

**FIRST-YEAR WRITING REQUIREMENT  
COURSE GUIDELINES**  
August 2009

The Sweetland Center for Writing approves the departmental curricular offerings that satisfy the LSA First-Year Writing Requirement (FYWR). FYWR courses must be reapproved every five years. Enrollments in all FYWR courses are capped at 18.

**Statement of Purpose**

The goal of the First-Year Writing Requirement is to prepare students to write in diverse academic contexts. As a broad preparation for the range of writing tasks students will encounter at the University of Michigan and beyond, FYWR courses emphasize evidenced, academic writing in a variety of genres and rhetorical situations. This course is foundational for students to master the kind of analysis and argumentation found in sophisticated academic writing.

*A FYWR course is required of all students in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; School of Art and Design; School of Business; Division of Kinesiology; School of Music, Theatre, and Dance; and the School of Nursing. A FYWR course also is required of all students transferring into the College of Architecture and Urban Planning and the College of Pharmacy. The College of Engineering offers its own writing program and requirements.*

**Course Goals**

First-Year Writing Requirement courses assign writing tasks designed to help students learn to:

- produce complex, analytic, evidence-based arguments that matter in a range of academic contexts;
- read, summarize, analyze, and synthesize complex texts purposefully in order to generate and support writing;
- practice writing in a variety of genres and demonstrate an awareness of the strategies that writers use in different rhetorical situations;
- develop flexible strategies for organizing, revising, editing, and proofreading writing of varying lengths to improve development of ideas and appropriateness of expression; and
- collaborate with peers and the instructor to define revision strategies for particular pieces of writing, to set goals for improving writing, and to devise effective plans for achieving those goals.

**Writing Instruction**

- As a general rule, students in First-Year Writing Requirement courses should complete a minimum of four major writing assignments, of varying page lengths, with at least 25 pages of polished writing, no less than half of which should have gone through substantial review and revision.
- Students should understand how and when they will receive feedback on their writing (through conferences about papers, peer review workshops, class discussion of common problems, written comments on preliminary drafts, etc.). Individual conferences with students about their writing will help them to understand audience and reader expectations and will enable dialogue about personal writing goals.
- Students should write regularly throughout the semester and revise their work in response to comments from their instructor and peers, and should work intensively on revising each formal assignment.
- Writing assignments should be *varied* in genre (to advance understanding of audience and purpose), *sequential* (to facilitate the development of ideas and concepts), *dispersed* over the course of a semester (to enhance continuity), and *revised* (to promote reflection and rigor) so that students build their capacity to produce complex, intentional, and sophisticated evidence-based writing.

*Students must receive a C- or above to receive credit for the First-Year Writing Requirement. Students who receive a D+, D, or D- will earn course credits, but must elect another First-Year Writing Requirement course.*

For more information about the FYWR, please contact the Sweetland Center for Writing at 764-0429 or email [sweetlandinfo@umich.edu](mailto:sweetlandinfo@umich.edu).

Adapted from the University of Michigan English Department Writing Program's *Teaching First-Year Writing: A Guide for New Instructors of English 124 and 125* and the University of Washington Expository Writing Program's *Orientation Manual*.