Upper Division Writing Course in Your Major (GWAR)

Your Final Writing Requirement: Upper Division Writing Courses in Your Major (GWAR)

Writing in your GWAR class will not only help you learn specific content in your major, it will also help you practice writing in the genres and styles used by professionals within your chosen discipline.

Your upper division writing requirement will be satisfied by a writing intensive course in your chosen major. Here at SF State, we call the last class towards your University writing requirement GWAR courses (which stands for Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement). All of the CSUs have some kind of GWAR requirement. Here at SF State, an intensive writing class in your chosen major allows you to build on what you have learned in FYC and 2YC in order to learn the types of writing used in your chosen discipline.

Like FYC and 2YC, your GWAR course will usually be small (25 students or less) and will stress revision. Although you will likely find yourself using and adapting many of the reading and writing strategies you have learned in FYC and 2YC, you will also learn more specific practices and conventions that pertain to your major. In this regard, your instructor will be an invaluable guide, since she not only understands what constitutes successful writing within your field, but also has a deep understanding of the content of your field.

In GWAR, your instructor will discuss the conventions of writing in your discipline with you throughout the term, as well as provide feedback on your writing. As in FYC and 2YC, you will be asked to regularly revise your work and perhaps to make use of helpful revision tools like peer review. As you work to develop the more specific types of writing required by your major, your instructor will likely sequence assignments so that you are able to build toward a longer writing project or paper.

In sum, your GWAR class gives you the chance to practice integrating knowledge from your major with your knowledge about writing. In GWAR, you will learn the specific ways of asking questions, reporting information, making arguments, and presenting ideas that your chosen field values. And, because your GWAR course is situated within your major, GWAR thus helps you continue your journey toward being a successful writer, no matter what your future field may be. You can visit http://ueap.sfsu.edu/wac for more information.

What if I need additional support while in my GWAR class?

In addition to GWAR-oriented resources at the LAC and CARP, students who feel they need more writing practice than GWAR provides should consider taking one of the two courses below:

English 418: Grammar for Writers

ENG 418 is intended for those who would like to improve their writing through the study of grammatical sentence structures.

Ever wonder why your writing doesn't seem to "flow"? Have teachers told you that your sentences seem choppy, confusing, or too simple? English 418 is a course for students who want to learn how to construct sophisticated, professional sentences. Using samples of student writing from across the disciplines, we will learn to identify common errors, develop techniques for constructing a variety of sentence structures, and focus on improving cohesion and coherence in your writing. This course will teach you how to write polished, grammatically complex sentences, and most importantly, give you confidence in your ability to express your ideas correctly and with style.
English 415: Grammar and Editing for Multilingual Students

English 415 is an upper-division grammar and editing course designed to be taken concurrently with GWAR. The course offers instruction and practice in editing for accuracy and style, as well as correct use of citations. Students will also learn to understand and fulfill the requirements of diverse writing tasks, using their GWAR assignments as practice material.