

Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Policy
(Supersedes PM 01-02, AA 2007-07; PM 91-03 and AA 2006-27)

1.0 Overview

- 1.1** The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) was implemented by the CSU in 1977 and has undergone several CSU revisions, the most recent of which is Executive Order 665 implemented in the fall of 1998 and italicized in the sections below.
- 1.2** The GWAR obliges all CSU campuses to certify the writing proficiency of all undergraduate and graduate students before their degrees are granted.
- 1.3** The GWAR Coordinator and the University Writing Committee (UWC) shall be responsible for seeing that the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) is implemented and administered at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). Procedures for implementing and administering the GWAR may be amended or altered without necessitating a new Presidential Memorandum.
- 1.4** The GWAR program reports to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the Office of Academic Affairs.

2.0 CSU Policy and CSUDH Implementation: GWAR at the Baccalaureate Level

2.1 Competence in Writing skills at the Upper Division Level

- 2.1.1** Executive Order 665: “All students subject to the degree requirements of the 1977-78 or subsequent general catalogs must demonstrate competence in writing skills at the upper division level as a requirement for the baccalaureate degree, and if not previously met in the CSU, for a second bachelor’s degree.”
- 2.1.2** Undergraduate CSUDH students may meet the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement in any of the following ways:
 - 2.1.2.1** Passing the Graduate Writing Examination (GWE) with a score of 8 or better effective fall 2007;
 - 2.1.2.2** By completion of one of the approved writing certifying courses with a grade of “C” or better;
 - 2.1.2.3** By satisfying a Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) examination or course before matriculating to CSUDH.

2.2 Campus Matriculation

- 2.2.1** Executive Order 665: “Students shall be matriculated at the CSU campus where they satisfy the GWAR.”
- 2.2.2** CSUDH shall allow students in distance learning programs to meet the requirements at other CSU campuses or CSUDH through the use of a proctor-administered GWE.

2.3 Time Frame for Completing Writing Skills Proficiency Requirement

- 2.3.1** Executive Order 665: “As soon as possible after students are admitted, campuses shall inform them of writing skills proficiency requirements for graduation, as distinct from lower division curricula and tests. Certification of writing competence shall be made available to students as they enter the junior

year. Students should complete the requirement before the senior year.”

2.3.2 The writing skills proficiency requirements for graduation shall be highlighted in each course schedule booklet. CSUDH students at or near the 72-unit level, shall receive a letter from the University Advisement Center (UAC) informing them of this requirement and notifying them of the following:

2.3.2.1 They have a GW hold on their records, and

2.3.2.2 Must see a UAC advisor to sign a contract agree to take the GWE at the next sitting or enroll in ENG 350.

2.4 Certification by Examination

2.4.1 Executive Order 665: “Certification of graduation writing proficiency is an all-campus responsibility. Certification may rely on evidence of writing ability as demonstrated in written coursework, essay examinations, or other measures of student writing competence. Measures may be developed which best fit individual campus needs. However, certification by examination shall include a common essay written and evaluated under controlled conditions and scored by at least two faculty members.”

2.4.2 CSUDH shall use the one-hour GWE as its common essay, holistically scored. Students for whom English is not the preferred language shall be given an additional hour to complete the GWE.

2.5 Certification Transferability

2.5.1 Executive Order 665: “*Certification of graduation writing competence shall be transferable from one CSU campus to another.*”

2.6 Implementing Changes and Periodic Review

2.6.1 Executive Order 665: “Campuses shall submit annually to the Chancellor’s Office as requested a description of any changes in campus provisions for the implementation of the GWAR. Campus GWAR programs shall be subject to periodic review and evaluation at least every five years under the supervision of the Advisory Committee of Student Writing Skills.”

2.6.2 CSUDH shall respond to the Chancellor’s Office as requested. In addition, the GWAR program shall be part of the Program Effectiveness Council (PEC) process and the outcome of that evaluation shall be reported annually to the Academic Senate.

3.0 CSU Policy: GWAR at the Graduate Level

3.1 Writing Proficiency as a Condition for Graduate Program Admission

3.1.1 Executive Order 665: “*Campuses may require demonstration of writing proficiency as a condition for admission to a graduate program.*”

3.1.2 CSUDH shall accept this option with the understanding that the graduate program shall require GWAR certification of all its applicants, including those who graduated from campuses outside the CSU.

3.2 Additional Demonstration of Writing Proficiency

3.2.1 Executive Order 665: “Campuses may require additional demonstration of advanced-level writing proficiency as a condition for admission to a graduate program and/or award of the graduate degree.”

3.2.2 CSUDH shall grant graduate programs greater flexibility in satisfying the GWAR. Programs may develop their advanced-level examinations, holistically scored, or use national tests that include a holistically scored writing competency component. The UWC shall review and approve or disapprove all such variations.

3.3 Pathways to Satisfy the GWAR: Graduate Level (GL) Requirements

- 3.3.1** Graduate students who earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in the United States satisfy the GWAR: GL.
- 3.3.2** Graduate students who earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited non-US institution where English is a primary language of instruction to satisfy the GWAR: GL.
- 3.3.3** Graduate students who earned a four (4) or above on the analytical writing component of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) satisfy the GWAR: GL.
- 3.3.4** Students coming from baccalaureate programs offered in non-English speaking university settings can qualify to enter a graduate program by meeting one of the following options:
 - 3.3.4.1** Take the “Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and achieve a score of:
 - 3.3.4.1.1** 550 (paper-based);
 - 3.3.4.1.2** 80 (internet-based);
 - 3.3.4.1.3** 213 (computer-based);
 - 3.3.4.2** Achieve a score of 6.5 on an “International English Language Testing System” (IELTS) exam.

4.0 Responsibilities of Various Campus Entities Regarding the GWAR

- 4.1** The Academic Senate shall review and recommend approval for changes in policy and implementation of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).
- 4.2** The UWC and the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement and assessing their effectiveness.
- 4.3** The Office of Academic Affairs has administrative authority over the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement program.

5.0 University Writing Committee (UWC) Service and Composition**5.1 Committee Charge**

- 5.1.1** The UWC initiates and/or reviews all policy proposals pertaining to GWAR and submits formal recommendations to the Academic Senate for review and approval;
- 5.1.2** The UWC implements and oversees policies governing GWAR requirements and standards;
- 5.1.3** The UWC administers and assesses the elements of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.

5.2 Committee Composition

- 5.2.1** One faculty member from each of the following College elected by the faculty of those colleges:
 - 5.2.1.1 College of Arts & Humanities (excluding English Department faculty)
 - 5.2.1.2 College of Business Administration & Public Policy
 - 5.2.1.3 College of Education
 - 5.2.1.4 College of Health, Human Services, & Nursing
 - 5.2.1.5 College of Natural & Behavioral Sciences
- 5.2.2** One faculty member, with ESL competency, elected by the Academic Senate.
- 5.2.3** One member of Associated Students Incorporated (ASI) with undergraduate standing elected by ASI Leadership.
- 5.2.4** One member of ASI with graduate standing elected by ASI Leadership.
- 5.2.5** The Director of the University Advisement and Testing Center.

- 5.2.6 The Chair, or designee, of the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate.
- 5.2.7 The Chair, or designee, of the General Education Committee.
- 5.2.8 The Chair, or designee, of the University Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee.
- 5.2.9 One faculty member of the Graduate Council, elected by the faculty of the Council.
- 5.2.10 One faculty member from the English Department elected by the department faculty.
- 5.2.11 The Coordinator of the Writing Adjunct program in Interdisciplinary Studies.
- 5.2.12 The Composition Coordinator of the English Department.
- 5.2.13 The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement Coordinator.
- 5.2.14 The “Writing across the Curriculum” Coordinator, who shall serve as the Chair of the Committee.
- 5.2.15 The Dean on Undergraduate Studies.

5.3 Committee Service

- 5.3.1 Service on the committee of the elected members shall be in staggered two-year terms with the terms of newly added members to be determined by lot at the first UWC meeting of each academic year.

5.4 Committee Chair

- 5.4.1 The Chair of the Committee reports on the Committee’s activities to the Academic Senate during its regularly scheduled meetings at the request of the Chair of the Academic Senate.

6.0 Terms of Office of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement Coordinator

- 6.1 The University Writing Committee (UWC) and the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Coordinator are responsible for administering all the elements of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement and assessing their effectiveness

6.2 Procedure for Selection of the GWAR Coordinator

- 6.2.1 The Office of Academic Affairs shall send out a campus – wide announcement, drafted by the University Writing Committee (UWC), to the CSUDH full-time faculty inviting applications for the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Coordinator position.
- 6.2.2 The Dean of Undergraduate Studies. After consultation with the Academic Senate, shall appoint a GWAR Coordinator Selection Committee.
- 6.2.3 The Selection Committee shall review the applications and recommended three applicants, in ranked order, to the Provost and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or his/her designee, who shall make the final appointment.

7.0 Implementation of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Policy

7.1 Time Frame for completing Writing Skills Proficiency Requirement-Undergraduates

- 7.1.1 Any student who has not met the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement by 72 units shall receive a registration hold (GW hold) place on their account and must complete the following:
 - 7.1.1.1 Meet with a University Advising Center (UAC) advisor to map out a strategy, including a signed contract, to meet the requirement before the hold will be lifted.
- 7.1.2 Any student who has reached 90 units without satisfying the GWAR requirement must enroll in a certifying course.

7.2 Certification by Course – Undergraduates

7.2.1 Students who seek to meet the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement Through examination must receive a score of 8 or better beginning fall 2007.

7.3 Certification by Course – Undergraduates

7.3.1 All certifying courses must emphasize writing, either generic or disciplinary, with ample writing activity and instructor feedback and must be reviewed by the University Writing Committee (UWC) for approval. They must also participate in the Composition Cooperative (CC).

7.3.1.1 The Composition Cooperative shall consist of a common examination in all sections of certifying courses and a holistic reading resulting in a letter grade that must count for at least 25% of the student's grade in the course.

Approved: Dr. Michael E. Spagna, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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