I. PROGRAM SUPPORT

Personnel

1. Is the program directed by a person who has been appropriately appointed and given appropriate released time to supervise the program? (Note: For the last few years, the Committee has interpreted “appropriate released time” as “support that is appropriate for the program’s current size and state of development” – TH)

   Appropriately appointed, yes; however, no release time is received.

2. Who assists the director in supervising the program? (e.g., Faculty Board, student assistant)

   No additional assistance is received for supervision of the program. However, various faculty members will assist as needed in the review of applications for certification or re-certification, and in the periodic assessment of student writing samples.

3. Do the director and board members have adequate professional/secretarial/clerical assistance to support their work and maintain records necessary for articulation of WI courses?

   As noted above, no additional clerical or other help is provided. However, I do have a student assistant who provides support for my division as a whole; his services may be used, if needed, for WI tasks that are not confidential in nature. We also employ the services of someone who assists with survey preparation and data analysis for WI as well as other forms of course and program assessment.

4. Does a network of support exist for instructors of WI courses?

   In addition to active, informal peer support, WI faculty meet as a group at least once a year to discuss issues of general concern, and to review the results of WI assessments done each semester.
Overall Teaching Load and Class Size

5. Are classes designated as WI limited to 20 students so that effective interaction between instructor and student can occur?

Yes.

6. Are teaching loads of instructors such that courses can be planned for and carried out in a way that is true to the spirit of the WI guidelines and that does not add unreasonably to the overall workload of the instructor?

Yes, with the understanding that the community college workload itself is substantial.

7. Is the teaching of WI courses appropriately rewarded in review processes, including tenure and promotion?

Yes, if the faculty member chooses to highlight this activity in his/her dossier narrative or supporting documentation. (It is not a formal criterion in the faculty classification system.)

Student Needs

8. Are enough WI courses offered so students can meet graduation or degree requirements?

Yes. We try to offer a good balanced complement of courses each semester (typically 20-25) so that all have healthy enrollments and none have to be cancelled. A number of courses (e.g., specialized literature courses) are offered on a cyclical basis (i.e., not every semester.)

9. Are WI courses clearly designated in class schedules?

Yes. WI courses are designated by a W- preceding the course title, and WI and other Focus-area courses are included in a separate listing in the class schedule each semester.

10. Are students advised about the availability of and purpose for WI courses through regular campus publications?

Yes, in class schedules and the college catalogue. Individual instructors may also provide additional information about the nature and goals of WI in their syllabi.

11. Can students who need help on writing problems get help, either from instructors or from staff in a writing workshop or laboratory?

Faculty teaching WI courses are, of course, the front-line of such assistance, but additional help is available from individual faculty and peer tutors and from the College Skills Center.

12. Are WI designations recorded and explained on student transcripts?

On HCC transcripts, WI courses are indicated by a “W” preceding the course title (e.g., SOC 214, W-Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations.) No other explanation is given. Changes in transcript format or information would probably have to be made at the system level.

Budget

13. Have adequate funds been provided to support the program?
Program costs, such as they are, are absorbed into the overall budget for instruction.

II. COURSE DESIGNATION PROCESS

1. Is the WI designation process reasonable, explained to faculty, and followed regularly by program administrators?

Yes to all of the above.

2. Does the designation process include the following:
   a) Publicizing the hallmarks of writing-intensive courses

   Yes. WI hallmarks, along with other pertinent information, are posted on the campus internal website.

   b) Soliciting proposals from individual faculty members

   Yes. A general announcement is made at the beginning of each year. Also, since WI is fully institutionalized at our campus, faculty members are generally well aware of this option, and newer faculty members are often recruited and mentored by more experienced faculty. We would, however, still like to encourage more submissions from faculty in our CTE programs.

   c) Reviewing proposals
   d) Approving the designation of courses as writing-intensive
   e) Notifying appropriate personnel of such designations

   Yes. The WI Coordinator works with 2-3 other WI faculty (usually from programs or disciplines other than the one for which a proposal is being submitted) to review new proposals. The Coordinator will then inform the faculty member submitting a proposal of the status of the proposal (e.g., either full approval, or approval contingent on some adjustment being made.) When a course is fully approved, it can be scheduled as the instructor and division chair see fit.

   An annual report of WI actions (initial approval and recertification) is provided to the campus Committee on Programs and Curricula (CPC) and we have also begun posting this information on the W-Focus site noted above.

3. Does the program offer an option for WI designations that extend beyond a single semester? If yes, please add a brief description of the option. [added Spring 1998]

   New courses receive an initial three-year period of certification; subsequent recertification is for a period of five years. Both initial certification and recertification are contingent on faculty members having students complete specific W-Focus evaluations each time a course is taught. Faculty seeking recertification must also indicate how they are assessing both course SLOs and WI hallmarks.

III. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

1. Is there a program of evaluation that assesses WI courses to see if they are doing what they are supposed to do—help students improve their writing?
As noted above, faculty teaching WI courses are expected to have their students complete WI-specific evaluations at the end of each semester. These evaluations include items linked to the WI hallmarks as well as several items linked to the rubric used periodically to assess student writing samples. The WI Coordinator receives copies of individual course assessments as well as an aggregate report in order to assess the effectiveness of the WI program as a whole. Writing sample assessment is conducted on a bi-annual basis; we are in the process of coordinating this (in alternate years) with a similar assessment of sample from ENG 100 sections. WI writing samples are drawn from students who have taken 42+ credits (i.e., have “sophomore” standing). In addition, we are also tracking how many WI courses students have taken at the time their writing samples are assessed. Samples from AY 2010-11 will be assessed in Fall 2011.

With the change in policy that was instituted in Fall 2010, which allows students more freedom of choice in which WI courses they take (i.e., can now be in the same discipline) we are still encouraging students to consider taking WI offerings in different disciplines. We are also encouraging students to take more than the two WI courses required for graduation, and will continue to monitor the choices they make.

2. Do program supervisors monitor the progress of students as they move through WI courses?

To date, we have looked more at general trends rather than at individual student progress. However, the WI Coordinator has begun to look at the selection of WI courses made by students (since breadth of writing experience is of interest), and the WI evaluation instrument we use would allow for cross-tabulation of the number of WI courses taken against the student’s level of confidence in his/her writing skills. We are also interested in the extent to which ENG 100 (passed with a “C” or better) is providing good preparation for WI courses, since this is a prerequisite for WI on our campus. A primary concern here is the competence students have (or do not have) in the various skills required for writing research papers. We continue to require that students pass a WI course with a “C” or better in order to receive credit for the course.

IV. FACULTY TRAINING PROGRAM

1. Are training programs in WI course instruction required or provided for faculty who want to participate in them?
2. Are orientation sessions provided at the beginning of each semester for instructors new to WI course instruction?
3. Are resources provided for instructors who want or need help in planning and teaching WI courses?

As noted above, formal requirements for WI courses are posted on the campus internal website. This includes 1) general information about the way in which the WI requirement (part of the larger Focus-area requirements) fits into the General Education core and the Liberal Arts (A.A.) program; 2) WI hallmarks; and 3) forms for certification and recertification. There is no formal training program per se; faculty members considering offering a WI course for the first time receive support from their peers, division chair and/or the WI Coordinator. Copies of syllabi for WI courses as well as samples of application forms are made available, as needed. Within the basic WI requirements, faculty are encouraged to develop the kinds of assignments that are most appropriate for course content and pedagogical goals. Discussion of shared concerns as well as best practices is included in our annual meetings. The reports that are provided to individual instructors based on student evaluations also serve to help faculty fine-tune their teaching in this context.

If you have additional information for the committee, please submit it with this form.

In re Tom Hilger’s memo of 6-30-2010 to the CCAO, Item #3: Since “bundling” *(we call it “Dual Option”)* was, as far as I know, created at HCC and continues to work very effectively, I would like to address this concern—something I was unable to do last year because I could not attend the meeting.