

Brothers, Sheila C

From: Raphael Finkel [raphael@cs.uky.edu]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2012 3:22 PM
To: Brothers, Sheila C
Cc: Davis, Alison F; Feddock, Christopher A; Fryar, Alan E; Lowry, Regina; Fuqua, Zachary D; Raphael Finkel; Scott Yost; Provost, University of Kentucky; Witt, Don
Subject: Item 4: Graduation Writing Requirement

Sheila,

The SAASC has voted to approve the proposed communication requirement for the major. Some notes:

The proposal recommends dropping the existing Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR) and in its place requiring that each major institute a communication requirement for the major (written, oral, and/or visual) (CRM). The CRM must be articulated in a program learning outcome and must be assessed like all program learning outcomes. The CRM should address at least two of oral, written, and visual.

The logistics: the General Education Outcomes Committee (GEOC) and Undergraduate Council (UC) certifies and oversees CRMs. The new requirement takes place immediately on University Senate (US) approval.

ENG 203/4/... will no longer be offered. Until CRMs are in place, each college will except students on a case-by-case basis until Fall 2012.

CRMs must emphasize instruction and evaluation with a draft/feedback/revision process, and the associated courses must be graded heavily on communication-intensive assignments. Students must complete such assignments with at least a C. The proposed CRM is in addition to the UKCore requirement (6 credits: Composition and Communication I and II)

In consultation with Deanna Sellnow, we discover this additional information:

1. Individual programs may opt for either CRM (Communication Requirement in the Major) or the existing GWR (Graduation Writing Requirement) but, since GWR is suspended, the mechanism would be to propose that the CRM for that program would be whatever the old GWR required.
2. It not necessary for a program X to consult department Y before X establishes a CRM that requires Y's courses for X's students. However, Y might impose prerequisites on such courses, and it would be a good idea for X and Y to work together to make sure the arrangement is mutually satisfactory.
3. If a CRM depends on courses that undergo minor change (such as a name change or a course-number change), it is not necessary for the CRM to be re-vetted by the General Education Outcomes Committee (GEOC) and Undergraduate Council (UC).

Raphael

GWR ad hoc Committee Report and Recommendation January 2011

Members:

Deanna Sellnow, Communication (Chair)
Karen Badger, Social Work
Anna Bosch, Arts and Sciences
Janet Eldred, English and Director of Writing Initiative
David Hulse, SSS
Scott Kelley, Gatton College of Business and Economics
Richard Sweigard, College of Engineering
Scott Yost, Civil Engineering

The group discussed options ranging from (a) eliminating any kind of graduation writing or communication requirement altogether to (b) retaining the existing requirement (c) to proposing a variety of options in between. Ultimately, the group concluded that the best approach is in line with the trend among UK benchmark universities, as well as among universities across the country. That trend is to require a “communication intensive course” or set of “communication intensive assignments” required across a series of courses in the majors (communication across the curriculum—CXC).

Philosophy & Rationale: Effective composition and communication (C&C) skills are not congenital but, rather, are acquired and developed over time through the processes of instruction, practice, assessment, and revision. Moreover, expectations as to what is effective increase commensurate with education and training. Employer surveys conducted annually by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) report communication skills (listening, writing, speaking, interpersonal, and teamwork) consistently among their top 10 criteria for hiring college graduates. Thus, college graduates ought to leave the university having attained the C&C skills necessary to succeed in the professions their academic majors represent. Although the fundamental principles of effective C&C are being taught as part of new composition and communication general education course sequence, many additional skills are discipline or profession specific. In some fields, for instance, being able to communicate orally using visuals such as models or posters, or in public or online forums using electronic slideshows, or in interpersonal or small group settings is as crucial to success as being able to write essays, articles, or reports and, perhaps, even more important than being able to write academic research papers. A discipline-specific communication requirement will help convey to students that such skills are not just a box to be checked in order to graduate, but are important skills for success in their major and chosen profession. Thus, the committee proposes the following recommendation.

Recommendation: Transform the current graduation-writing requirement (GWR) into a communication requirement (written, oral, and/or visual)* in the major (CRM) that is appropriate for the academic discipline and professions a given major represents. The CRM may be satisfied via either a specific communication-intensive course or communication-intensive assignments in a series of courses. The CRM will be articulated in a specific

program learning outcome and will be assessed regularly as required by program accreditation standards and university standards for SACS reaffirmation of accreditation.

*The committee recommends that each CRM address at least two of the three modalities (oral, written, visual) based on what is most appropriate for the major.

Implementation Timeline and Parameters:

The composition and communication subcommittee of the General Education Outcomes Committee (GEOC) and the Undergraduate Council will conduct CRM certification and oversight jointly. Courses that currently satisfy the GWR will be grandfathered in as certified for the new CRM.

The CRM will replace the GWR immediately upon approval by the University Senate. Rationale: The writing-intensive courses offered by the English department (ENG 203, 204, 205, etc.) that currently serve many majors across campus will no longer be offered as GWR courses.

Until CRMs are in place across campus, an appropriate administrator or governing unit determined by and in the student's college will grant current students who have not yet completed the GWR exceptions on a case-by-case basis. Such exceptions will be granted until Fall 2012, providing ample time for degree-granting units to identify their CRM program learning outcome(s), course(s) and assignment(s) to fulfill it, as well as their assessment plan. The assessment plan will include (a) clear goals for successful achievement of the CRM, (b) specific criteria and rubrics for systematically assessing student work, and (c) a cogent description as to how assessment results will be utilized to revise CRM instruction and/or curriculum if the goals are not met. The committee views the proposed change from the GWR to the CRM to be a change in form of an existing requirement that will be implemented in a more flexible way based on what is most appropriate for a particular major.

To fulfill the CRM, majors can require a communication-intensive course identified within their respective departments, a series of courses, or a new course more broadly conceived (e.g., a career development course). Students must have completed Composition and Communication I and II or their equivalents prior to completing the CRM. An appropriate person or committee in a given unit will assess the CRM regularly (at least biennially). Assessment results will be reported to the GEOC and Undergraduate Council, as well as to the Office of Assessment.

Communication-intensive courses must emphasize adequate instruction and evaluated assignments that clearly undergo a draft/feedback/revision process. If communication-intensive assignments are produced via a series of courses, each assignment must emphasize instruction and be evaluated based on a clearly articulated draft/feedback/revision process. Specific composition and communication skills to be mastered include organization, audience adaptation, development of an argument using appropriate evidence, and conveyed in a way that is appropriate, accurate, clear, and vivid.

A significant portion of the grade on communication-intensive assignments (significant is defined as no less than 50% of the grade on each CRM assignment) must be based on composition and communication skill achievement. Communication-intensive courses can be part of a college core requirement or a major requirement.

To be certified as a communication-intensive course, at least 80% of the final grade of a 1-credit course, 50% of a 2-credit course, 33% of a 3-credit course, and 25% of a 4-credit course must be based on communication-intensive assignments. If the assignments are produced in a series of courses, departments must provide a detailed description as to how the weight of the assignments over the series of courses is equivalent to these parameters.

To satisfy the CRM, students must earn a grade of “C” or better on the designated communication-intensive assignments produced in one course or over a series of courses. Any communication-intensive assignment that earns a D or below must be revised and resubmitted to meet competency (i.e., “C” or better) in order to satisfy the CRM. Instructors may limit the number of revision attempts and set time restrictions on revisions.

CRM Certification Guidelines

CRM certification will be granted by identifying:

- (1) a program learning outcome or outcomes focused directly on composition and communication skill mastery in written, oral, and/or visual modalities;
- (2) a course (or series of courses) that identify major assignment(s) focused on meeting that outcome and
- (3) that the assignment(s) account for a significant portion of the grade as described in the preceding paragraphs;
- (4) an explicitly stated instruction/draft/feedback/revision/evaluation process;
- (5) a discipline-specific information literacy component;
- (6) a clear communication instruction plan and rubric for evaluating communication-intensive student work; and
- (7) a cogent plan for assessing the CRM and revising instruction and/or curriculum when assessment goals are not met.

**Communication Requirement in the Major (CRM)
Program Certification Application**

Major: _____

Contact: _____
(Name) (Phone) (Email Address)

Program Learning Outcome: _____

Communication-intensive course or series of courses used to satisfy the CRM: *

*Include a syllabus for each course identified.

Assignment(s) (include a description and grading rubric, as well as an explanation of the weight of the assignment in the overall course grade): _____

Describe briefly the instruction plan for teaching the communication skill(s):

Describe briefly the draft/feedback/revision plan: _____

Describe briefly the CRM assessment plan: _____

Signature Routing Log: