

Written Communication Courses

Students develop their written communication skills at Westmont by taking at least two courses that emphasize writing fluently. These courses encourage students to develop their abilities to articulate information, ideas, and convictions. Students are expected to be able to communicate effectively to a wide range of audiences, within the academy, the church, and the public.

A. Written Communication. Students develop their written communication skills by completing at least two requirements that emphasize writing fluently. These courses support students as they learn to evaluate, synthesize, and articulate credible information in writing. Students develop writing projects using a process that typically includes research, drafting, revision, and editing. Ultimately, Westmont graduates are expected to be able to communicate effectively with a range of target audiences, within the academy, the church, and the public sphere.

a) **Writing for the Liberal Arts.** All students meet their Writing for the Liberal Arts requirement before or during their first two semesters at Westmont. The requirement may be fulfilled by any of these options:

- completing ENG-002: Composition or ENG-002ENV: Composition: Environment at Westmont;
- completing an equivalent course to ENG-002: Composition at another college or university;
- earning a score of 4 or 5 on the AP Language or AP Literature exam before their first semester at Westmont;
- completing ENG-104 or any other Written Communication Course at Westmont after earning qualifying test scores (e.g., SAT EBRW score or some IB exams) before their first semester at Westmont.

b) **One other Written Communication course.** This course will typically be within the student's major. Students should consult their academic advisors to plan accordingly.

Interpretive Statement

The guiding principle for GE Written Communication coursework is four interventions in the writing process; for example, students working on a history honors paper could submit four sections of their work during the semester. A variety of teaching methods can be used to meet this requirement: paper revision encourages students to intensify their development of a persuasive argument or critical analysis;

response writing in class concentrates on content rather than form; journaling to explore ideas promotes critical thinking; summary writing is a necessary skill developing both content and form; essay examinations are evaluated on content as well as form, etc.

Certification Criteria

The syllabus explicitly identifies the course as a written communication course, and it clearly defines expectations for performance. Students are informed that their writing will be evaluated for rhetorical awareness (audience-centered appeals), rhetorical sensitivity and mobility (discipline-appropriate language use), content/message, form/organization (structure, transitions), clarity, and style (grammar/syntax/punctuation, artfully constructed sentences).

1. The course requires sufficient writing: at least four writing assignments totaling at least 4000 words. Writing is spread throughout the course in a sequence of related assignments rather than concentrated in a large paper at the end. These activities may include journal writing, article reviews, essays, research papers, scientific lab reports, business reports and plans, paper revision and editing assignments, revisions of sections within a term-length project, peer reviewing and editing, etc.

2. The course provides significant writing instruction or includes a substantive assignment in which students submit at least one draft for comments from the professor and then revise the draft to take account of these comments.

Student Learning Outcome

Students will demonstrate written communication that is informed by rhetorical situation, audience, genre, and purpose.