

V. 7: Draft Resolution in Support of Writing in the Majors

The University Writing Program Committee/Writing Initiative Task Force asks that the University Curriculum Committee approve the following:

Resolution:

The University Curriculum Committee recommends that the Senate endorse a writing-in-the-disciplines requirement so that significant writing instruction beyond the core curriculum is included in every major. Though a university-wide requirement, the specific ways that the requirement will be implemented will be designed by each program to meet the needs of their discipline following general principles developed by a faculty committee on writing. The plans for implementation will be reviewed and approved by this writing committee in concert with the University Curriculum Committee to ensure consistency to the principles.

Rationale:

Faculty members have long recognized that writing competency is important to the success of students, yet there is evidence that many of our students have had limited instruction in writing before entering Auburn and that many of our students do less writing and receive less instruction in writing than their peers at comparable universities. Similarly, faculty members understand that forms and practices of writing vary across different disciplines and in different contexts. Research in the field of writing studies has established that student learning can be enhanced with meaningful writing experiences, and that improvement in writing comes with opportunities to practice, receive feedback and revise under the direction of knowledgeable and experienced writers. However, unlike other universities, Auburn does not require specific writing instruction beyond the first-year composition sequence required in the core curriculum. As the Writing Initiative Task Force reported in 2008, there are many ways that students could be provided with meaningful instruction and significant opportunities to work on their writing but that these experiences need to fit with the requirements and practices of different disciplines. Thus, faculty in those disciplines, with appropriate support from the University Writing Program, are in the best position to determine what kinds of writing their students need to do and where in the curriculum writing experiences and instruction are most appropriate. Auburn University has already demonstrated a commitment to improving the written competency of our students through the expansion of the John C. H. Miller Writing Center. The University has included enhancing writing as one of the action plans in the Strategic Plan and has committed to providing support for faculty in the majors to develop appropriate curriculum, provide significant writing instruction, and assess the results of their efforts by establishing the Office of University Writing and hiring a director.

*Approved by the UCC
Linda S. Glaze
2/4/2010*