

**Hire a WAC/WID (Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines) coordinator to support the development of writing courses and the teaching of writing across campus.**

**CURRENT CHALLENGE:**

Recently, Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) representative Kelli Kennedy contacted the Writing Competency Subcommittee Chair Dr. Ginny Crisco to discuss upper division writing courses. Ms. Kennedy reported conversations ASI representatives have had regarding their experiences learning to write on campus, their sense of their preparedness for their next step after their Bachelor's degree, the lack of opportunities to take writing courses in their disciplines, and the limited number of writing courses that are offered in any one semester. This conversation, along with the recommendations in the 2013 Professional Review of Supplemental Writing Assistance on our campus, conducted by Writing Program Administration consultants Michael Pemberton and Joyce Kinkead, leads the Writing Competency Subcommittee Chair Ginny Crisco to propose a Writing Across the Curriculum / Writing in the Disciplines Program (WAC/WID). (Note: Currently this proposal is in review in the English Department. Additionally, the subcommittee supports the gist of this proposal but whole committee has not approved this exact proposal as it is currently written. It is on our agenda for our next meeting on February 11th, 2016.)

**PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

**WAC/ WID PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

**PROPOSAL:** Support the development of a Writing Across the Curriculum / Writing in the Disciplines program on campus by hiring a WAC / WID coordinator to support the development of writing courses and the teaching of writing across campus.

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** The WAC coordinator is considered English Department faculty (teaches one class; two courses of release for WAC coordination). Because this is a position that supports the university, the WAC coordinator should have ongoing, permanent funding for assigned time and a WAC budget provided by the Provost's Office. The WAC Coordinator needs to have a PhD in Composition, Rhetoric, or Writing Studies, and should specialize in any of these areas: Writing Across the Curriculum, Genre Studies, Composition Pedagogy, ESL, or Assessment.

**BENEFITS TO FRESNO STATE:**

**INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT**

Planning documents and research support the development of WAS/WID to build students' abilities with writing across our campus beyond the first year. According to the Academic Plan for 2011-2016, the first goal under "Learning" states, "Improve student writing by expanding writing across the curriculum, establishing desired measurable outcomes, and gauging achievement of these outcomes" (emphasis mine). This goal names writing across the curriculum in particular and points to the need to support writing at the upper division level in the disciplines. While writing is not named in The Draft Strategic Priorities of the Office of the President, the function of a WAC/WID program could address the first priority. A WAC / WID program touches any course or discipline that uses writing (and supports the teaching of writing across the curriculum and at various levels), so the effect of a WAC/WID program could be wide spread across the campus.

**RESEARCH ON WRITING IN THE WORKPLACE**

The National Commission on Writing's "Writing: A Ticket to Work. . . Or a Ticket Out: A Survey of Business Leaders" surveyed 120 major American Corporations. They found that 1) "Writing is a 'threshold skill' for both employment and promotion, participation for salaried employees" (3). 2) "Two-thirds of salaried employees in large American companies have some writing responsibility"(3).

**RESEARCH ON STUDENT SUCCESS**

Several studies on student success link writing courses--because of their small class sizes and commitment to active learning and performance--to students' satisfaction with their education, to their abilities to finish their degrees more quickly, and to their opportunities to take up their education in meaningful and important ways (Astin, Light, Sommers and Saltz).

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT:** Organize and deliver professional development for campus faculty, Support faculty understanding and implementation of writing pedagogy and best classroom practices, Generate funds to support multidisciplinary literacy practices and professional development, Enhance access to writing pedagogy on campus through on-line and web-based WAC archives, instruct faculty in the use of new technologies to support students' writing and learning.

**POLICY AND CURRICULUM:** Lead coordination and revision of campus Writing Program policies with a special consideration for stricter sequencing of writing requirements and infusion of writing more broadly across the curriculum, Coordinate and improve W courses and the teaching of writing for the GE writing requirement.

**RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT:** Instruct Departments undergoing review as well as the university for accreditation in how to use writing to assess programs / departments, Conduct original, publishable, research in the field of college-level reading and writing to determine best practices, Collect inter-university data to compare the effectiveness of university level policies, and to compare the reading and writing habits of Fresno State students and faculty to students and faculty at other universities.

**OUTREACH:** Articulate writing pedagogy with two-year colleges, Organize workshops and events, Accept invitations at other universities or professional organizations to do workshops.