

## **UNIVERSITY POLICY ON WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

### **ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY S93-14**

**(formerly F87-14)**

At its meeting of April 27, 1993, the Academic Senate unanimously approved the following revised policy on written English proficiency at SFSU:

#### **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

The development of student writing skills is both central to the mission of the University and dependent on the full and active participation of faculty from all segments of the academic community. Although major responsibility for teaching English composition has historically resided within the English Department, the University's written English requirements apply to students, spanning a broad spectrum of academic majors and interests.

The University Written English Proficiency committee was established to encourage and support broad and effective faculty participation in the teaching and assessment of student writing. Towards these ends, the committee sponsors a wide array of services and activities in support of curricula and programs that foster the teaching, learning and assessment of written English; these services, activities and programs should be sensitive to the needs of a multi-cultural diverse student population. Furthermore, the committee endorses the principle that test development, procedures and instruments should reflect thoughtful and humanistic consideration of all people, be sensitive to the multi-cultural and ethnic diversity of our students, and to the extent possible be valid, reliable and free of bias.

This document describes the formal University program in written English proficiency. It also highlights the special role and responsibility of instructors of undergraduate and graduate composition courses.

#### **COMMITTEE CHARGE**

The University Written English Proficiency Committee is charged with the following tasks:

1. Recommend substantive and/or procedural changes in the implementation of the undergraduate written English proficiency requirements to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and to official policy-making bodies in accordance with established university policies and procedures.
2. Serve as a subject-matter resource and liaison to faculty members and/or department/program chairs who seek assistance in developing writing components in their programs. the committee with sponsor the following kinds of activities to strengthen, enhance , and improve student writing proficiency across the curriculum in both undergraduate and graduate programs:

- Workshops focusing on such topics as grading, holistic evaluation, pedagogical strategies, and other competency areas to enhance the overall quality of instruction in courses having a substantial written English component.
- Workshops for instructors interested in improving the quality of student writing across the curriculum;
- Workshops on cultural and linguistic diversity;
- Development and distribution of guidelines and materials to assist faculty members in enhancing both the content and pedagogy of written communication in English.

3. Compile data and make suggestions for improvement of disciplinary writing components, following consultation with appropriate program faculty, to the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC), and to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of the Graduate Division;
4. Recommend substantive and/or procedural changes in the implementation of the graduate written English proficiency requirements to the Dean of the Graduate Division and to official policy-making bodies in accordance with established University policies, procedures and practices; and,
5. Submit an annual report to the Academic Senate summarizing committee activities. Recommendations for substantive policy changes must be submitted to the appropriate standing academic policy committees (e.g., EPC, APC, CRAC, GEC) and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or her/his designee. Recommendations for routine procedural modifications must be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or her/his designee.

## **UNDERGRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH POLICY**

### Lower Division

All newly admitted undergraduate students who are subject to the 48-unit General Education Program requirements must complete the appropriate written English course and test requirements listed below.

1. Undergraduate Entry Level Placement Tests (EPT and ESLPT):

All newly-admitted undergraduate students must take the California State University English Placement TEST (CSU-EPT) during their first semester of attendance at SFSU, except those with an approved EPT test or course exemption. The results of the EPT will not affect admissions eligibility. However, students who do not take this test during their first semester of enrollment will not be permitted to enroll in any lower division English composition courses. Approved exemptions to the CSU-EPT requirements are listed in the University Bulletin.

In addition to taking the CSU-EPT, all non-native speakers of English who wish to enroll in ESL courses must also take the SFSU-ESLPT (English-as-a-Second Language Placement Test) before the end of their second semester of instruction. Non-native speakers may consult the ESL Program Coordinator or the Testing Office for the SFSU-ESLPT schedule. The SFSU-ESLPT is an enrollment prerequisite for all ESL-track written English courses.

2. Developmental Written English Instruction:

Both native and non-native speakers of English who do not pass the CSU-EPT and/or the SFSU-ESLPT may be eligible for one or more of the developmental options listed below. Enrollment in these courses will depend on students' scores on these tests as well as the recommendations of the ESL Coordinator and/or the Coordinator of Writing Skills Program.

A. Native speakers of English:

All entering freshmen who are native speakers of English and score between 142 and 150 on the CSU-English Placement Test (EPT) must take English 50: Writing Skills Workshop. This course focuses on the development of college-level sentence, paragraph, and essay writing abilities.

Students who are native speakers of English and who score 141 or below on the CSU-EPT are encouraged to take English 49: Intensive Learning English and English 50: Writing Skills Workshop. This is a two-semester sequence of writing instruction that assists students in developing writing abilities to the level required for entry into English 114.

B. Non-native speakers of English:

Students who are non-native speakers of English, and who score below 142 on the CSU-EPT may also take the SFSU-ESLPT, to qualify for entry into ESL courses equivalent to English 114 and 214.

Those whose scores on the SFSU-ESLPT are in the lowest quartile are encouraged to take English 201 and 202, a two-semester sequence of composition coursework for ESL students.

Units and grades earned in writing courses numbered below 100 **DO NOT** count toward meeting graduation requirements. Successful completion of English 49 and 50 by those students needing them is an enrollment pre-requisite for English 114 and 214.

3. English 114:

Students should take English 114, a foundation course in college-level composition skills, prior to completing 30 units of courses work. Only those students who can demonstrate one of the following are exempt:

- a. A "passed for credit" score on the CSU English Equivalency Examination (EEE);
- b. A score of 3,4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
- c. Completion of an equivalent college-level course elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

Taking the CSU-EPT is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all English 114 courses as well as all ESL-track composition courses. Taking the SFSU-ESLPT is also an enrollment prerequisite for all ESL-track written composition courses.

Students who are non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 209 as an English 114 substitute, only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT exam and the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

#### 4. English 214:

English 214 is a GE Basic Subjects foundation course in composition, logic, style, rhetoric and literature. Students normally take English 214 after completing 24 semester units and prior to completing 60 semester units, unless they have one of the following exemptions:

- a. "Passed for credit" score on the CSU English Equivalency Examination (EEE);
- b. A score of 3,4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program;
- c. Completion of an equivalent college-level courses elsewhere of 3 semester- or 4 quarter-units with a grade of credit (CR) or C- or better.

For native speakers of English, successful completion of English 114 or its equivalent is a pre-requisite for enrollment in all 214 courses. Students who are non-native speakers of English may enroll in English 310, as an English 214 substitute, only if they receive a qualifying score on the SFSU-ESLPT examination and the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

#### 5. Alternate 214 Courses:

The existing alternate 214 courses are like English 214, fundamental writing courses in which a subject matter area (e.g., music) serves primarily as a vehicle for the teaching/learning of writing and composition skills rather than discipline-specific content. The design and pedagogy of 214 alternates should focus primarily on writing and composition skills. In order to achieve this goal, all active alternate English 214 courses shall be periodically reviewed by the University Written Proficiency Committee.

Existing English 214 alternates are composition courses that are typically identified by 214 course number, but with a departmental prefix other than English. The approved alternatives to English 214 are the following:

**AAS 214 EDUC 214 HUM 214 SPCH 214**

**AIS 214 ENG 310 LARA 214 THA 214**

**BLS 214 GEOG 214 MUS 214 WOMS 214**

**BUS 214 HIST 214 NEXA 214 WCL 214**

Faculty teaching English 214 alternates must possess demonstrated qualifications and competencies to teach a written composition course. The appointing department chair and college dean, in consultation with the Dean of the College of Humanities and the Chair of the English Department, are responsible for the assessment of these qualifications before the person is assigned to teach any written composition courses.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies will serve as a liaison with department chairs and college deans to ensure that goal, and, if necessary, to resolve conflicts.

For native speakers of English, successful completion of English 114, or its equivalent, is a prerequisite for enrollment in all English 214 alternate course sections.

Grading on all written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

## **Upper Division**

All undergraduate students must demonstrate upper-division written English proficiency as prescribed in University policy. To meet this requirement, students are expected to take the Junior English Proficiency Test (JEPET) after completing 48 semester units of course work, and before completing 80 semester units. To be eligible to take this examination, students are required to have passed English 114 and 214, or their equivalents. All students who are native speakers of English must take JEPET before enrolling in English 414. Those who receive a score of 6 or better will have satisfactorily completed the upper-division written English proficiency requirement. Those who receive a total score of less than 6 on the JEPET must either re-take the test or successfully complete English 414. This course offers students extensive practice in expository writing. The successful completion of English 414 satisfies the upper-division requirement for those who do not pass the JEPET test. Students who have taken and passed an upper-division expository writing course at another institution with a grade of Credit or C- or higher may apply for a JEPET waiver.

Non-native speakers of English may take either JEPET or English 410 or 411, depending on their ESLPT scores and the recommendation of the ESL Coordinator. Non-native speakers and bilingual students who elect to take JEPET and do not pass may take English 410 or 411 only with the approval of the ESL Coordinator.

Grading on all upper-division written composition courses will be either ABC/No Credit or Credit/No Credit, at the student's option.

## EXCEPTION TO THE UNDERGRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH POLICY

Students who were enrolled at San Francisco State University, or at another California State University campus, or at a California community college **BEFORE FALL, 1981**, and who have maintained continuous attendance subsequent to their initial enrollment, are not subject to these written English requirements. These students will be held to the written English requirements as stated in the SFSU Bulletin in effect when they began their first term of continuous attendance.

## GRADUATE WRITTEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY

All students in programs of graduate study at SFSU must demonstrate entry-level and exit-level writing proficiency in accordance with the "Guidelines to Establish English Writing Proficiency for Graduate Students."

### 1. Entry-level Writing Proficiency

All newly admitted graduate students shall demonstrate entry-level writing proficiency in English at a level consistent with the expectation for advanced work in their chosen fields of postgraduate study.

To assess the entry-level writing proficiency of newly-admitted graduate students, departments shall employ one of the following evaluation options:

- a. "Passed for credit" score on the CSU English Equivalency Examination (EEE);
- b. require students to take the SFSU Graduate Essay Test (GET);
- c. require students to submit scores on an acceptable and nationally-recognized graduate-level examination that requires an expository writing sample;
- d. require students to submit to the Department Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator or Committee Chair expository writing completed in one of the department's required courses during the first term of enrollment for evaluation of entry-level writing proficiency;
- e. require students to take a graduate-level writing examination calling for expository prose administered and proctored by the department/program to which the student has been admitted;
- f. require students to submit for departmental review a portfolio of expository essays other expository writings, or equivalent written creative work.

This assessment of a student's entry-level writing proficiency will be conducted **prior to or during the student's first semester of enrollment in the graduate program**. Students who pass an approved examination or successful completion of the assessment processes stipulated above will have satisfied the graduate entry-level writing proficiency requirement.

Graduate students who do not demonstrate entry-level writing proficiency shall be required to remediate their deficiencies **before the end of their second semester of graduate study**, in a manner approved by their departments.

## 2. Assessment of Exit-level Writing Proficiency

Graduate students shall demonstrate exit-level writing proficiency by one or more of the following methods:

- a. Writing an acceptable Master's thesis;
- b. Writing a substantial paper in a culminating course or seminar;
- c. Successfully completing a comprehensive written examination administered by their department/program;
- d. Successfully completing a discipline-based project, creative work, or other activity that requires extensive writing.

Departments that cannot certify the completion of the exit-level graduate writing proficiency requirement, either before approving the Graduate Approved Program, or by exercising one of the culminating-experience options described above, shall submit a reasonable alternate plan to the Dean of the Graduate Division.

The Written English Proficiency Committee will serve as a resource and liaison to the Graduate Council, the Dean of the Graduate Division, and schools, departments and programs in responding to concerns or issues related to the entry- and exit-level graduate writing proficiency requirements.

## COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The University Written English Proficiency Committee will consist of nine members as follows:

- Three faculty members from the English Department, including one from the ESL Program faculty, elected by the department according to its established procedures;
- Two faculty members from areas other than the English Department, elected at large by the faculty;
- One faculty member from areas other than the English Department who has experience teaching composition, elected at large by the faculty;
- One student selected by the Associated Students;

- One tenured English Department faculty member invited by the Committee from one of our major feeder community colleges, who will serve as the community college liaison to the committee.
- One member of the Academic Affairs staff to be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and to serve as staff to the committee, without voting rights;

Each of the six elected faculty members will serve for staggered three-year terms. The AS member may stand for re-election or re-appointment for one successive term only.

The committee will elect one of its members as Chair for a one-year term.

**\*APPROVED BY PRESIDENT CORRIGAN ON JULY 8, 1993\***