

For Committee Use Only

Course	PSCI 344 (v. 2)
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Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form

NEIU Writing Intensive Program, Center for Academic Writing
Ronald Williams Library www.neiu.edu/~wip

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
- 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.

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. The sources listed below can also provide guidance in designing Writing Intensive courses.

Bean, J. C. (2001). *Engaging ideas: The professors' guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gottschalk, K., & Hjortshoj, K. (2004). *The elements of teaching writing: A resource for instructors in all disciplines*. Boston: Bedford / St. Martin's.

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

Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form

INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Writing Intensive Course Proposal Form
 - Available at <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip>
- Proposed Course Syllabus
- Curricular Proposal Transmission Form
- FCAA Course Proposal Checklist (and any necessary 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.

Subject: Political Science (PSCI)

Course #: 344

New Course Existing Course

Credits: 3

Course Abbreviated Title (29 characters max): WIP:Public Organization Theory

Course Title: WIP:Public Organization Theory

Average Weekly Contact Hours: 3

Discussion Independent Study
 Field Experience Student Teaching
 Lecture Hybrid/Online

Course Description (100 words max; for catalog): Review of theories concerning public bureaucracies, their internal functioning and societal roles; analysis of the organizational setting of work and its implications; organizational effectiveness, decision-making, leadership and policy formulation, and change in public organizations.

WI GUIDELINES

Complete the chart below by showing how the proposed course meets each of the WI Guidelines. Please make a reference to where in the proposed syllabus this information can also be found. **Refer to the complete guidelines and notes below for more information.** Contact the CAW and/or see Bean (2001) and Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004) for help designing a WI course (full references at the bottom of page 1).

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**.

The writing activities are an integral part of the course. Techniques of writing for political science are a regular part of the material that is covered. Paper assignments are discussed before they are due and after they are returned. Discussion involves both content and writing. In addition there are two books on writing that have assigned readings.

2. Students will write the **equivalent of at least 15 pages of graded assignments** over the course of the semester.

NOTE: See Guideline 4 for more specific information about these graded assignments.

Students will write at least 15 pages of graded assignments. Students are required to write three concept memos of two pages or more. These memos review and discuss a theoretical concept that they found in the readings. The memos are graded for their content and for their writing. The material in these memos is then expanded upon in three evaluation/analysis papers of at least three pages each. These papers start with the review covered in the memo, thus giving students the opportunity to revise and clarify their earlier writing. The evaluation paper then goes a step further than the concept memo as it requires students to apply the theoretical concept to real life. Students are asked to develop a case study based on their own experience. The case study is then used to either: (1) test the validity of the theory as it is applied to their experience; or (2) apply the theory to their experience, showing how the theory helped them understand an organizational problem. In this way, students make the connection between theory and practice in their thinking and in their writing. They learn how theory and abstract reason can actually be helpful and are not just "academic." The paper thus becomes an integral part of the learning process.

The concept memos and the evaluation/analysis papers together amount to at least 15 pages of graded assignments.

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.

There are multiple types of writing in this class. Besides the formal assignments of the concept memos and the evaluation/analysis papers, there are two informal assignments. One of these is the journal that has already been discussed. The other is a series of ungraded in class reflections where students are asked to address a question raised in the class and the readings. They are given about 10 - 15 minutes to write these and hand them in. I review them and apply comments but generally do not grade the writing style as these assignments are used simply to encourage students to get used to writing and overcome inhibitions.

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.

NOTE: *As such, in-class exams and quizzes will not apply toward the 15-page requirement unless effective and correct written expression are explicitly considered in determining the grade.*

Graded writing accounts for 75% of the grade.

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.

Writing assignments are structured so that students are constantly revising their earlier work. The journal provides students the opportunity to summarize and reflect on the theoretical articles. The concept memo requires them to develop these summaries and critiques in a more formal way. Finally, the evaluation/analysis papers require them to revise or polish this conceptual discussion, and then to apply it to a case study. In this way, revision is built into the assignments automatically. Further, students are required to write two drafts of the first two evaluation/analysis papers. Please note in the syllabus that the first draft of the evaluation/analysis paper is due on February 18, and the final draft is due on March 2. The first draft of the second evaluation/analysis paper is due March 18, and the final draft is due April 6. Thus, students are required to produce two drafts. Each will be graded and students will be given the higher of the two grades.

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.

NOTE: *Ungraded writing activities might include in-class minute papers, muddy point papers, brief reflections on what students have learned in the class period, or brief explorations of questions students have about a topic. Although some of these assignments and activities may receive completion points, some must be truly ungraded, and not contribute to a student's course grade in any way. Contact the CAW if you would like more information on designing and implementing these kinds of writing-to-learn activities.*

As already mentioned, there in-class writing assignments which are ungraded. I review them and make a brief comment or check for students to know I read them, (I have heard students complain if they think their work has not been read by the instructor.) However, no grade is assigned.

SAMPLE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

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

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

Student Writing Assignment Sheet (paste into the gray box below the handout given to students)

PSCI 344—Public Organization Theory

Spring 2010—J. Hill

First Evaluation Paper

The evaluation paper is the next step in your writing projects. For the first part of this paper, consider a theory we have read. Summarize the primary concepts in the theory. I encourage you to use the theory you examined in a concept memo, but you are not required to do so. You can use a different theory. For the second part of the paper, you need to develop a case study based on your experience in an organization. (We will discuss this in class.) You then use this case study in one of two possible ways:

(Option 1) Show how the theory helps you diagnose a problem or policy in that organization. Be sure to explain specifically how the theory applies and what insights it gives you. Do not simply show that some brief part of the theory also is seen in the case study. Instead explain what insights you have learned from the theory and how it explains why a particular behavior is seen.

(Option 2) Use the case study to show a significant weakness or flaw in the theory. For example, explain that the theory would predict one particular behavior, but the organization displays something else. In your analysis, suggest why the theory does not apply and ways the theory could be changed to improve it.

The first draft of this paper is due in class on February 18. I will return in within a week and you will then revise it. The revision is due March 2.

Evaluation papers should be typed, double-spaced, and should be three to five pages in length. Where appropriate, you will use the APSA system of parenthetical citations and bibliographic references.

Please answer the following questions regarding this sample writing assignment:

1. How will this writing assignment be evaluated and/or responded to?

The writing assignment is reviewed and graded for content and writing style. Regarding content, I will be looking for the accuracy of their summary of the theoretical concept and the logic of their critique. I will also look at their case study and evaluate it for completeness. Finally, I will examine their application or linkage of the case study and the theory, and examine the strength, logic, and relevance of the insights that are drawn. In addition, I will review and correct writing style with an emphasis on "readability." In other words, I examine if they are explaining their ideas clearly in a manner that is easy to understand. Thus, there are four parts for my grade: (1) concept summary and critique ; (2) case study/application; (3) evaluation/analysis; (4) writing style and mechanics. I should note that I list writing style and mechanics as a separate area, but emphasize to the students that their no one will know if they have a brilliant insight if the writing describing it is unclear.

For a grading rubric, I start with a grade of 95 points and will, when a paper is truly outstanding, I give a higher grade.

Has all 4 parts well	95 points
Summary or critique has errors, incomplete, etc. but essentially good	- 5 points
Summary or critique seriously flawed or problematic	-10 points
Case study incomplete or unclear	- 5 points
Analysis or evaluation incomplete or flawed	- 5 points
--this can mean the analysis is not tied to the theory well, there is a problem in logic, it is not clear what is learned	
Analysis or evaluation is missing large parts, or is flawed as above, but to a greater degree that undermines the whole argument	-10 points
Numerous mistakes in grammar and style; writing is unclear or awkward	-10 points

2. How is this writing assignment connected to course objectives or learning outcomes?

This writing assignment essentially is the course. The objective is for students to be able to read abstract theories and to apply them in a way that is meaningful and helpful to them. This assignment is the ultimate means by which this is done and demonstrated by the student.

INFORMAL, UNGRADED WRITING ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITY

Paste into the gray box below handout for the writing assignment/activity or describe the writing assignment/activity.

PSCI 344—Public Organization Theory
In-class reflection

[This is read aloud in class by the instructor.]

Recall that in the last class we discussed the characteristics of an organization. That is, we explored how we determine if a particular group of people is or is not an organization. These characteristics included:

boundaries (who is and who is not part of the organization)
goals (what is the organization trying to achieve)
hierarchy (a structure of roles and superior/subordinate patterns)
rules (expectations of behavior and procedure)

[These are then written on the board.]

Are there any other characteristics you wish to add or amend now that you have thought about it a little more?

[Changes are made as they are offered by the students.]

Now, using these characteristics, is NEIU an organization?

[There is a brief discussion on this.]

What about the automobile manufacturer, Ford? Is it an organization?

[Again, there is a brief discussion.]

Now, what I would like you to do is use these same sets of characteristics to determine if the bleachers in Wrigley Field are an organization or not. Please think about this and write your response over the next 10 minutes. Start with a very brief and informal outline or list of the points you wish to make, and then write your response.

Please answer the following questions regarding this sample writing assignment/activity:

1. How will this ungraded writing assignment/activity be responded to or used by the instructor?

When people were done, I asked them to share their answer with the class. They were not asked to read it, but simply explain why they did or did not feel that the bleachers in Wrigley Field were an organization. I explained that this kind of exercise would be fully appropriate for their journal entries. But then we used their answers to further explore how we define what an organization is or is not.

2. How is this ungraded writing assignment/activity connected to course objectives or learning outcomes?

It is used primarily to introduce the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical approaches. Some of the definitions I read afterwards are short and leave out material. Others are long and cover everything, but give you no insight into what is important to study. The objective of the course is to allow students to learn how to use theory in understanding the world around them. This exercise is an introduction to how that is done.