

Implementation of Writing Plans: Review Process for Cycle Two, 2016-2019

Instead of collecting formal implementation reports, the University Writing Committee asks that Departments engage in a deliberative conversation about the state of writing in their majors and invite the Director of University Writing and members of the UWC to attend that discussion. The role of these external participants is primarily to listen for patterns of implementation, gather examples of practices, and consider challenges that might be addressed by other programs or additional support.

These participants may be able to answer specific questions or clarify goals of the writing initiative during the meeting, but we think it generally best to identify those needs and invite the Director or UWC member back at a later date for a more specific workshop or Q&A. The Office of University Writing provides a number of different workshops for faculty groups in addition to individual consultations. Your department can request a specific workshop [here](#).

Possibilities for making this process productive for your faculty:

1. Identify someone in the department who understands the writing initiative and can facilitate a productive conversation. Have that person serve as the point of contact for the Director of University Writing and the member of the UWC who will attend the departmental discussion.
2. Invite the relevant faculty to attend and come prepared for a productive and honest discussion.
3. Remind faculty that the writing initiative is focused on improving writing in the disciplines rather than on generic “good writing” or lower-level skills such as spelling and punctuation. Disciplinary faculty are in the best position to teach students the kinds of writing practices that are valued in the academic and professional work graduates of the major will be expected to do. Disciplinary faculty members are also in the best position to show students that content and thinking cannot be easily separated from clear expression.
4. Review (or create) and distribute to faculty in advance the inventory of writing being done in your department. The Director of University Writing will provide the earlier inventories you submitted, the original writing plan and first-cycle review report, and the comments the UWC provided to the department.
5. Review and consider how the writing being assigned connects to the general principles which were required for your writing plan to initially be approved. A summary of those principles is located on [our website](#).
6. Consider collecting and distributing examples of assignments (whether working well or not) and examples of student writing at various levels but especially as they graduate.
7. Ask faculty to spend some time in advance reflecting on writing in the major. Possible prompts might include the kinds of questions included as possible agenda items in the section that follows.

We are less concerned in this cycle with assessment than we are with what you are doing with writing. If you have done assessment of writing, you might want to include it in the discussion, but we suggest the discussion consider such questions as:

1. What features of writing seem most important to student success in your department and in the careers students have after graduation?
2. Where are you satisfied with the ways you are helping students to improve their writing skills and where do you see areas where more needs to be done?
3. What have you done to work on these weaknesses or to share with others the strategies that have proven successful?
4. How are you using writing to assist in students learning the content or concepts of your courses?
5. What strategies for providing feedback and asking students to revise their work have you tried?
6. What structures or programs of support could be offered by your department, your college, the Office of University Writing, or some other unit at Auburn that would make improvement in student writing and in teaching writing more likely to succeed? What programs or structures have you already taken advantage of in your efforts to improve the teaching of writing in your courses?
7. What would you most like to see happen as a result of talking about writing in your department? What specific actions will you take next?

Contact Margaret Marshall at auburnwrites@auburn.edu to set the date and determine the precise procedure for your department.