



Assessing Writing at York

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Heather Robinson and Raquel Coy,
York College Writing Across the Curriculum



Writing as a graduate requirement

Per a CUNY resolution in 1999, and a York Senate resolution in 2001, students must complete three WI courses to graduate. The language:

- In order to graduate, students who began their studies at York College and students who transfer to York without a prior A.A., A.S., or Bachelor's degree must complete 3 courses designated as Writing Intensive (WI). At least one of these WI courses must be at the 300 level or above and in the student's major.
- All major programs require at least one WI course at the 300-level or above, to support students' completion of this graduation requirement.
- Students who transfer to York will be responsible for fulfilling all Writing Intensive course requirements for graduation. Students may transfer up to two Writing Intensive courses to fulfill this requirement. Transfer students should consult with an advisor about the number of WI courses required for graduation.



WI courses at York

- Courses at the 100- and 200-level: infused throughout the curriculum. Not all departments offer them. Many, but not all, are Pathways courses.
- Courses at the 300- and 400-level: every program designates and offers their own WI course that students must complete to graduate with that degree.

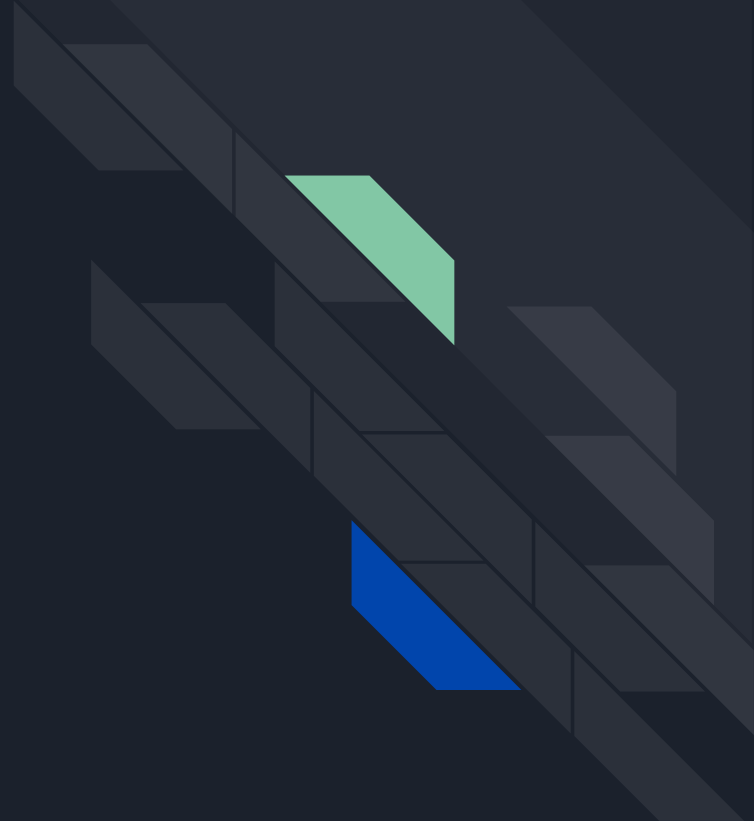


Assessing Writing at York

Assessment of writing at York has been happening continually since 2018, but in an ad hoc way. We assess in two ways:

- Via GEAC: Written Communication proficiency
- Via program assessment/AAC: PSLOs written into program assessment

Writing assessment in General Education Courses





GEAC Written Communication assessment

These courses are WI courses that are in the Flexible Core (note, composition is different)

Courses assessed with respect to writing:

Fall 2022: CLDV 110, ECON 102, ENG 286, HUM 224

Fall 2024: ENG 286

Spring 2026: ENG 272

Written Communication Rubric

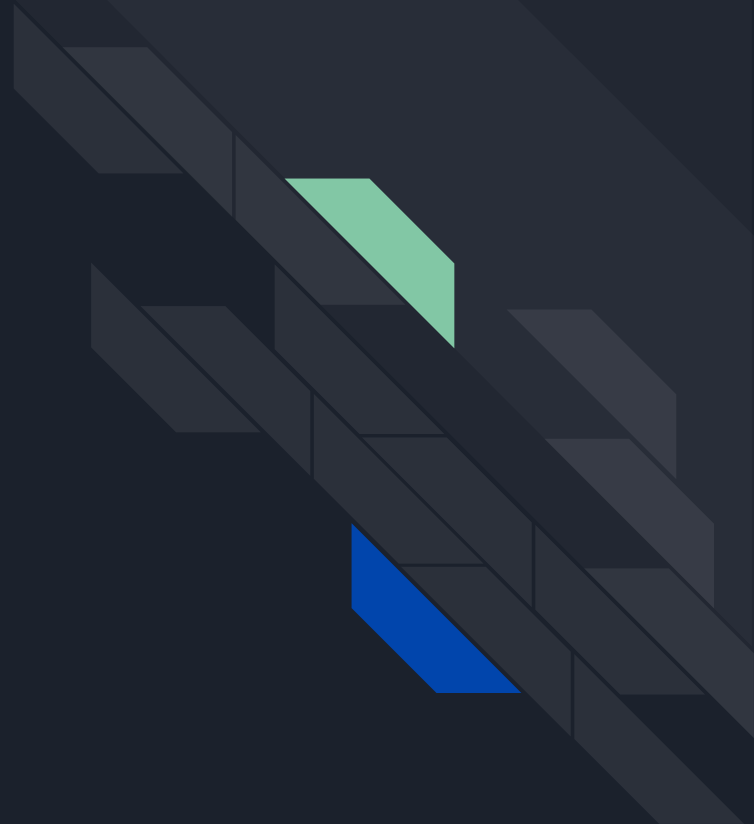
Written Communication Rubric adapted following AAC&U VALUE format

With considerations from the Colorado State Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse (Writing to Engage)

Definition: Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in various genres and styles. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

SLO	4 – capstone	3 – milestone 2	2 – milestone 1	1 – benchmark
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a consistent and thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context) most of the time.	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of – perhaps inconsistently – audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates insufficient attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields.</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, and stylistic choices.	Demonstrates consistent use of most conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, and stylistic choices.	Follows basic expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for organization and content	Fails to use a consistent system for organization and genre convention.

Writing assessment in
the major





Assessment of WI courses via AAC, using department-generated rubrics

2022-3: ENG 272, ENG 286, JOUR 281

POL 453

BUS 461

AVIA 410

2023-4: ENG 311, ENG 410

BUS 481

SPAN 413

2024-5: JOUR 281

FA 106, FA 397

POL 327



Assessment of writing in non-WI courses

SPAN 418: 4.x Write well developed essays using appropriate organization, vocabulary and grammatical structures.

ANTH 302: PG: To evaluate observed behavior and develop a valid analysis through ethnographic writing

FA325: PLO 1.3 Observe, write about and discuss art from around the world (with exposure to a specific area) as a primary source in historical study.

PH320 : PSLO: Complete a statistical analysis and report results in both an oral and written form.

JOUR 284: PSLO 3. Students will write and revise well-structured, articulate works in discipline-appropriate genres, including but not limited to academic, professional, creative and civic writing



Writing-focused PSLOs

Political Science: PSLO 2.4: Attain familiarity with and ability to craft at a fundamental level appropriate writing genres in political science.

English: PSLO 3. Students will write and revise well-structured, articulate works in discipline-appropriate genres, including but not limited to academic, professional, creative and civic writing.

Spanish: 4.3 Write creative works such as stories, poems, testimonies, journals or short dramatic works on current events related to social, cultural, ethical, and linguistic issues pertaining to the communities to which the students belong; 4.x Write well developed essays using appropriate organization, vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Public Health: PSLO: Complete a statistical analysis and report results in both an oral and written form.

Fine Art: PSLO 1.3 Observe, write about and discuss art from around the world (with exposure to a specific area) as a primary source in historical study.


Business: PSLO3.1 Clearly communicate through writing and presenting research results
PSLO3.3 Develop and provide written documentation understandable by business users.

Sample Rubric 1: Adapted Critical Thinking rubric (used to assess Art History BA courses)

SLO	4 – Capstone	3 – Milestone, high	2 – Milestone, low	1 – Benchmark
Explanation of issues	Issue/problem to be considered is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered is stated without clarification or description.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and some relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, considering the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) considers the complexities of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) does not acknowledge issue complexity.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and/or obvious.

Sample Rubric 2: Argument & Structure (used to assess Political Science BA courses)

	4- Exceeding	3-Achieving	2-Acceptable	1-Beginning
Argument/Focus	Exceptionally clear focused and interesting statement of argument(s)t that addresses research question (s). A conclusion that restates the argument, summarizing the findings explaining importance of the research and how it can be used	Clear argument (s) that addresses research question. A clear conclusion that restates argument(s)t and says why the research is important.	Contains argument(s) but with inconsistent focus and generally addresses research question(s). Conclusion tends to generally summarize research	Vague argument(s) lacks clarity or focus. Missing a conclusion.
Structure/Content	Demonstrates full knowledge with clear purpose and subject, pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics; supports conclusions/ ideas with evidence.	Has somewhat clear purpose and subject, some examples, facts, and/or statistics that support the subject: includes some data or evidence.	Attempts to define purpose and subject: provides data or examples, facts, and/or statistics, which do not adequately support the subject: Includes thin data or evidence.	Does not clearly define subject or purpose; provides weak or no support of subject; gives insufficient support for ideas or conclusions.



Sample Rubric 3: As yet untested Clarity, Tone and Style rubric

	Highly Proficient	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Minimally Proficient
Audience, Tone, Point of View	Demonstrates clear and consistent awareness of audience needs; tone and point-of-view entirely appropriate to assignment	Mostly demonstrates clear awareness of audience needs; tone and point-of-view mostly appropriate to assignment	Demonstrates inconsistent awareness of audience needs; tone and point-of-view entirely appropriate to assignment	Seldom demonstrates awareness of audience needs; tone and point-of-view rarely appropriate to assignment
Word Usage and Sentence Construction	Consistently demonstrates highly adept word usage and sentence construction	Demonstrates mostly competent word usage and sentence construction	Inconsistently demonstrates competent word usage and sentence construction	Seldom or never demonstrates appropriate word usage. Sentence construction is basic.

Psychology!	Exemplary (4)	Accomplished (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Ability to formulate Hypotheses/Aims	Approximately one paragraph, addressing the topic and a main idea Includes thesis statement that is appropriate in scope (states the goal of the current paper)	Of variable length, identifying a topic Includes thesis statement that may not comprise a topic and an assertion	___ Introduction present but incomplete, unclear or otherwise minimally acceptable	No body
Ability to synthesize the literature	Five or more elements below Each paragraph contains a clear topic sentence (and also logically leads to the next paragraph) Defines concepts and main variables Provide concise and clear background of variables/concepts using relevant studies Describe research methods/findings of prior relevant studies Provided citations from more than one study that supports the main idea Clearly identifies gaps in the literature Identify future research direction that is ties to existing body of research	Less than Five elements Not all elements support and develop the main idea Not all paragraphs contain a clear topic sentence (and also logically leads to the next paragraph)	___ Less than three elements ___ Body present but significantly incomplete, unclear or otherwise minimally acceptable	No conclusion
Ability to summarize	Typically one paragraph (or may be more) Summarizes the body and concludes the paper Contains restatement of the main idea (or thesis statement), summarize subpoints and leaves the reader with an interesting final impression	Less than one paragraph Summarizes the body incompletely with weak conclusion Contains less than the following: restatement of the main idea (or thesis statement), summarize subpoints and leaves the reader with an interesting final impression	Conclusion present but significantly incomplete, unclear or otherwise minimally acceptable	No introduction

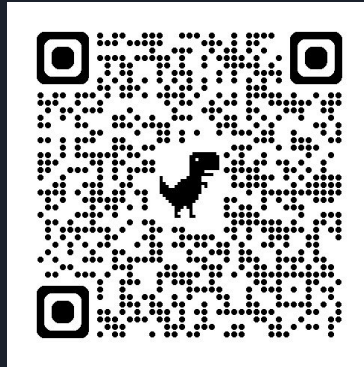


Where we need to go: systematic assessment

- Each programs should be assessing their capstone WI courses at least every four years
- If you're assessing writing, please assess at least one of your WI courses!
- Programs can and have established their own goals for writing. Possibilities include:
 - Disciplinary and genre-specific writing - e.g., English
 - Argument and structure - e.g., Political Science
 - Clarity and communication of ideas - anyone? (English TBA)
- Alignment of program assessment with Gen Ed assessment so we see student performance from the start to the end
- Use a finite number of rubrics so we can compare across programs
- Report writing assessment results to WAC Program so we can report on program as a whole



Thank you!



[Links to WAC website](#) and full versions of rubrics