

**Sense of the Senate:
Temporary Suspension of Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)
in response to COVID-19
W* EXEC 20-10
Passed 04/22/2020 by the Academic Senate
37 in Favor/2 Against/2 Abstentions**

RESOLVED: that the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (AA 2017.11) be suspended effective Spring 2020 through Summer 2021 and reinstated by Fall 2021 in accordance with the Chancellor's Office memorandum dated March 12, 2020; and be it further

RESOLVED: that students who have catalog rights through Fall 2020 and are expected to graduate in any term where the GWE is suspended or prohibited be exempted from satisfying the GWAR and shall graduate as planned provided all other university and department or program requirements are met.

Rationale

The global pandemic COVID 19 has disrupted the lives of individuals across the nation, state, and Southern California region. The state's mandatory stay-at-home orders and prohibitions on assembly have prompted the Chancellor's Office to suspend the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) on all campuses that offer in-person testing until the Fall 2021 term, by which time campuses are expected to have implemented course-based options for meeting the GWAR (see Chancellor's Office Memorandum dated March 12, 2020).

At CSUDH, all students matriculating before Fall 2021 retain catalog rights allowing them to satisfy the GWAR either by passing the Graduation Writing Examination (GWE) or earning a passing grade in a GWAR-certifying course (see <http://csudh.2020-2021/Catalog/Catalog-Rights-Requirements-Under-Which-a-Student-Graduates> and <http://csudh.2020-2021/Catalog/Completion-of-the-GWAR>).

The limited suspension of the GWAR offers graduating students the most equitable solution given that 1) the University cannot offer students matriculating before 2021 both of the GWAR options to which they are entitled per the University Catalog; and 2) students must be able to graduate without investing additional time and incurring unanticipated expenses associated with taking a GWAR-certifying course.

We acknowledge that suspending the GWAR will result in the loss of educational opportunity for those graduating students who would have opted to complete a GWAR-certifying course as well as the loss of faculty workload associated with potentially diminished enrollment in these courses (though any student who wishes to enroll in a GWAR-certifying course may continue to do so).

Passed 04/22/2020 by the Academic Senate

We also acknowledge the significant workload for the advising units as they advise students on their options associated with the GVAR. We encourage the administration to provide additional staff support for these efforts.

The recommendation to suspend the GVAR was made in response to a global pandemic and as such did not follow “normal” processes, though it was approved by the University Writing Committee (UWC), a broadly representative body that includes faculty representatives from the Colleges, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the WAC Program, the Composition Program, the GVAR Program, Retention and Advising, the Toro Learning and Testing Center, the Graduate Council, the Educational Policy Committee of the Academic Senate, the General Education Committee, and Associated Students Incorporated. The UWC consulted separately with the Chancellor’s Office, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Educational Policy Committee, the Senate Executive Committee, the Composition Committee, the Writing Center Director, the University Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee Chair, the Chairs of the Department of English and of Interdisciplinary Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities.

Finally, we reaffirm the importance of building and maintaining a robust culture of writing at CSUDH that supports and advances the mission, vision, and goals of the University while it positively impacts students, faculty, and staff.