

GRADUATE WRITING REQUIREMENT

GOALS:

In order to command scholarly and professional credibility, graduate students should:

- a. Develop writing skills commensurate with society's expectations of persons who hold advanced degrees.
- b. Develop the ability to write in formats and styles appropriate to their disciplines.

POLICY:

In accordance with requirements of the State of California, students must demonstrate competence in written English before they apply for advancement to candidacy. For pedagogical reasons, they should demonstrate such competence as early in their programs as possible.

OBJECTIVES:

The student's writing should demonstrate:

- (a) Comprehensibility;
- (b) Clear organization and presentation of ideas;
- (c) An ability to arrange ideas logically so as to establish a sound scholarly argument;
- (d) Thoroughness and competence in documentation;
- (e) An ability to express in writing a critical analysis of existing scholarly/professional literature in the student's area of interest; and
- (f) An ability to model the discipline's overall style as reflected in representative journals.

STANDARDS:

Writing competency should be measured against specific standards (e.g., representative journals in the field), which are stated in the program's catalog entry, in the department's graduate student handbook, and in similar material.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. At the time of the student's advancement to candidacy, the program must specify the means (See 2a-d below) by which the writing requirement is met.

2. The writing requirement may be fulfilled by any of the following items:
 - (a) A course or courses specified by the program, provided these courses meet the requirements stated in "Objectives", above. Should the student pass all components other than writing, the student would receive credit for the course but would have to demonstrate writing competence in some other way, specified by the program's writing policy.
 - (b) A survey of literature or proposal for thesis or project, if this task precedes advancement to candidacy.
 - (c) A qualifying exam with a substantial essay component, if the exam is completed prior to advancement to candidacy.
 - (d) A development process that spans several semesters, but is completed prior to advancement to candidacy. In this case, portfolio assessment or similar evaluative methods are appropriate. Departments that choose this approach must describe in writing the developmental process and specify faculty member(s) who will monitor it.
3. Neither a passing score on the CSU Upper Division Writing Examination nor scores on the verbal portion of the Graduate Record Examination may be used to fulfill the graduate writing requirement.
4. Each graduate program's writing policy is subject to review of and approval by the University Graduate Committee.

Approved Academic Senate, April 26, 1999