

## W1 Writing Goals—Sample Form on Garnet Gateway

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The First-Year Seminar and Writing Committee is responsible for approving all W1 and W2 courses. Below are the writing goals for W1 courses. Please think about the W1 writing goals listed below and fill out the form to let the FYS/W Committee know how you will approach them. For ideas on writing in your course, feel free to contact Hillory Oakes, Director of Writing, at [hoakes@bates.edu](mailto:hoakes@bates.edu) or other Writing at Bates staff at [writing@bates.edu](mailto:writing@bates.edu).

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### Writing Guidelines

A W1 course is the first of three progressively more advanced writing-attentive courses required of students. The legislation creating the three-tiered writing requirement states that the overarching goal of the W1 course is to "enhance students' understanding of how analysis and intellectual discovery shape the process of writing."

To attain this goal, W1 courses and other writing courses are guided by five broad pedagogical principles:

- 1. Writing is taught, not just assigned.**
- 2. Writing assignments of varying scope or genre are a significant portion of the coursework (at least one-third of the total work of the course and approximately fifteen pages of finished, polished writing).**
- 3. Faculty members give feedback on writing, commenting on rhetorical issues in addition to content.**
- 4. Students have multiple opportunities to write and to revise their writing.**
- 5. Research skills and scholarly citation practices are assigned.**

### W1 Writing Goals:

In addition to these broad pedagogical considerations, faculty and the First-Year Seminar and Writing Committee adopted a commitment to specific writing goals for students in W1 courses. There are five categories: **Inquiry, Argument, Evidence, Organization, and Style**. While the FYS/W Committee does not expect that each objective will be explicitly addressed in a W1 course, the committee considers that the W1 classroom is a logical place to integrate discussions, exercises, and assignments that might address multiple goals throughout the semester as appropriate.

Each response below is linked to one or more of the five categories of shared commitments for a W1 course and suggests sample strategies for approaching these learning goals. Please respond by describing specific ways you will address these goals in your W1 course.

## **INQUIRY**

### **Goals for student learning about Inquiry:**

1. Learn what kinds of questions scholars ask
2. Craft questions worthy of inquiry
3. Respond to texts critically and thoughtfully
4. Identify an audience for an assignment
5. Understand that purpose and audience will shape the way they present their ideas
6. Ultimately, recognize that writing, thinking, and research are ongoing processes and become accustomed to rethinking and deepening their ideas

### **Pedagogical approaches for teaching about Inquiry:**

1. To cultivate attention toward the process of writing, a W1 course asks students to write a number of assignments that may vary in length, scope, and approach; these assignments might take the shape of several short but interrelated essays, sequenced assignments, or a longer writing project completed in stages, with an end result of approximately fifteen pages of finished formal writing. Informal writing—assignments that are short, often done in-class, and often ungraded—also helps students improve their writing process.
2. To encourage students to “rethink and deepen their ideas,” a W1 course asks students to revise their writing in response to comments from other readers (instructor, peers, writing assistants, and others). Revision should be built into the majority of assignments but might take a number of forms: graded or ungraded rough drafts, further revision of graded work, or commentary and revision on sections of a longer work (introduction, thesis, or annotated bibliography, for example). Commentary can likewise come in a variety of forms: written feedback from instructors; electronic feedback from instructor or peers; individual conferences with instructors, writing assistants, or others; or peer review between classmates.

**Please describe the number, type, and general outline of the writing assignments as well as the approach to commentary and revision you are planning for your course:**



## **ARGUMENT**

### **Goals for student learning about Argument:**

1. Recognize when argument is the appropriate mode for a particular writing project
2. Think about the ongoing conversation their work is entering—and the way in which they enter the conversation
3. Develop a question or position, articulated as a thesis statement, guiding idea or opening question
4. Learn how to use evidence to advance an argument

### **Pedagogical approaches for teaching about Argument:**

To help students improve their critical thinking skills and their ability to create and support a line of thinking, a W1 course engages students in the relevant scholarly conversation, as both readers and writers. Doing so might entail such assignments as critically evaluating the argument of course texts, discussing the questions asked in a particular field or about a particular issue, creating and defending an original argument, and exploring differing viewpoints.

### **Please describe the ways in which you anticipate that your course will ask students to critically assess their own arguments and the arguments of others:**



## **EVIDENCE**

### **Goals for student learning about Evidence:**

1. Read and evaluate sources critically to understand a text's argument and to formulate their own position about that argument
2. Understand the different types of evidence recognized as authoritative by various disciplines
3. Choose appropriate sources to support their own arguments
4. Understand the value of fairly presenting an opposing viewpoint
5. Acknowledge and articulate the limitations of evidence

### **Research Skills:**

6. Learn how to use their time efficiently while researching
7. Be able to mine sources for further evidence
8. Have a command of larger research horizons (interlibrary loan or field research, for example)

### **Pedagogical approaches for teaching about Evidence:**

1. To help students more skillfully locate and use information, a W1 course asks students to develop their research skills, both in the use of library or electronic resources and in the responsible use of sources within their own writing. Use of library resources might entail an assignment-specific session in the library or an introduction to the research methodology of a particular field or fields; responsible use of sources within their own writing might entail

discussion of citation formats, quoting and paraphrasing, and plagiarism.

2. Students benefit from having a style, citation, or research guide to consult, not only during their W1 course but throughout their college career. Recommended guides at Bates include *The Pocket Style Manual* (Bedford/St. Martin's) and *Writing with Sources* (Rowman and Littlefield), as well as discipline-specific guides such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. (Some departments have developed in-house guides, as well.) The Director of Writing, the Coordinator of the Peer Writing, or one of the Writing Specialists can suggest other guides best suited to your course.

**Please describe specific research-related activities as well as the style guide, reference, or web guide you will use or assign for this course:**



## **ORGANIZATION**

**Goals for student learning about Organization:**

1. Understand that thinking must be organized in order to communicate effectively with an audience
2. Be able to identify different organizational patterns, recognize the way in which their choice of organizational pattern is informed by purpose and audience, and draw upon these patterns as models for their writing
3. Understand the ways in which various components of organization (such as introductions, conclusions, paragraphs, transitions, and disciplinary-specific sections) guide the reader and strengthen an argument

**Pedagogical approaches for teaching about Organization:**

In the spirit of “teaching writing, not just assigning it,” W1 courses typically incorporate some discussion of the practice of writing, whether sentence-level (such as grammar or mechanics), paragraph-level (such as transitions or development), or essay-level (such as introductions and conclusions or ordering of evidence). These discussions might take place on a regular basis (for example, a 30-minute period set aside each week), or they might be scheduled to correspond with various stages of an assignment.

**Please describe how you anticipate covering issues of organization:**



## **STYLE**

**Goals for student learning about Style and Conventions:**

1. Appreciate the careful crafting of language
2. Understand that different disciplines have different stylistic conventions and understand the rationale behind the different conventions
3. Be aware of their audience's conventional expectations (vocabulary, diction, style, citations, etc.)
4. Understand proper ways to reference and acknowledge others' work
5. Become more facile with concision, fluency, and variety of sentence structure
6. Acquire self-editing skills that improve writing's clarity
7. Understand the most common conventions of punctuation, grammar, and mechanics

**Pedagogical approaches for teaching about Style:**

To foster awareness and discussion of style, W1 courses often include readings from different genres or ask students to write for a variety of audiences. In some W1 courses, faculty members have used papers from their own past to illustrate their growth as writers and their emerging sense of style. Resources available to your class to supplement class discussion include workshops led by the Director of Writing or the staff of Writing at Bates (writing professionals and peer writing assistants); numerous teaching materials from Writing at Bates are also available for your class.

**Please describe how you anticipate covering issues of style:**

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