

Memorandum

From: Luise McCarty, representing the Foundations Faculty
Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
To: Robert Kunzman
Associate Dean for Teacher Education
School of Education, IUB
Date: February 22, 2013
Subject: Proposal for an Intensive Writing Policy for the School of Education

Introduction

Our Educational Foundations Program offers two undergraduate courses, H205 – Introduction to Educational Thought and H340 – Education and American Culture, that have been designated intensive writing courses in the undergraduate teacher education programs of the School of Education.

The faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies are proposing an Intensive Writing Policy responsive to the stipulation in the General Education Curriculum that undergraduates be given opportunities for intensive writing and that “each degree program should articulate how undergraduate students fulfill this requirement within their degree program.” (BFC Circular B25-2009, 12. For a full text see <http://www.indiana.edu/~bfc/docs/circulars/08-09/B25-2009.pdf>)

The proposed policy is an amended version of the College of Arts and Science Intensive Writing Policy – see <http://college.indiana.edu/undergrad/iw.shtml>. In addition, our proposal reflects the Foundational Intellectual Skills stipulated in the Indiana Statewide Transfer General Education Core, in particular those identified as “Written Communication.” (retrieved from http://www.in.gov/che/files/IN_Statwide_Tsfr_Gen_Ed_Core_121212.)

Proposal for an Intensive Writing Policy

The purpose of the Intensive Writing (IW) requirement in the School of Education is to provide students with practice in writing on an educational subject under the direction of an instructor well acquainted with the standards of good writing. Assignments should be evaluated with close attention to organization and expression as well as to substance and argument. Students should have completed one of the following courses as prerequisites: ENG-W131, W170, CMLT-C110 or an equivalent.

For a course to qualify for IW credit, students must be required to write at least 5,000 words (roughly 20 typed pages), not counting revisions and informal writings (e.g. journals). Ordinarily, students will write a series of papers over the course of a semester, rather than one long term paper.

Good writing is intimately connected to sophisticated thinking and inquiry. Through writing, students are expected to explore issues, identify, collect and analyze relevant information, and organize evidence in order to draw logical conclusions and sound judgment based on the findings. Therefore, to practice the craft of writing and analysis crucial to their development as professional educators, students must receive periodic evaluations of their writing and they should have opportunities to redraft one or more papers in light of the instructor's comments. The instructor is expected to provide feedback that addresses both subject matter of a paper and the analysis and presentation of this subject matter, recognizing that they are intertwined. Student writing should be subject to a peer review process, and at least one assignment should be common across all sections of a course.

The instructor should be pedagogically competent to teach about the organization and process of writing, about relevant genres, styles, purposes, contexts, audiences and conventions in several academic disciplines. Other qualifications should include the ability to evaluate style, tone, syntax, grammar and spelling of a student's written work, teaching about the correct use of varieties of sources, and the ethical and legal issues surrounding plagiarism. In addition, an instructor must be proficient in teaching and assessing reasoning and critical thinking as well as establishing defensible, transparent, and clearly communicable criteria for evaluation based on sound professional judgment.