Writing-Intensive Course Requirements

Successful entry into a career area generally requires significant writing skills. To ensure that students gain these skills, City Tech has added the following to the requirements for all degree programs:

- Successful completion of two writing intensive courses for the associate degree, one of which must be a course in the associate core and one a first-level course in the major. These courses must be completed prior to the attainment of 45 credits. For associate degree transfer students: a total of TWO (2) writing-intensive courses, one in the core curriculum and one in the major.

- Successful completion of an additional two writing-intensive courses for the baccalaureate degree, one in the baccalaureate core plus one in an upper level course in the major, making a total of FOUR (4). For baccalaureate degree transfer students: a total of four writing-intensive courses, two in the core curriculum and two in the major.

Writing-intensive courses have a "W" appended to the section number in the schedule of classes. Writing-intensive courses completed successfully at other CUNY colleges or at colleges that have articulation agreements with New York City College of Technology will count toward meeting these requirements. (City Tech Catalog 2011-13. P.36)

In order for a course to be designated "Writing Intensive" it should, at a minimum, include the following:

1. **Critical reading, logical thinking, and the use of writing to help students understand the topic at hand.** Insofar as reading, writing, and thinking are interdependent activities, students should be expected to practice these skills to better engage with course material.

2. **The use of appropriate style and disciplinary conventions in writing and speaking**. Each discipline uses particular citation, vocabulary, and organizational styles. Disciplinary writing conventions should be considered part of the course content.

3. **The productive use of research resources, including the library, specific to the discipline.** Each discipline may use specific research resources. Students should receive instruction as to what these resources are and how to use them. Assignments should be designed in such a way as to develop students' information literacy in ways appropriate to the discipline.

4. **A detailed syllabus.** The syllabus should communicate course objectives and grading policy. Writing should be a substantial component of the course grade.

5. **A comprehensive course calendar.** The course calendar should clearly indicate due dates for all major projects. These projects should be scaffolded to engage students in the academic writing process (brainstorming, drafting, peer-review, revision, and proof-reading).

6. **A minimum of fifteen pages of writing per student**. This should include a mix of informal and formal assignments ranging from "writing-to-learn" exercises (journals, summaries, definitions, micro-themes, low stakes writing, and in-class drafts) to major projects (essays, reports, research papers, and posters).

The following is from the City Tech WAC Fellow Handbook and may be helpful when developing your WI syllabus, for more details, please attend the WI Syllabus Faculty Workshop and/or consult a WAC fellow.

WI Course Syllabus Preparation

In writing your course syllabus, you should make the following clear to your students (1) the goal of developing students' writing process is linked to the comprehension of the course topic and (2) in combining comprehension of course material with writing goals, identify concrete procedures for writing development and goals, including but not limited to proficiency in conceptual analysis, verbal presentation of ideas, thesis-based paper, crafting research papers.

I. The WI course requires the instructor to assign 15 written pages per student. It is highly recommended that instructors break up the writing assignments. Here are some promising options for developing writing assignments:

(1) a series of scaffolded assignments that lead to a final research paper
(2) a series of scaffolded assignments that lead to two to three term papers
(3) weekly informal reading responses coupled with a scaffolded formal assignment
(4) At least one draft and revision process

II. What is the difference between a formal and informal writing assignment
Informal – writing to learn
- focus is not on grammar or organization
- ungraded
  - link to effective grading materials for revision workshop
- provide examples, perhaps discipline specific?
Formal – writing to communicate
- focus on research or thesis
  - perhaps we can make available online handouts on (1) what a research paper is and (2) what a thesis is .
- graded
  - link to effective marking materials workshop

III. Designing the Course Schedule

(1) Ideas for scaffolding Assignments into the Schedule
(2) Ideas for using class time for group writing workshops

IV. Identify relevant bibliographic citation style (MLA, Chicago, APA, etc.) in the syllabus