University is responsive to the needs of dual career couples. For best consideration applications should be received by November 22, 2010. For further information, go to http://chinook.eou.edu/hr/
Appendix C: Writing Center Director Position Description 2 (Example)

1. Description of the Winona State University Writing Center/Director Position:

The Writing Center conducts individualized writing tutorials with students from all academic disciplines so that they may better use writing as an effective tool for learning, communication, self-expression, and critical thinking. To this end, the Writing Center works closely with students, faculty, and administrators to help WSU students become more capable, successful writers.

Writing Center tutors discuss paper topics with writers, offer feedback on developing drafts of papers, suggest writing strategies, diagnose writing problems, review missing or misunderstood information, address research and documentation procedures, and ask questions that will motivate productive revision.

The Writing Center staff consists of seventeen tutors, twelve graduate and five undergraduate students. All tutors complete a rigorous training program under the supervision of the Writing Center Director. Last fall, the Writing Center conducted 1025 tutorials, putting us on pace to break 2000 separate writing tutorials for the 2008-2009 academic year. The Writing Center is open forty-five hours each week.

Graduate students who work in the Writing Center also teach sections of English 106, English 107, English 111, English 112, and English 226. Their work tutoring individual students in the Writing Center is a crucial part of their preparation for teaching writing to an entire class.

Position: The Director of Writing Center is responsible for administrative oversight of the program.

2. Duties:

Tutor Training and Staff Development

- Conduct nine weeks of new-staff training each fall
- Facilitate staff development through periodic in-service activities
- Evaluate staff through formal observations
- Write formal reports on each tutor’s performance (see attachment for a sample report)
- Conference with tutors regarding their performance
- Coordinate peer evaluations among staff
- Read and comment on peer evaluation reports
- Meet informally with individual staff members on a regular basis to discuss recent tutorial activities
- Train staff in effective means of promoting tutorial services
- Mentor staff of all levels
- Write recommendation levels as requested by tutors
• Prepare New Staff Orientation
• Supervise undergraduate internships

Writing Center Promotion and Administration

• Correspond with faculty across campus about how the Writing Center can help them more effectively teach students how to write
• Coordinate tutor visits to classes across campus at the start of each term
• Advertise the Writing Center to students, faculty, administration, and other constituencies
• Manage yearly publication of *The Writing Labyrinth*, a newsletter exploring issues relevant to writing
• Oversee judging of the Sandra Adickes Award, awarded yearly to the best essay written in English 111: College Reading and Writing
• Answer queries from professors and administrators about writing-related issues
• Oversee the keeping of records for all tutorials conducted
• Supervise work-study student help
• Schedule tutors’ shift work
• Handle student complaints (this requires very little time because there are very few complaints)
• Conduct institutional assessment regarding Writing Center’s effectiveness

Connection to English Department

• Chair the English Department Composition Committee
• Attend Graduate Committee meetings in the spring to assist with review of teaching assistantship applications
• Report to the department on issues relevant to the Writing Center
• Conduct observations of new graduate student teachers
• Write formal reports on graduate student teacher performance
## Appendix D: Recommended Revisions to Writing Intensive Approval Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Revised</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing intensive courses may overlap with any other [general education] category(ies). Writing intensive courses must also be in at least one other general education category.</td>
<td>We recommend that a full time equivalent (FTE) multiplier and faculty workload multiplier be applied to writing-intensive courses. Provided that such a multiplier is put in place, we suggest that the following language be adopted:</td>
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<td>[No current course cap]</td>
<td>Courses should be taught by faculty members at a 20:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Maximum enrollment shall not exceed 25 students.</td>
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<td>Absent the multiplier, we suggest the following language be used:</td>
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<td>Class size is left to the discretion of the department and/or instructor, but an enrollment of 20-25 students is recommended.</td>
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<td>Eligibility for designation as a Writing Intensive course: at least 20 pages (250 words per page) of evaluated written work. At least 10 of the 20 pages must be critiqued, returned to the student for revision, resubmitted by the student, and then reevaluated. a. Faculty could think of two types of writing: 1) exploratory, informal writing of the kind that appears in learning logs, response journals, lab notebooks, discussion boards and the like. The purpose of this writing is to develop a writer’s power of perception and observation, to expand a writer’s thinking repertoire, and to develop a consciousness of the writing process; 2) more formal writing, directed to an external audience, of the kind that appears in essay tests and formal papers.</td>
<td>Faculty members must assign 20 pages (250 words per page) of evaluated written work, spread across a course.¹ The 20 pages of writing assigned in a writing-intensive course might include a combination of informal, exploratory writing and formal, polished writing. a. Informal writing assignments allow students to grapple with course content and clarify their understanding and/or opinions of course material. This writing might include learning logs, response journals, lab notebooks, discussion boards and the like. b. Formal writing assignments require students to use writing as a means to communicate in more formal writing situations. Such assignments might ask students to write for real or imagined academic, professional, or public audiences and to write in genres/for communicative...</td>
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</table>
At least 10 of the 20 pages must be critiqued, returned to the student for revision, resubmitted by the student, and then reevaluated.

At least 10 of the 20 pages must receive written feedback from instructors. Faculty are encouraged to solicit a draft or other preliminary work, provide written feedback on this writing--supplemented, whenever possible, with feedback from other students--and allow students time for revision and editing.

A portion of class time should be dedicated to writing instruction, and writing should play a significant role in the course grade.

Teachers should encourage students to visit the Writing Center to receive additional one-on-one feedback on their writing. The following is a statement that faculty can include on their syllabi:

The Writing Center is the primary on-campus source for free academic support on writing. Students can work one-on-one with a trained consultant to receive objective, constructive feedback on their academic writing projects at any stage of the writing process. For more information, visit [www.mnsu.edu/success](http://www.mnsu.edu/success), or call 389-1791 to make an appointment.

1 Should a discipline feel that a different page requirement is appropriate for its writing-intensive courses, a formal appeal must be submitted to the University Writing Committee for consideration.
### Appendix E: Recommended Revisions to Writing-Intensive Course Competencies

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Goal: Students will continue to develop skills taught in composition, applying them in the context of a particular discipline.</td>
<td>Goal: Students will continue to develop skills taught in Composition, applying them in the context of a particular discipline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<td>(a) use writing to explore and gain a basic familiarity with the questions, values and analytical or critical thinking methods used in the discipline;</td>
<td>(a) Engage in effective writing processes, including the ability to generate ideas, draft, revise, format, and edit their work.</td>
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<td>(b) locate, analyze, evaluate, and use source material or data in their writing in a manner appropriate to intended audiences (popular or within the discipline).</td>
<td>(b) Use writing to grapple with course content and reflect on their learning.</td>
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<td>(c) Produce texts appropriate for an intended audience, purpose, and context.</td>
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<td>(d) Display strong technical skills in areas such as grammar, mechanics, and source documentation.</td>
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<td>In addition to demonstrating these competencies, students enrolled in upper-division writing-intensive courses will be able to:</td>
<td>In addition to demonstrating these competencies, students enrolled in upper-division writing-intensive courses will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Write in academic, professional, or public genres related to the discipline, displaying an understanding of the genres’ communicative functions and contexts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(f) Locate, evaluate, analyze, and use source material or data in their writing.</td>
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Bibliography


Hanouf, Aljuhail and Ahmadi, Kheiriyeh, ”Redefining the Visibility of a Writing Center.” Presentation at the Middle East-North Africa Writing Centers Alliance Conference, Al Ain, 19 February 2009.


