Communication Intensive Course Requirements Overview for Faculty

Please note that prior Diversity Intensive and International Intensive requirements have been replaced by new the Context and Perspectives requirements in the Race, Gender, and Inequality and Globalization themes in the undergraduate curriculum.

A Communication Intensive (CI) designation denotes that a course significantly integrates oral and/or written communication through outcomes, assessments, and instruction within a course. A CI designation will only be assigned to *permanent courses*. All students are required to take a three-credit course designated as CI. This requirement can be met within a variety of course subjects in both Arts & Sciences and Business. Please note that certain majors have an additional three-credit CI built into their major requirements, separate from the general requirement. Transfer students with a minimum of 30 credits will be waived from the CI requirement.

Faculty who are interested in seeking a CI designation for their course should submit a rationale through Course Leaf, which will be reviewed by the Curriculum Implementation Committee (CIC). Faculty can seek approval for existing permanent courses that do not currently carry the desired designation or for new permanent courses. When preparing a course proposal to include the CI designation, please use the criteria below that CIC will use when reviewing proposals.

Communication Intensive Guidelines and Student Outcomes

General Criteria for Communication Intensive Courses

- The aim of CI courses is to help students improve their ability to communicate in either writing or speaking in English.
- The course will include written and/or oral communication assignments.
- Individual communication components should constitute at least **one-third** of the student's final course grade.
- The course must include instruction in, as well as evaluation of, communication components.
- Classroom instruction and feedback should focus on issues of effective communication skills appropriate to the field being studied.
- Communication assignments must be iterative; students should receive feedback from the instructor on communication assignments or activities.

Criteria for written work:

- Formal written assignments should have explicit instructions regarding content, genre, and audience.
- Informal written assignments should be used to facilitate learning the course content.
- The instructor should provide feedback on a draft of the assignment to encourage improvement. (When there is more than one of the same types of assignment, instructors may provide appropriate feedback on earlier papers that will motivate better writing on later papers.)

Criteria for oral communication:

- The instructor should provide written guidelines regarding the goals, speech genre, and intended audience of formal presentations.
- Oral communication and participation should facilitate learning in the discipline.
- Oral communication intensive courses should provide students at least two opportunities to present or otherwise demonstrate these skills. Expectations for improved performance should be specified.

When applying for the CI designation, the following should be identifiable in your syllabus:

- Reading assignments that provide specific communication instruction.
- Class time devoted to communication instruction.
- Assignments that offer students the opportunity to improve based on instructor feedback.

  - For longer or one-time assignments, the instructor should provide feedback on an informal or preliminary version of the paper or presentation.
  - When there is more than one of the same types of assignment, instructors may provide appropriate feedback on earlier papers or presentations that will motivate better communication on later ones.
  - Students may provide feedback to each other on drafts of writing assignments or early versions of presentations.

- Distinguish between individual and group communication projects and, for group projects, indicate the requirements for individual students.

Student Outcomes for CI Courses

Students will be able to identify and understand the rhetorical forms and strategies used in writing or speaking in the course discipline or profession and employ these forms and strategies in their own writing. These forms include:

- *Genre*: Students will be able to identify the types of disciplinary or professional writing or speaking appropriate to the course (e.g., lab reports, literature reviews, proposals, management memos, audit reports). Students will be able to analyze and imitate the genre, its typical uses, structure, and conventions (e.g., length, format, forms of reference).
- *Audience*: Students will be able to identify the intended audience of a piece of writing and explain how audience considerations may have shaped the writing (e.g., the audience's level of technical proficiency, need for technical or general information, likely position on a disputed proposition, position within an organization). In their own writing, students will be able to make decisions (e.g., about tone, diction, and purpose) that reflect the need to address the intended audience.
- *Evidence*: Students will be able to assess the relevance and credibility of evidence in their reading and writing. They will be able to search for and find relevant and reliable evidence to support their own assertions and claims.
- *Argument*: Students will understand the strategies of argument and persuasion appropriate to the course discipline or profession (e.g., appeals to logic, emotion, precedent, authority) and be able to employ them in their own writing, consistent with the purpose, audience, and genre of the writing task.

Finally, students will engage in writing and/or speaking as multi-step processes requiring drafting, research, feedback, and revision.

Note to faculty: These student outcomes reflect the importance of learning about communication within the context of a particular discipline or profession. While we may wish to believe that good writing is the same in all situations, we should recognize that every discipline focuses on a particular part of the world and takes a particular perspective, expressed in the questions that it asks, the assumptions that it makes, the technical knowledge it generates and the technical vocabulary that embodies its knowledge. Inevitably, each discipline thus produces a kind of ongoing conversation among its practitioners, a conversation that uses its own special language and conventions. Our goal is to enable our students to enter that conversation. To do so, they must not only use the accepted conventions of standard written and spoken English, but also master the rudiments of *disciplinary* forms of communication.