

Guidelines for Writing Requirements in Liberal Studies Courses

(Approved May, 2009)

Writing is an important part of all Liberal Studies Program courses. Writing helps to promote the learning outcomes of the program by structuring opportunities for students to:

- reflect on the ideas, practices, texts (broadly defined), and other experiences associated with the course;
- communicate those reflections in ways appropriate both to the discipline(s) represented in the course and to conventions of academic and professional discourses;
- interact in writing with peers and instructors such that ideas, knowledge and meaning can be reconsidered, reexamined and re-evaluated. Often this comes through a process of revision;
- devote time to the task of studying outside of class;
- construct arguments and use evidence appropriate to the discipline(s) represented in the course.

Writing will take different forms in the Liberal Studies Program. Depending on the particular unit involved and the content of the course within it, students may be asked to write summaries, analyses, essays, lab reports, reflections, reviews, proposals, research papers, editorials, problem sets, computer codes, or explanations, etc. Regardless of form, writing in all Liberal Studies Program courses should adhere to the following guidelines:

- At least one writing assignment should be completed outside of class.
- At least one assignment should be structured in ways that help students reflect on course content.
- Writing should reflect learning outcomes for the course.
- Instructors should provide feedback in a timely manner.
- The advisory committees for each component of the Liberal Studies Program will establish their own expectations for writing in their courses (including an expected range in the number of pages assigned), consistent with these guidelines and approved by the Liberal Studies Council.

Writing Intensive Courses:

Three units of the Liberal Studies Program, 1) *First-Year Writing*, 2) *Focal Point Seminar*, and 3) *Sophomore Seminar on Multiculturalism in the U.S.* are designated as “writing intensive.” Assignments in these courses will adhere to the guidelines specified above, and in addition, will include a minimum of 10-20 cumulative pages of writing. Students in these enrollment-capped courses will have at least one opportunity to receive feedback on an assignment with the goal of revising and resubmitting.