

**West Chester University
Writing Program and Writing-Emphasis Program
Handbook**

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I. Purpose of the Handbook

The *Handbook* was originally written by the WCU Faculty Development Committee to aid faculty members in improving their teaching and their students' learning. This *Handbook* serves as a guide for those interested in creating Writing -Emphasis courses.

In addition to explaining the requirements for Writing-Emphasis courses, the *Handbook* is a source of ideas and models. It provides recommended writing activities and explanations of those activities to give interested faculty an idea of what writing techniques are being used across the curriculum.

The *Handbook* also offers ample justification for the purpose of academic writing. Many faculty question how to fit writing into their specific course, especially if it seems secondary to the course purpose. Various tips on writing, sample syllabi, and ideas from writing-Emphasis instructors are included and should serve as a resource for other instructors who wish to do the same in their courses.

Acknowledgements

Many individuals and groups have worked to advance the ideas of the West Chester University Writing-Emphasis Program:

- The National Endowment for the Humanities, which gave us our start in 1979;
- The English Department, where such courses originate;
- The Writing Program Committee, which has existed since 1979, and on which over 60 faculty have served;
- A contingent of Writing-Emphasis faculty who have dedicated themselves to developing their students into better writers;
- The Faculty Development Committee, who funded many seminars and speakers for the writing program; and
- Current and past administrators.

With these and other friends and participants, West Chester University has had over two decades of high quality programs, seminars, workshops, and other activities for faculty interested in improving students' abilities to write and think.

The current *Handbook* was updated by the CAPC Writing Emphasis Subcommittee in 2000-2001.

II. The Process of Obtaining Writing Emphasis Designation for a Course

After reading through this handbook, a faculty member should develop a course syllabus that reflects the criteria stated on the "Application for Writing Emphasis Designation Criteria and Checklist" (cover sheet). Complete the Writing Emphasis cover sheet, and green General Education Proposal Cover Sheet. Submit the syllabus with the two cover sheets to Dorothy

Shafer in Bull Center (Room 143). Ms. Shafer will forward a copy of the application to the Writing Emphasis Subcommittee. (The committee is comprised of appointed faculty members who serve for two years. Over the years, faculty representatives have come from over 30 different academic departments at WCU.)

Applications for Writing Emphasis courses may be marked as either default or discretionary. Default means that the course, if approved, will have an automatic W (the schedule Writing Emphasis designation) whenever it is scheduled, regardless of instructor. Discretionary means the course has been approved as Writing Emphasis only for a particular instructor(s).

After reviewing the application, the Writing Emphasis Committee will either return the application to the applicant with a request for revisions or forward the application and recommendation for Writing Emphasis designation to the CAPC General Education Committee. The General Education Committee then will review the application and either return it to the Writing Emphasis Committee with an explanation as to why it does not meet the criteria specified for a writing emphasis course, or will forward it to the Executive Board of CAPC. It then will be included on the agenda for the next scheduled CAPC meeting. If members of CAPC approve the application, it will be forwarded to the Provost. Finally, with the Provost's signature, the course will receive the writing emphasis designation as of the date specified by the Provost.

III. Guidelines and Recommendations for Writing Emphasis Courses

In practical terms, what are the ingredients of a successful proposal for a Writing Emphasis course? What do individual West Chester University instructors do in teaching their Writing Emphasis courses?

Rather than restrict the way an instructor sets up writing tasks in such a course, the Writing Program provides an application form that allows for considerable individualization.

Important criteria:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There must be a "summary of writing activities and objectives" that show how the writing assignments will be used in the class. |
|--|

The writing summary is primarily intended to enable an instructor to think through the writing objectives and writing tasks for a course with the same thoroughness usually afforded to substantive units of course content. Why, after all, do we assign research papers, essay examinations, learning logs, etc.? What do we want students to learn from each task? Each instructor thus formulates an individual rationale in his/her writing summary, which is examined by the Writing Emphasis Committee. Composing the writing summary calls for an instructor to examine the rationale for using writing in a given course, encourages improvement in managing

writing tasks, over time, and promotes innovation in assigning varied forms of written expression.

2. There must be a commitment to use both formal and informal writing assignments (see page 5).

3. There must be a commitment to use instructions concerning techniques of composition as appropriate to the writing assignments.

4. There must be a commitment by the instructor to provide constructive comments and opportunities for revision to encourage improvement in writing.

5. There must be a prominent statement on the class outline stating that the course is a Writing Emphasis Course and the syllabus must have objectives that include writing instruction and improvement.

Suggestions Concerning Evaluation

Activities Requiring Evaluation

For the most part, those activities requiring evaluation are improved versions of familiar academic assignments. The Committee wished to discourage such practices as simply assigning a term paper with only a few minutes of talk and letting the students go on their own, or giving essay exams without explaining what is being sought in the answers.

For writing to be used effectively in traditional ways, the Committee has concluded after reviewing current literature on the subject that you must take time to explain to your students what you are looking for in their tests and paper. It is also helpful to have brief conferences with your students to assess their progress on papers. With your constructive criticism the students will be able to make adjustments and improvements in their papers before they hand them in to be graded. More attention to early drafts means less work on later drafts, and it usually means better final products. Some instructors prefer not to look at sloppy first drafts but at what they call "first readable drafts," cleaner versions which can be read and responded to quickly. Another suggestion is to have your students write a rough draft *before* the assignment is due and to confer with you about it; this practice eliminates the problem of trying to rewrite a paper after it is graded.

The same principle applies for essay exams. By distributing a sample essay or diagramming on the chalkboard what an "A" essay should include, you can help improve your students' essay exams before they are written. If the students know what you are looking for, chances are better that you will get it.

Research demonstrates that revision is a key element in improving students' abilities as writers. Revision (which should be differentiated from editing and proofreading) is an activity that involves critical thinking as students carefully reason through and test out large-scale changes to their texts involving aspects of their writing such as overall argument, logic, organization, use of data/research/information, and appropriateness for intended purpose and audience. Substantive feedback from the instructors or other writing professionals (such as Writing Center tutors) on papers or drafts can encourage students to make these kinds of changes to their writing. Individual conferences with instructors or a writing tutor, and end comments (rather than marginal comments) have been shown to produce the greatest effect on revision.

Other Activities

Some "other" kinds of writing activities recommended by the Writing Program Committee have developed as "writing to learn" exercises and do not require evaluation. Here instructors may deal extensively with "affective" issues. For example, students may be shown how the thought-process works in writing to help them see that writing is not as difficult as it looks. Instructors should help students see that activities such as planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading are ways of improving their effectiveness as writers. Further, by having students work among themselves to critique each others' writing, you will enable them to see different ideas of writing about the same topic. They may begin to notice mistakes. They may offer ideas to each other on style and be able to improve not only their peer's paper, but their own as well.

Other innovative writing exercises that may aid in learning are: having your students write a letter to a named audience, analyzing and summarizing articles, keeping a subject-matter journal, editing poorly written pieces, peer group editing, and writing their own essay question.

We call writing exercises like these "writing to learn". Research has shown that the results of using "writing to learn" activities in university settings are an increase in student learning, better grades, and, as important, better writing performance.

An instructor may assign any combination of traditional or writing-to-learning activities, but will at the least provide the students with guidance about and samples of the type of writing desired. This way the students are not alone with what they do, but are helped through example. Peers can also be a valuable learning resource (e.g., using group editing exercises). In peer writing groups, students can be given instructions that will enable them to learn from each other's strengths.

Recommended Writing Activities

To assist instructors in developing their writing summaries, the Writing Program Committee has issued a list of recommended writing activities which fall into three categories: those requiring evaluation by the instructor; those that may or may not be evaluated by the instructor; and "informal writing".

Requiring Evaluation by the Instructor

1. Assign a writing exercise in which students address one or more audiences. For example, students could write a letter to a congressional representative on a topic discussed in class, or they could compose a paper for a professional audience with a briefer version for the popular press or a 4th grade classroom.

2. Initiate a correspondence, dialogue, or debate on a subject by having students exchange alternate written statements and responses developed successively from a topic you assign. Electronic media (such as on-line discussion groups or class listserves) can facilitate this type of writing.
3. Have students summarize a technical piece (article, chapter) in more general and less formal terms.
4. Supervise and review the building of a research paper at each stage of development. The final version will be much better, and less work to read, if you have approved a prospectus, and out-line, and a first draft.
5. Have students read several literature searches (or reviews of the literature) and then compose one of their own from sources you select.
6. Emphasize writing tasks that call for analysis of a process or analysis of cause or effects, and have students apply headings at each stage of the analysis. Provide examples beforehand.
7. Assign specific writing that asks students to apply special concepts or theories to a specific case. Ask students to use specialized terminology and to work with disciplinary conventions for writing.

May Be Accomplished With or Without Additional Evaluation by the Instructor

1. Ask students to rewrite their notes in paragraph form.
2. Ask students to write paragraph summaries of their reading assignments.
3. Discuss the characteristics of writing done in your field: abstract, reviews, research articles, etc. Explain the hows and whys of writing to a professional audience.
4. Give an editing exercise. For this task, students can work with either a sample of student writing (with consent), with a short text that you composed yourself just for that purpose, or with a piece of published writing that can be edited for style (journalism to academic writing, for instance).
5. Use peer review wherever it seems suitable, especially for shorter writing assignments. If not graded, such writing tasks can be tallied. Students can also be provided with peer review sheets on which they provide classmates with specific feedback for longer and more formal texts. (See Attachment **)

Suggestions for Informal Writing

Informal writing assignments can promote learning both about course material and writing without placing undue burden on faculty for reading and commenting on each piece of writing students produce. However, in order for students to take them seriously, informal writing tasks should be included as a part of the final grade.

1. Give brief and regular learning-centered assignments that ask "what did I learning about____, and how did I learn it?"
2. Appoint a student recorder or two to record or log each class. Post a copy of the log on your office door, or have the student submit it electronically and post it at your class website.
3. In any writing assignment specify carefully what you mean by such terms as *trace*, *discuss*, *explain*, *compare*, and *define*. Before an essay test, distribute sample answers to essay exams and explain what constitutes a superior, average, and inferior response-not just in content but in clarity and precision of expression. If sample exams are not available, a study sheet that describes these qualities can also be helpful to students. For essay exams, the study sheet should discuss both the content of the answers and the qualities expected in the writing.
4. Have students assigned to groups that will be responsible for making study guides to share with the class for a specified exam.
5. Assign a "mock" essay question so that students can practice responding to it. Provide students with evaluation sheets so that they can rate their own or their classmate's performance on the sample question.
6. After an essay test, review the writing done on selected actual essay exam question. For example, you may pick one or two good answers to read aloud in class.

7. Have students keep a reading, field, or lab journal, where they record observations, questions, and summaries. Collect them several times during the semester, giving credit for completeness.

Examples of Writing Strategies Used by WCU Faculty Members

A wide variety of writing-emphasis strategies are enlisted by faculty at WCU, with some of the more regularly used listed below. Some of the courses where these strategies and tasks occur are listed on the next two pages. (The courses themselves are a representative sampling of the many having the Writing Emphasis designation.)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| A. Essay exams | H. Resume |
| B. Free writing | I. Response to articles, films, books |
| C. Journals (daily, weekly) | J. Critical analysis, review |
| D. Summarizing, notes, class, readings | K. Models of writing available |
| E. Peer editing, review | L. Papers, 8-20 pages |
| F. Authentic writing assignments to various audiences, for example, case studies, short stories, lesson plans, care plans, reports on cultural events, interviews, brochures | M. Papers under 8 pages |
| G. Informative letters | N. Oral presentation |
| | O. Group projects |
| | P. Weekly writing, homework, essays |

Explanation of Writing Requirements Used in Courses

- A. Essay exams are generally given in class. Many Writing-Emphasis instructors prefer essay examinations in contrast to objective exams.
- B. Free writing can include brainstorming, stream of consciousness writing, on-the-spot responses to topics.
- C. Journals can take on many forms. They can be used daily, weekly, or even monthly. Instructors often ask students to respond to readings, classes, films in these journals. They often contain students' personal views and for this reason are not always graded for correctness.
- D. Summarizing notes, class, and/or readings generally is used to clarify student understanding and comprehension.
- E. Peer editing and review may consist of having students critique each others' papers; generally involves constructive criticism. Instructors may want to offer students guidelines for doing this. Instructors may work with individual groups.
- F. See description above.
- G. Information letters generally include writing to businesses, government officials, or parents.
- H. Developing resumes for specific job fields.
- I. Responses to articles, films, books generally means that students submit writings based on their personal, informed opinions on the given topics.
- J. Critical analysis refers to students' writings that rely more on theories or concepts used in the course.
- K. Models of writing are made available to students. Instructors generally distribute samples of well written essays or papers to give students an indication of what they are looking for.
- L. Papers of 8-20 pages usually are research papers.
- M. Papers under 8 pages can take the form of a research paper but are generally more students' analysis.
- N. Oral presentation here refers to those that accompany submission of a paper or written project.
- O. Group projects generally are major papers and usually are accompanied by an oral presentation.
- P. Weekly writing. Homework essay refers to writing usually done outside of the classroom that in submitted for review by the instructor.

A Sampling of Writing-Emphasis Courses and the Writing Strategies Used by Their Instructors

ACC 410: Directed Studies Instructor-C.J. Galbraith	J. Critical analysis, review L. Paper (8-20 pages)	
COM 415: Language, Thought and Behavior Instructor-Elaine Jenks	I. Response to readings J. Critical analysis, review	M. Papers (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation
ECE 407: Diversity Issues in Early Childhood Instructor-Catherine Pruhoe	F. Create lesson plans J. Critical analysis, review	
ESP 403: Introduction to Cervantes Instructor-Jorge Escorcía	A. Essay exams D. Summarize F. Authentic writing assignments I. Response to articles	J. Critical analysis, review L. Paper (8-20 pages) N. Oral presentation P. Weekly writing
ESL 201: Fundamentals of Techniques in Geology Instructor-C. Gill Wiswall	A. Essay exams B. Free writing D. Summarize lectures E. Peer editing, review J. Critical analysis, review	K. Models of writing L. Paper (8-20 pages) M. Papers (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation
FIN 375: Contemporary Issues in Finance Instructor-Cynthia Benzing	D. Reaction papers F. Authentic writing assignments L. Paper (8-20 pages)	
HEA 301: Health for Elementary Grades Instructor-Tammy James	B. Free writing C. Journal writing D. Summarize lectures F. Lesson plans, newsletter	G. Letters I. Response to films J. Critical analysis, review N. Oral presentation
HON 301-01: The America's: Politics and Economics in the 20th Century Instructor-Celia Esplugas	A. Essay exams C. Journal writing D. Summarize class E. Peer editing, review	I. Response K. Models or writing L. Paper (8-20 pages) N. Oral presentation
HON 302-01: The Double Figure in Film, Literature, and Psychology Instructor-Margarete Landwehr	C. Journal writing E. Peer editing, review F. Short story writing	M. Papers (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation
HON 402: The US and the Middle East Instructor-Lawrence Davidson	J. Critical analysis, review L. Paper (8-20 pages)	
KIN 451: History of Health &	A. Essay exams	I. Response to films

Physical Education Instructor-Karin Volkwein	B. Free writing C. Journal writing D. Summarize class E. Peer editing	J. Critical analysis, review M. Papers (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation O. Group project
LIT 162: Literature of the Apocalypse Instructor-Charles Bauerlein	E. Peer editing, review G. Letters	J. Critical analysis, review L. Paper (8-20 pages) M. Papers (under 8 pages)
MAT 354: Teaching Mathematics in Secondary Schools Instructor-Gail Gallitano	A. Essay exams D. Summarize class E. Peer editing, review F. Authentic writing assignments G. Letters / H. Resume I. Response	J. Critical analysis, review K. Models of writing M. Papers (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation O. Group project P. Weekly writing
MHL 201: Form and Style in the Arts Instructor-Charles Price	A. Essay exams B. Free writing C. Journal writing E. Peer editing, revision F. Cultural event report G. Letters	J. Critical analysis, review K. Models of writing M. Paper (under 8 pages) N. Oral presentation O. Group project P. Weekly writing
NSG/NSL 212: Nursing Theories and Concepts Instructor-Staff	E. Peer editing, review G. Letter I. Response to articles, class	J. Critical analysis M. Paper (8-20 pages) N. Oral presentation
PHI 102: Introduction to Religious Studies Instructor-Frank Hoffman	A. Essay exams C. Journal writing F. Report on trips H. Resume	I. Response J. Critical analysis, review M. Paper (under 8 pages)
SMD 414: History, Organization, and Administration of Athletic Training Instructor-Neil Curtis	A. Essay exams F. Planning projects G. Letters	H. Resume M. Papers (under 8 pages)
THA 306 &307: History of Theater Instructor-Harvey Rovine	A. Essay exams J. Critical analysis, review	

IV. Purposes for Writing: Writing and its Connections

Why Write?

Writing, it is generally said, is connected with learning and thinking. If so, writing should be useful in every college classroom. As an instructor, you may accept this position as generally true, but you may have some reservations about using writing in your classes. How much of a burden will writing add? How much time will writing steal from your coverage of course material? Are you expected to teach "English"? How will students react to writing tasks? This guidebook explores each of these concerns.

Most typical thinkers at some point have pen or pencil poised to jot down the numbers, schemes, designs or words that capture their thoughts and allow them to build and extend them. Writing pins down and elusive idea and allows the thinker to explore it, see its implications and possibilities, test its truth and worth, and use it as a stepping stone to other thoughts or as the corner-stone to a concept or structure.

Writing and Thinking

The connection between thinking and writing is so close that ways of thinking are sometimes called writing modes. Students who passively listen to lectures, as if watching TV, are learning less effectively than if they were actively involved and engaged with the course material. If they write, they are no longer passive receivers; they will be originators, synthesizers, and producers of thought. The act of writing imprints learning on the mind and in memory. The use of many senses reinforces the concepts being learned.

Senses Used in Writing to Reinforce Learning

Kinesthetic: The physical act of writing

Auditory: Students listen to their inner voices

Visual: Students create a graphic record

Writing and Learning

Writing is also connected to learning in that it gives students unique access to their previous knowledge and experiences. Writing reveals to students what they already know and what they still have to learn about the subject. Writing facilitates the learning of complex material. Like a digestive enzyme, writing can break down new, difficult concepts into absorbable components. Students make unfamiliar information their own by putting it in their own words and connecting it to what they already know.

The Written Record is:

visible

permanent if desired

alterable

available for review by the writer and others

Writing and Reading

Finally, writing can improve reading comprehension by demanding close reading of text and by familiarizing students with certain modes--for example, explaining a process or comparing. If students practice these modes in their writing, they may better recognize them in their reading.

A Writing Environment

So how much writing are we talking about? As much as satisfies your goal for improving student thinking and learning. As a minimum, we recommend that you have students do some informal writing which does not require correction, write one or two short papers connected to a major course objective, and answer an essay question in each exam.

As an instructor you may be wondering if this will mean more work for you. It will, but it is manageable work and it will also make you a better teacher. You will be doing something to solve real problems your students have in learning and communicating. Yes, it will take longer to evaluate essay exams than to score a Standard Answer Sheet or test form. But the results of using writing throughout the semester will make it worth it. You will be encouraged and excited about seeing what your students can achieve.

What about Correctness?

Can you be expected to teach English in a content course? Not at all. No one expects you to use your class time to teach syntax, grammar, or prose style. When you read a piece of student writing, your concern will be with the student's grasp of course content, astuteness of thinking, and clear communication of ideas.

You may be bothered by your students' incorrect usage, but you probably do not remember many of the rules yourself. You probably acquired your sense of correctness through extensive reading, and you probably can write adequately or well without much recourse to rules. You can help your students learn correctness by demanding a reasonable degree of it. For example, you can take off points if your students cannot spell key terms specific to your course, ones that you have been working on all semester. You can demand that your students write in complete sentences and observe conventions of standard English needed to understand the message. In

other words, you can reinforce the importance of correctness by having some element of it count on certain writing assignments. You can make one general comment on these aspects, but you do not have to mark each error.

Writing vs. "Objective" Tests

Suppose you have students who cannot write well but can get an "A" on an objective test. Won't a writing emphasis course penalize them? Yes, it will, but in order to maintain the "A" they should be required to learn to articulate concepts, to spell key terms, and to make sense in complete sentences. Their employers will expect this much and demand retraining on the job to achieve it; their senior professors on thesis committees also have a right to expect genuine literacy.

What if your students object and say, "This is not an English course, so why should our knowledge of English be counted as well as or knowledge of the course content?" Just remind your students that the separation of English from other disciplines does not occur in the "real" outside world. The ability to write a simple report or summary, to keep a chart or a log, to write a memo, letter, or proposal, and to set forth a position and back it up is an integral part of a college student's future, whether that future is in a trade, technology, business or a profession. This "public" kind of writing is part of the equipment necessary to function well in the world.

The real-life situations about which your students will have to communicate in the future will never present themselves on a standard answer sheet.

While English is a separate discipline on campus, use of the English language is also an essential component of virtually every class. The English word, whether heard, read, or written, is the medium through which the class is conducted. The task of communicating clearly and in writing what was learned is an expected part of every Writing-Emphasis course and could be part of almost every other class.

V. Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

What is Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

WAC is a nationwide reconsideration of the role that writing plays in the learning of all subjects. Synthesizing research in cognitive development and writing theory, WAC aims to increase the quantity and quality of writing done in academic courses and thereby to improve both student writing and comprehension of subject matter. To do this, programs, such as the WCU Writing Emphasis Program, offer faculty a forum for using as a learning device.

Research has indicated that communicating the importance of writing to students in the classroom has helped improve their writing. research has also indicated that the effective use of writing in teaching can substantially improve learning. University faculty members have contributed in both areas: learning to write and writing to learn.

Report on Faculty Responses to Writing Emphasis at West Chester University

1. Measurable improvement in the quality of learning occurs when writing emphasis techniques are used systematically. Since the faculty's primary interest has been in learning improvement, they see writing emphasis as something that helps them to do a better job of teaching.
2. The effectiveness of required composition courses is consistently reinforced in Writing Emphasis courses. Faculty increase the amount of writing students do in various classes, which in turn improves general student literacy. Graduating students who have this superior training help give the University a good reputation, thus helping to attract more students who are talented and well-prepared.
3. Faculty who participate in Writing Emphasis training report that they feel more comfortable writing, write more, and believe they are writing better. Ultimately, not only are student writing and learning improved, so are the quantity and quality of faculty writing.

What is West Chester University's Program for Writing Across the Curriculum?

West Chester University's cross-disciplinary Writing Emphasis program was begun in 1978 as a pilot project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Pennsylvania State College Educational Trust Fund. It now serves all of the University's more than 10,000 undergraduates. The WCU Writing Emphasis program is based on the assumption that writing is importantly related to thinking and is integral to academic learning in both liberal and professional studies. Its focus is not on remediation but on enhancement. Writing Emphasis provides for:

1. Approximately 175 Writing Emphasis course sections each semester. Courses with the Writing Emphasis designation are not additional requirements but regular subject-matter courses that by themselves can fulfill other general education, cognate, or major requirements. These courses are offered in all departments. They differ from other courses only in that their syllabi and assignments call for a significant amount of writing and their instructors provide significant attention to improving student writing.

Writing Emphasis courses are not English composition courses; rather, they are courses that reinforce that competencies established in English composition. Also, Writing Emphasis courses are not intended to be senior seminars in which extensive written work is ordinarily required; rather, as envisioned for this requirement, they are less advanced courses, many of which may be suitable for general education. One of their main purposes is to prepare students to attain and practice competencies that are called for in senior seminars.

2. A General Education requirement is that all students must take three (3) of these Writing Emphasis courses. According to the policy adopted in 1980, each student will take at least three Writing Emphasis courses at West Chester University. (The requirement is reduced to two for transfer students with 40-70 credits, and to one for students transferring 71 or more credits.) The three Writing-Emphasis courses should be taken before the senior year.

In evaluation of the Writing Emphasis policy, it was found that students were well informed of this general requirement. Most student respondents agreed that they has no trouble in finding Writing-Emphasis courses, and that the Writing-Emphasis course helped to improve their writing.

3. Opportunities for faculty development have been held in the past and are being scheduled for the future.
4. Procedures to get a course approved as Writing-Emphasis: In order to get a course listed with the "W" symbol, a faculty member must fill out a ***Criteria and Checklist*** for developing a Writing-Emphasis Course (see page 3). The form lists the requirements for a course to receive the "W" designation from the Writing Program Committee.
5. Procedures to get the "W" course into the main schedule: Courses approved as default Writing Emphasis have an automatic W when scheduled. Courses approved as discretionary must have the W added by the Department Chairperson to the main Schedule for the coming semester. Sometimes the Department Chairperson has to be reminded to add this "W" comment.

How Else to Get Involved in Writing Emphasis

- Talk up writing among your colleagues.
- Offer one or more Writing-Emphasis courses.
- Make sure your students know writing is important.
- Reward good student writing in your courses and in your department major.
- Write an article and share it with your students.
- Ask to serve on the Writing Emphasis Committee.
- Find articles on writing in your field and share them with your colleagues and the Committee.
- Conduct research on the effect of writing on your students.
- Develop a means of "publishing" your students' writing.

Sample Materials from WCU Faculty

Selected Writing Summaries:

- A. ESS 420 Structural Geology
- B. SMD 414 History, Organization, and Administration of Athletic Training
- C. NSG/NSL 212 Introduction to Nursing Theories
- D. HON 302 The Double Figure in Literature, Film, and Psychology
- E. HIS 357 Diplomatic History of the United States
- F. MUE 322 Music in the Secondary Curriculum

Selected Handouts and Other Items:

- G. "Discussion of Writing in Art and Science" by Charles Price on Form and Style in the Arts (MHL 201), and Lou Casciato on Unified Science (IND 201)
- H "Reaction Papers"- by Stacey Schlau
- I "Using Writing to Structure a Class Project on Minerals" by LeeAnn Srogi on Writing in Minerology (ESS 302)
- J. *Writing Program Newsletter No. 12: Designing Essay Examinations*

Attachment A

WRITING-EMPHASIS COURSE WRITING SUMMARY ESS 420-Structural Geology

I. Writing Activities

- A. In-class cooperative activities-These activities are listed under "ASSIGNMENT" on the first page of the syllabus. Student, working in groups of 2-4, are asked to analyze data supplied to them. Each student completes the assignment by writing a paragraph summarizing the conclusions they have reached in group discussion. Students are required to support their statements and encouraged to disagree with a group consensus by reasoned argument.
- B. Field notes-Three afternoon field trips are conducted during the laboratory portion of the course. Students are asked to record observations and measurements in their field notebooks. The field books are collected and evaluated for clarity for expression and quality of description. In some cases, the students are asked to write descriptions of techniques used in the field (e.g. use of the Brunton compass).
- C. Laboratory assignments-Several laboratory assignments include written summaries of interpretations reached during the laboratory. As an example, students are asked to describe the geologic history of an area based on their analysis of a geologic map and cross section.
- D. Exam questions-Both the mid-term and final exams contain three parts: short essay, quantitative analysis, and long essay. The instructions for the short essay portion of the exam read, "Answer six of these questions in well constructed, coherent, short paragraphs. In some cases, a few sentences will completely answer the question. In other, it will take more." The instructions for the take-home, long essay portion of the exam read, "Answer question 1 OR 2 AND 3 OR 4. Your answer should be well thought out, coherent, and demonstrate the breadth and depth of your understanding of the selected topic. You may refer to your text, but be very careful not to "borrow" language; your answers must be your own."
- E. Term project-Each student is required to complete a term project. The project is written in parts with intermediate deadlines. Initial drafts are peer reviewed in class. Revised sections are peer reviewed again and receive instructor review. The reader is directed to the syllabus for a complete description of this writing activity.

II. Comments

The writing activities included in the course are designed to cover the variety of writing tasks faced by a professional geologist. Short pieces are used early and often to both reduce writing anxiety and enhance the understanding of concepts. Because geologic data is commonly collected in the field, field notes are particularly important, and a type of writing not often addressed. Clarity and quality of descriptions are emphasized. The term project is organized to demonstrate the sequence of steps in conducting a scientific investigation and to make the task less daunting. Instruction and reviews emphasize organization and logical flow of a technical report, logical and persuasive presentation of data and ideas, and writing to the appropriate audience.

Peer review is utilized to aid students in critiquing others work, as well as their own. Short pieces are discussed in class. Written reviews provided feedback on the term project as it develops. Review instruments are supplied with the syllabus both to guide students' thinking for written peer reviews and to serve as models for how their papers will be evaluated.

"Writing Summary" Re-Submission

SMD 414 (formerly PED 414) -- History, Organization and Administration of Athletic Training

Originally submitted by: Bruce Norris, 1/89

revised by: Neil Curtis, 11/94, 3/95

I. Writing Activities

A. Major Term Projects:

1. Training Room Design Project: the student will justify and rationale for the design of an athletic training facility for a college or high school - **Total value = 15%**
2. Training Room Budget Project: the student will justify the capital and expendable budget for the same college or high school - **Total value -15%**

B. Essay Exam Questions: The students will have ample opportunity on each examination to respond to essay question.

1. Exam 1: **Total value = 15%**; (50% essay questions) -sample questions:
Since the inception of NATA there have been many historical developments in the athletic training profession. Discuss one of these developments (including the year it occurred); describe how this event influenced the athletic training profession.
2. Exam 2: **Total value = 15%**; (30% essay questions) -sample question:
 - a. Describe how you would set up the ideal scientific study to investigate if pre-activity hamstring warm-up and stretching reduces the incidence of hamstring injuries in track athletes.
3. Exam 3: **Total value = 20%** (100% essay questions)
-Directions for exam 3: Be clear, concise, complete and neat. You may answer the questions in any order, but be sure to clearly indicate the correct question number in your blue book (or equivalent). I encourage you to write on the question sheets to assist in the construction of your responses, so that your answer will be NEAT and CONCISE
-Grading criteria include: grammar, completeness of answer, clarity of communication of ideas, and the logic of the argument. Have a happy holiday and semester break!!!!
-Sample questions:
 - a. Read the attached article by M. Royko. It is a copy of a nationally syndicated column published a few years ago. Write a letter to Mr. Royko expressing your views about his article and attempt to clarify misconceptions about the athletic trainer.

- b. You are working as the athletic trainer at Smallville High School, a local rival of Sayreville High School. Mrs. Mann, a parent of a Smallville football player shows you the article (see page three) on knee braces and asks you why Smallville does not require knee braces for its football players.
- 1) Would you recommend that Mrs. Mann's son wear prophylactic knee braces, based on this article? Explain and give a rationale for your recommendation (for or against or other).
 - 2) Is the title of the article accurate?

C. Other Written Assignments: **Total value = 20%**

1. develop a written emergency action plan (10 pts)
2. evaluate the safety and design of a sports medicine facility (10 pts)
3. design a resume and write a cover letter (15 pts)
4. write professional communication to MD, parent (10 pts)
5. critically read and review research article (15 pts)
6. injury recording using various techniques (15 pts)
7. reaction papers/discussion: numerous current articles are on reserve at the library and distributed in class. The student will respond and react to issues facing the profession raised in these readings. Assignments will be completed in class and as homework. (varies)

II. GRADING SUMMARY: Your grade will include a numerical average of the tests and assignments. Your grade will be based on total points accumulated throughout the course based on the following percentage:

Written exam 1=	15%
Written exam 2=	15%
Final Exam 3 =	20%
Budge =	15%
Design =	15%
Other written assignments =	20%
	100%

III. General Comments

This course continues to be offered during the Fall semester of each academic year. The target students are seniors in the athletic training major or pursuing the athletic training concentration as part of another major. While other students have the opportunity to take the course, they are discouraged from doing so due to the high degree of specialization of the course.

All writing assignments are carefully described in class, either in written or verbal form. Students are encouraged to confer with the instructor throughout the semester about their writing performance. Emphasis is placed on the importance of accurate, concise communication to a specified audience. Following the completion of the assignments,

prompt and constructive criticism is provided. Students are encouraged to review samples of completed assignments from previous semesters.

Any student judged to have serious problems with his writing (problems beyond the scope of the corrective capabilities of the instructor) is strongly advised to seek additional assistance from Writing Center.

Writing Emphasis
Course Summary
NSG/NSL : 212
Introduction to Nursing Theories and Concepts

I. Writing Activities

A. Letter to Legislator - Required assignment

Students are given guidelines for writing a letter to a legislator. The letters are to address a health care or nursing related issue. Letters are submitted and reviewed before being sent. If necessary students are asked to rewrite and resubmit for review.

B. Summary of Nursing

Research Article - Required assignment

Students select a research article from the nursing research literature.

Students are asked to read the article and answer a series of questions related to the research process as discussed in class.

C. Nursing Issue Term Paper

Required assignment

Students select a current nursing issue. Guidelines for writing the paper are provided. Students are required to identify and explain the issue. They are required to delineate the extent of the problem and discuss the implications of the issue for nursing.

D. Major Written Project (required assignments)

- 1) Nursing history
- 2) Psychosocial assessment and genogram
- 3) Physical assessment
- 4) Nursing care plan

Students are required to select a client on whom they will complete each of the above. This assignment requires students to collect information, build a data base, identify client's actual and potential health problem, develop a plan of care, and analyze the plan and the client's health status.

Writing-Emphasis Course Writing Summary
The Double Figure in Literature, Film & Psychology
Dr. Landwehr

I. Writing Activities:

A. Journal--Required assignment. (20% of final grade). Each student will write his/her personal observations, opinions, and interpretations of each work in a journal. At least three pages per week should be written in the journal. There should be at least one page written per short story and six pages per novel. After the student has read several short stories, she/he is encouraged to make thematic and stylistic comparisons among the various works.

B. Paper--Required assignment. (60% of final grade). Students will write three typed papers of six to seven pages each. They may choose one story or film as their topic, compare a story or film with another work, or apply a psychological theory of personality to a work. For their first two papers, students must submit a brief outline of their argument one week before the paper is due. Papers are to be handed in ON TIME and COMPLETED. Students should read at least three secondary sources (articles, books, etc.) when they are researching their papers. If a student receives less than a B- on the paper, s/he is required to rewrite it. There will be no chance to rewrite the final paper. Papers should be free of obvious spelling and grammar mistakes. Typing mistakes should be kept to a minimum. Papers will be graded on content (how well an argument is presented; originality of thought) and style (grammar, use of vocabulary, organization, clarity).

C. Works of Fiction--(Optional). Students are encouraged to write their own short stories. They may wish to imitate works that they have read in class. One short story can be written in their journal and can take the place of three weeks of commentary in their journals. If you wish to write a short story, I would like you to discuss it with me and write at least three drafts. Your final version should be well-written and polished.

II. Oral Presentations/Written Critiques--Required Assignment. (20% of final grade). Each student will present at least two oral reports on an author, story or film. Each participant should read at least one biographical summary of the author assigned to them as well as three journal articles and/or chapters from books of their topic. In the presentation, the student will briefly report on the author's (or director's) life and on his or her major works, and present a summary of the various interpretations of the work. The student is encouraged to make critical comments on each of the interpretations. The other students will write a brief evaluation of the report, which will contain a comment on its strong and weak points regarding the organization and clarity of the presentation.

III. Comments: All written and oral assignments must be well organized, clearly presented, and completed ON TIME. Students should demonstrate that they have put a substantial amount of effort and thought into their assignments.

WRITING EMPHASIS COURSE SUMMARY

HIS357 Diplomatic History of the United States

(Dr. Thomas Heston)

I. Writing Activities

- A. Daily Journal - The students will maintain on index cards a written journal in which they will summarize the theme of each class session. The journals will be collected and reviewed each time the class meets.
- B. Book Reviews - The students will be required to read and critically review in writing a number of substantial monographs related to the subject. The works will be chosen for their literary as well as historical merit. The instructor will provide examples of superior and inferior book reviews before the students embark on the assignment. Students will be encouraged to further revise "completed" papers in that the initial grade assigned to a particular summary may be supplanted by a higher grade (if any) assigned to a later revision.
- C. Editing Experience - Rough drafts of book reviews will be subjected to small group, peer review in class. The emphasis in the peer review will be on clarity of expression. The instructor will join in this exercise.
- D. Examination Questions - All examination questions will require a written response. Half of the questions will require a substantial analytical essay; half will require a shorter written response. The analytical essays will be reviewed after the exam. "Good" answers will be analyzed as part of the post-exam review.

II. Comments

The writing emphasis portion of this course will concentrate on clear, logical, effective communication. Student work will be constructively critiqued throughout the course and students will be shown the benefits of multiple revisions. Student anxieties about writing will be reduced via the peer review exercise. The instructor's participation in that exercise is designed to demonstrate that virtually everyone needs to work hard in order to write well. Examples of successful and unsuccessful writing will be collected for use in future semesters. The nature of the writing assignments will be thoroughly discussed in class before the students attempt to complete them.

Attachment F

Writing-Emphasis Course - Writing Summary: MUE 332 Music in the Secondary Curriculum Carol Beimain, J. Bryan Burton, C. Floyd Richmond

Comments

The primary emphasis of MUE 332 is the development of effective teaching skills. Writing is one of many tools utilized in the development of those skills. The written assignments described below are used in the course.

Review of Basal Series

Students are required to review basal series textbooks on the secondary level. The review is to include a detailed analysis of the material found in the textbooks including a summary of the underlying philosophy of the series, the organization and accessibility of the material, and the appropriateness of the material for the intended age. The primary purpose of the assignment is to insure that students are acquainted with important instructional materials on the secondary level. The written review provides an opportunity for students to exercise their analytical and evaluative skills.

Field Experience Logs

Students are required to observe secondary music classes in local public schools on ten occasions during the semester and are to maintain a journal describing their experiences. The journal is to contain a detailed lesson plan with goals, objectives, and procedures for each class observed. Identifying the goals and objectives requires an analysis of class activities and consultation with the cooperating teacher. Writing the procedures requires careful reporting of the observed activities. Additionally, students are required to describe how discipline and other problems were handled. The field experience logs are evaluated weekly for the first three weeks and monthly thereafter. Clear expression of the goals, objectives, and procedures is required.

Written Music Lessons

Students are required to write music lessons for secondary students. The lessons must include goals, objectives, procedures, interaction, evaluation, explanation and supporting materials. The music lesson is evaluated on its overall effect. Additional emphasis is given to unity between the various parts of the lesson. Supporting materials which students may incorporate into their lesson include text (posters, overhead transparencies, blackboard writings), graphics (pictures, posters, illustrations, overhead transparencies, blackboard drawings), sounds (cassette tapes, vinyl recordings, and compact discs), multimedia (video tapes, video discs, computers, and synthesizers), and equipment (melody bells, rhythm instruments, and synthesizers).

Micro-Teachings

Students are required to teach four times during the semester. On each occasion, a written plan explaining the lesson and its teaching/learning strategies and sequence is submitted to the instructor. The plan contains the goals, objectives and procedures of the lesson and is a significant factor in the overall grade for the teaching assignment. The plan is evaluated on the basis of its logic, clarity, and execution.

Unit Plans

Students are required to submit a written unit plan covering at least five lessons. The writing of the plans provides practice of critical professional skills. The unit plan is evaluated on its content and form.

Attachment G

Charles Price (Music Theory), a former member of the Writing Program Committee, discussed the Writing Emphasis in MHL 201 FORM AND STYLE IN THE ARTS. His initial assertion was that students in Writing Emphasis sections perform better than students in other classes. He highlighted the reaction papers his students wrote in response to works of art viewed, listened to, or read: these ranged from biblical stories and Homeric epic to modern dance, opera, and film. The reaction papers, which are only one component of Price's writing emphasis, are ungraded but required. Students must write what they see/hear, what they think, and what they feel. They are collected and used as the basis for further classroom discussion.

Price's point was that the reaction papers engage students in responding to many difficult works and themes. This kind of writing overcomes reluctance and enables students to grapple with academic analysis and comparison.

The second presentation was made by Lou Casciato (Geology-Astronomy), a long-time WCU faculty member and an original participant in the 1978 seminar on writing across the curriculum. Although Lou focussed on IND 201 UNIFIED SCIENCE, his observations applied to other courses he has taught. He reviewed eight components he has used to create a writing emphasis:

1. Using drafts. If you collect drafts, do not return them with red marks; instead, arrange for conferences with the student writers. This will be more productive.
2. Using a journal. This should be more affective than cognitive, highlighting what students encounter that links with course content.
3. Spontaneous in-class writing. This works beautifully in a 3-hour class to focus attention and to clarify concepts.
4. Re-writing class notes. This task gets students to integrate the various strands of the course.
5. "Cheat sheets." These are study aids that are encouraged before tests, and are marked. Again, they help to sort out course concepts and to increase student learning.
6. Choices. Students are provided with options on tests and respond very favorably to such choices.

In all, ten writing strategies were presented, including the powerful idea of sharing with students exemplary work in each category.

WRITING EMPHASIS COURSE
WRITING SUMMARY

MHL 201 Form and style in The Arts
Charles Price

I. Writing Activities

- A. Class Log - Two students will be assigned on a rotating basis to log each class session. Copies will be made available to students who miss class sessions.
- B. Journal - Students will be required to keep a journal of their reactions to the major reading/listening/viewing assignments in the arts. The journals will be collected and reviewed twice during the semester by the instructor. Several journal entries will be selected for further discussion in class sessions.
- C. Reaction Papers - Students will be requested in class to respond to works of art viewed/listened to/read during that class session.
- D. Cultural Activities Reports - One required (and one additional optional) cultural event or activities report of approximately five hundred words will be due before the end of the semester. Only visits to approved major museum collections or attendance at approved plays, ballets, or concerts will be acceptable. A "Cultural Event or Activities Reports" handout will be distributed at the beginning of the semester.
- E. Test Questions - A portion of each major test or quiz will require written response. Approximately one-third to one-half of all examinations will be made up of essay questions on the relations of historical and cultural events to the arts; or on questions of form, style, and content concerning specific works studied in class.
- F. Major Written Project - Each student will be required to complete a major written project. Project proposals will be submitted before midterm for approval. One non-graded rough draft will be required before submission of the final paper. The instructor will provide suggestions as to the scope, organization, and content of the final submission after reviewing the draft. The paper will represent a major course grade.

II. Comments

Sections of this course that do not carry the writing emphasis designation do not require class logs, journals, or a major written project.

"6 Minutes"

Writing Program Presentation

Lou Casciato X1096
Main 136

Techniques

Course IND201
Unified Science
Sat 9-12 Sec 75
W + 1

- 1] Correct drafts - Research or - Rewrite - repeat cycle
Term papers (one on one with students)
- 2] Student journal - collect - unannounced dates
- 3] Spontaneous in class writing (15-20 minutes)
- 4] Rewrite class notes, marriage of lecture - discussion and readings. Collect - unannounced dates
- 5] Collect "cheat sheets" after Test
Outline, organization - enhance study skills
Use of study guide for tests
- 6] If you want students to answer five essay questions on test - ask ten - choice!
25% - grammar, style, organization, etc.
- 7] Essay questions - open ended - unstructured - homework after each class. Only questions of generalization and application not feedback. Teach in content A, question in context B, Same for #5 above.
- 8] All tests - open notes - life is an open book exercise.
- 9] Give out key terms, concepts that should appear in their answers to essay questions - before the test.

Reaction Papers

Stacey Schlau, Professor of Foreign Languages and Women's Studies, uses reaction papers in several courses: Contemporary Latin American Narrative Feminist Theory, Puerto Rican Culture, and Third World Women. Short (2-3 typed pages), conceptual essays, handed in about six times per semester, reaction papers are individual reflections flowing from class materials. In reaction papers, students are free to choose, and expand upon, any topic that interests them from class readings, discussions, films, or speakers during the time period of the course since the last reaction paper. Students may interject their own feelings, as well as analyzing a concept or theme.

Purposes of reaction papers include learning to: 1) express thoughts coherently and well; 2) formulate and substantiate a line of argument, without knowing the instructor's "right" point of view; and 3) provide an in-depth analysis of the information discussed.

The most successful reaction paper explores a topic in-depth, rather than attempting to touch upon many issues. Even better, she does so in an original manner: 1) After class discussion about Black women's intellectual tradition, based on reading assignment, one student writes a lyrical reverie naming and describing many African-American women in U.S. history, and the reason why each is an intellectual and spiritual foremother; 2) after role playing a series of case studies of development projects in the Third World, a student imagines herself in the position of a poor rural woman in Africa or Latin America, describing and analyzing aspects of her life; 3) a student develops a thoughtful, well-reasoned argument, based on political, economic, cultural, ecological, and moral factors discussed in class and readings, for (or against) Puerto Rican independence from the U.S.; and 4) after discussing two pieces of short fiction by Jorge Luis Borges, purported to be detective stories but which are also philosophical labyrinths, a student describes not only his reaction, but also how they resemble Escher's drawings.

Schlau keeps files for each course of previous high-quality reaction papers, for student consultation. She is also willing to read and respond to a draft, on paper or through e-mail, before the day the paper is due. She finds the workload of reading and grading not too burdensome. And, she is able to see how students develop ideas on various subjects, as well as often learning about the class materials new ways. Reaction papers help students to think more carefully and independently, and to keep up with the class.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM 10/17/94
Writing in Mineralogy, ESS 302, LeeAnn Sroggi

Using Writing to Structure a Class Project on Minerals

Purpose of the Project:

- to give students opportunities to learn independent of the instructor
- to provide opportunities for cooperative learning
- to enhance learning through communication of ideas to others
- to provide opportunities for creativity through fulfilling the above

Nature of the Project:

- students select a specific mineral to investigate over the semester outside of class time
- students prepare a poster presenting the information about their topic

Problems from previous years' projects that I hoped to overcome by applying the principles of WAC.

- students procrastinated working on their projects
- students weren't prepared because they didn't know how to gauge their understanding
- students weren't thinking about what, and to whom, they wanted to communicate
- students didn't know how to create effective posters because they had no prior experience
- students focused on visual materials for the poster, not realizing that pictures without text rarely communicate effectively
- I had difficulty communicating my expectations in ways that students understood

Writing Program Newsletter No. 12: Designing Essay Examinations

There is more to taking essay exams than knowing the facts. Often, some students do better than others not because they know more but because they express themselves better.

Instructors often complain that students write their worst on essay examinations. The pressure of an examination discourages good style. But the chief weakness of examination answers is not that they are unpolished or ungrammatical or awkward; it is that they are not composed at all. Many students do not first plan what they want to say. Too often they begin to write without a clear purpose and assume that as long as they are writing they are somehow answering the question. The result is often an answer that is irrelevant, unclear, and even self-contradictory.

The checklist below summarizes some considerations in designing an essay question:

CHOICE OF TASK

1. Does the question test the students' understanding of significant course content?
2. Is the question sufficiently focused to allow students to say something substantive in the time allowed?
3. Is the question the end point of a sequence of previous writing assignments or other preparation?
4. Does the question allow students to synthesize their learning, make new connections, or see the material in a new way?

WORDING

1. Is the task clarified by the exact use of terms such as *trace*, *compare*, *explain*, *justify*, etc? (See the list below.)
2. Are any steps in the writing task spelled out clearly?
3. Is there enough context given so that students can immediately plan their answers without spending time figuring out the demands of the question?

4. Would it be appropriate or helpful to frame the question as a simulated professional problem?

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Do students know the relative worth of the various questions or parts of the questions so that they can apportion time well?
2. Do students know the criteria by which their answers will be graded?

The words that follow are frequently used in essay examinations:

SUMMARIZE: Sum up; give the main points briefly. *Summarize the ways in which people preserve food.*

EVALUATE: Give the good points and the bad ones; appraise; give an opinion regarding the value of; talk over the advantages and limitations. *Evaluate the contributions of the teaching machines.*

CONTRAST: Bring out the points of difference. *Contrast the novels of Jane Austen and William Makepeace Thackeray.*

EXPLAIN: Make clear; interpret; make plain; tell "how to do"; tell the meaning of. *Explain how scientists can, at times, trigger a full-scale rainstorm.*

DESCRIBE: Give an account of; tell about; give a word picture of. *Describe the Pyramids of Giza.*

DEFINE: Give the meaning of a word or concept; place it in the class to which it belongs and set it off from other items in the same class. *Define the term "archetype."*

COMPARE: Bring out the points of similarity and points of difference. *Compare the legislative branches of the state government and the national government.*

DISCUSS: Talk over; consider from various points of view; present different sides of. *Discuss the use of pesticides in controlling mosquitoes.*

CRITICIZE: State your opinion of the correctness or merits of an item or issue; criticism may approve or disapprove. *Criticize the increasing use of alcohol.*

JUSTIFY: Show good reasons for; give your evidence; present facts to support your position. *Justify American entry into World War II.*

TRACE: Follow the course of; follow the trail of; give a description of progress. *Trace the development of television in school instruction.*

INTERPRET: Make plain; give the meaning of; give you thinking about; translate. *Interpret the poetic*

line: "The sound of the cobweb snapping is the noise of my life."

PROVE: Establish the truth of something by giving factual evidence or logical reasons. *Prove that in a full-employment economy a society can get more of one product only by giving up another product.*

ILLUSTRATE: Use a word picture, a diagram, a chart, or concrete example to clarify a point. *Illustrate the use of catapults in the amphibious warfare of Alexander the Great.*