

**For Committee Use Only**

Course	PSCI 251 (v. 2)
Date Submitted	01-13-09
Action	Approved
Date Action Taken	01-21-09

## Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form

NEIU Writing Intensive Program, Center for Academic Writing  
Ronald Williams Library [www.neiu.edu/~wip](http://www.neiu.edu/~wip)

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Beginning with students who newly enroll in Fall 2008, all students must successfully complete a Writing Intensive course within their discipline in order to graduate. Successful completion of ENG 101 or its equivalent with a grade of "C" or better is a prerequisite to enrolling in a Writing Intensive course. Writing Intensive courses must be NEIU courses.

Writing Intensive courses:

- Are 200-level or 300-level courses offered relatively early in the major
- Must be a minimum of 3 credit hours
- Have an absolute maximum of 25 students so that the instructor can devote a great deal of time to provide feedback on early drafts of written work
- Have CU class-size adjustments following the contractual guidelines specified for ENG 101
- Meet the Writing Intensive Guidelines (see p. 3 or <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip> for the guidelines)

Departments and programs have several options for implementing Writing Intensive courses:

- Create a new course to add to the list of requirements for the major\*
- Modify an existing course\*
- Choose to offer one course that students must use to fulfill the Writing Intensive requirement or allow students to choose one of several courses that can be used to fulfill the Writing Intensive requirement
- Work with faculty in a group of departments/programs to develop a Writing Intensive course that can be used by all their majors
- Consult with the Writing Intensive Faculty Advisory Committee (WIFAC) if they wish to propose alternative ways of providing Writing Intensive courses for their majors

**\*Note:** Departments and programs that choose to create a new required course or modify an existing course that was not previously required will need to propose a change in the major program and submit the program change through the appropriate governing bodies.

Departments and programs are encouraged to review the *Developing Writing Intensive Courses: Questions for Departments and Programs to Think About and Discuss* document available through the Center for Academic Writing.

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Support for designing Writing Intensive courses, preparing the course proposal documents, and/or designing and implementing writing assignments is available through the Center for Academic Writing.

Please contact Kate Hahn at x4490 or [mk-hahn@neiu.edu](mailto:mk-hahn@neiu.edu) with any questions or visit <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip> for more information.

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## Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form

### INSTRUCTIONS

The following need to be submitted electronically to WIFAC at [mk-hahn@neiu.edu](mailto:mk-hahn@neiu.edu) for each course that is proposed:

- Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form
  - Available at <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip>
- Curricular Proposal Transmission Form
- Course Proposal Checklist (and any necessary additional documents, e.g. proposal rationale)

Please use the "Save As" function to save this document with the Subject and Course Number of the proposed course as the document name (for example, PSYC202.doc). Provide the information requested on the following pages.

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Subject: Comparative Political Systems

Course #: PSCI 251

New Course       Existing Course

Credits: 3

Course Abbreviated Title (29 characters max): Comp Political Systems

Course Title: Comparative Political Systems

Average Weekly Contact Hours: 3

Discussion       Independent Study  
 Field Experience       Student Teaching  
 Lecture       Hybrid/Online

Course Description (100 words max; for catalog): This course is an introduction to comparative politics. In this course students will study different political systems (democracies, semi-democracies, and authoritarian regimes) by way of selective case studies. Major issues in comparative politics, such as democratization, political culture, political economy, constitutionalism, political leadership, and political parties and elections will be discussed in some detail. Even though this is not a course in American politics, comparisons with the United States will be drawn where appropriate. There are no prerequisites for this class.

## WI GUIDELINES

Complete the chart below by showing how the proposed course meets each of the WI Guidelines. If information is provided in the syllabus, please copy it here. Refer to the complete guidelines below for more information.

<p><b>1. Active instruction in disciplinary writing</b></p>	<p>Students will write article reviews in which they dissect an article and learn about the different sections of which the article is composed (abstract, research question, methodology, evidence, and conclusion). During week 4 of the semester the class will visit the library and learn about the differences between scholarly and non-scholarly literature (and complete a library exercise). Article reviews teach students about disciplinary writing by providing them with a template of what a piece of academic writing in political science looks like. Once students understand the function of the different pieces of a scholarly article their reading and writing process will become easier and more efficient. In addition to article reviews, I have assigned the <i>Political Science Writer's Manual</i> (Scott and Garrison, 2006) to this class. I will use this manual to teach students about the writing process, paper formats, citations styles, and the use of library and internet resources. The writers's manual also includes examples of policy papers, research papers, and even critical thinking exercises. For more information about articles reviews see pages 2 (description) and 6 (evaluation criteria) of the syllabus.</p>
<p><b>2. Equivalent of at least 15 pages of graded assignments</b></p>	<p>Students will write: 3 article reviews (3-4 pages each); policy analysis paper draft 1 (5 pages) and final draft (8 pages). For a breakdown of the grades see page 3 of the syllabus.</p>
<p><b>3. Multiple types of writing</b></p>	<p>The writing assignments in this class consist of a combination of formal writing assignments (policy analysis paper and article reviews), and informal exploratory writing assignments (paraphrasing exercise, citation exercise, and library exercise). The difference between formal and exploratory writing is that the latter are in class practice of specific writing skills. For example the paraphrasing exercise (included under informal ungraded assignments) teaches students the difference between plagiarism and correct forms of paraphrasing. The focus is not on a final product (paper) or a building block (article review), but on a skill that is a necessary component of professional writing. For a description of the different assignments see page 2 of the syllabus.</p>
<p><b>4. At least 50% of course grade from graded writing assignments</b></p>	<p>50% of the grade is based on writing assignments:          Article Reviews 15% (5% each); Paper 1<sup>st</sup> Draft 15 %; Paper 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft 20%          See also page 3 of the syllabus.</p>
<p><b>5. Opportunities for multiple drafts</b></p>	<p>Students will produce two drafts of the policy analysis paper. The second draft will include more literature than the first draft. See also pages 2 (description) and 7 (evaluation criteria) of the syllabus.</p>
<p><b>6. Ungraded writing activities</b></p>	<p>Ungraded writing activities that are included in this are are: paraphrasing exercise, citation exercise, abstract writing exercise, and a library exercise. In addition to these four ungraded writing exercises, I will ask students to write either at the beginning of the class (to ask questions about the assigned reading) or the end of class (to sum up the discussion). The last activities are truly exploratory in nature in that they ungraded and spontaneous. See also page 2 of the syllabus.</p>

1. The writing activities should be an integral part of the course and should be designed so that students will receive active instruction in disciplinary writing.
2. Students will write the equivalent of at least 15 pages of graded assignments over the course of the semester.
3. Each Writing Intensive course will require multiple types of writing. Writing assignments might include correspondence, memoranda, proposals, progress reports, research reports, work-logs, site descriptions, observations, case studies, lab reports, creative writing, problem-solving, or computer programming, as well as other forms of course-related writing.
4. The graded assignments, consisting of multiple types of writing, will constitute a significant portion (at least 50 percent) of the final grade for the course; the grade on each assignment will reflect effective and correct written expression as well as knowledge of content.
5. On some graded assignments, students will be provided an opportunity to produce multiple drafts, in order to learn that writing is a process as well as a tool for invention and discovery. Students will get feedback from the instructor on those early drafts of written work before the grade is assigned.
6. Each Writing Intensive course will also provide an opportunity for students to engage in ungraded assignments, such as writing-to-learn activities, in order to practice writing and also to become actively engaged in processing the information that is presented in class or in a textbook. Informal journal writing is another useful means of developing students' critical thinking skills.

## **SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS**

Include here at least two sample assignments: one formal, graded assignment, and one informal, ungraded assignment. For each assignment:

- Provide the information that will be given to students when the assignment is given,
- Clearly describe how each assignment will be evaluated and/or responded to, and
- Indicate how each sample assignment is connected to course objectives or learning outcomes.

To include more sample assignments, copy and paste the appropriate section below.

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## **FORMAL, GRADED ASSIGNMENT**

### **Policy Analysis Paper**

#### **Assignment**

Policy analysis papers are written briefs that help decision makers evaluate the merits of a particular policy. Specific substantive details and possible topics of this paper will be discussed in class in week six (6). Students will write a first draft of the paper, based on two scholarly sources, of approximately five (5) pages. For the second and final draft students add at least two scholarly sources and one non-scholarly source to their paper. The final draft will be approximately eight (8) pages. A specific guideline for the first draft of the paper is provided on page 7 of the syllabus. A guideline for the final draft will be provided later in the semester.

#### **Audience**

You are writing for your professor and fellow students. Assume that the audience is somewhat knowledgeable about political science writing styles and substance.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment is to teach you how to write a policy analysis paper. Political decision makers do not have the time (or the training) to research many of the issues they are voting on. Instead they rely on experts in their staff to produce a short overview of the key points and a recommendation on how to cast their vote. The policy analysis paper trains students to write this type of document. A good number of political science majors end up working at some level of government and the skill to write a policy analysis paper is a significant asset.

#### **Due Dates**

First Draft March 9, 2009

Second Draft April 20, 2009

Format	Pages
1) Title page	1
2) Executive summary	½
3) Body	
a) Background Information	½
b) Description of Policy	1
c) Pros and Cons	1
d) Policy Alternatives	½
e) Recommendation	½
4) References	

**Policy Analysis Paper Rubric (first draft)**

Scoring Criteria	Excellent	Good	Needs Some Improvem ent	Needs Much Improvem ent
NAME _____				
Basic background information regarding the policy issue is provided and documented	4	3	2	1
The description of the current policy in force is clear and thorough	4	3	2	1
The pros and cons of the policy are clearly addressed	4	3	2	1
Policy alternatives are presented and a recommendation as to the feasibility is provided.	4	3	2	1
Mechanics (Grammar, spelling, references, tone, and organization)	4	3	2	1
Correct use of Citations and References	4	3	2	1
The word choice and tone of the memo are professional and not too technical.	3	2	1	0
The memo is well organized and each section is clearly identified.	3	2	1	0
Comments and Suggestions				

**How will this assignment be evaluated and/or responded to?**

In addition to comments written on the paper I will use the grading rubric pasted above.

### **How is this assignment connected to course objectives or learning outcomes?**

Course Objective # 5 Students will become better readers and writers in the discipline of political science.

#### Student Learning Goals:

1. Students will be able to locate, select, and document secondary source material information relevant to an issue.
2. Students will be able to analyze and incorporate research into their own argument.
3. Students will be able to identify multiple perspectives on a text/issue and articulate those perspectives.

In a policy analysis paper students write on a particular public policy area of their choice. Ninety percent of the information in this paper will come from sources not assigned by the instructor. Therefore students need to be comfortable in doing library research and selecting their sources (goal 1). A policy analysis paper is not merely a descriptive analysis of a particular public policy, it also entails a discussion of pros and cons and a recommendation. This means that students should be comfortable to formulate their own arguments (goal 2). Students are also asked to provide policy alternatives. This forces them to think about a certain policy area from multiple perspectives (goal 3).

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## INFORMAL, UNGRADED ASSIGNMENT

Student Assignment Sheet (paste the assignment handout into the gray box below)  
PSCI 251 Paraphrase Exercise

Consider the following paraphrases from the Gibson and Anderson text and determine whether or not they constitute correct forms of paraphrasing or plagiarism. Be prepared to explain to the class why an example is correct or incorrect. Change those you think are not appropriate paraphrases to make them better.

1. Analyzing whether political tolerance attitudes are in fact non-attitudes, Gibson and Anderson try to determine if tolerance as measured by political scientists is meaningful (Gibson and Anderson 1985, 119).
2. There are at least two reasons why tolerance attitudes may not have an impact on political behavior. First, attitudes may not have meaningful existence; they may be mere non-attitudes. In this case it is unlikely that political behavior would result from these attitudes (Gibson and Anderson 1985, 121-22).
3. In Skokie, Illinois local leaders did not attempt to force the community to support the democratic rights of Nazi's, but instead left the decision to the courts (Gibson and Anderson 1985, 127).
4. The intolerant position is often fueled by feelings towards the least-liked group rather than a rational cost-benefit analysis of the particular civil liberties issue at hand (Gibson and Anderson 1985, 130).
5. There exists a substantial difference between formal and informal culture in the United States. Public school students are exposed to a great deal of tolerant values (e.g., the Bill of Rights), but these rights are not necessarily extended to the students themselves (Gibson and Anderson 1985, 137).

### How will this assignment be evaluated and/or responded to?

This informal assignment is ungraded and will be executed and discussed in class.

### How is this assignment connected to course objectives or learning outcomes?

Course Objective # 5 Students will become better readers and writers in the discipline of political science.

### Student Learning Goal:

1. Students will be able to locate, select, and document secondary source material information relevant to an issue.

The students have read the Gibson and Anderson article for this particular class session. Instead of jumping immediately into the substance of the text I engage the students with a paraphrasing exercise. I

begin by explaining what the difference between paraphrasing and quoting is. I explain that in political science paraphrasing is often preferred over the use of direct quotes. I continue by explaining the difference between correct and incorrect forms of paraphrasing. To make sure that students really understand what I am talking about I have them complete the paraphrasing exercise. The five examples range from outright plagiarism to correct forms of paraphrasing. In my experience students find it easy to detect plagiarism, but not as easy to correct a plagiarized sentence. We end the class with a discussion of techniques that help students with the correct and appropriate selection and use of secondary sources.