

Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement



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<http://www.csus.edu/GVAR>



Undergraduate Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)

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► What is the Undergraduate GWAR?

The GWAR is a CSU wide requirement that should be completed by undergraduate and second bachelor's students in the junior year. The purpose of the GWAR is for students to demonstrate their proficiency at writing in an academic setting at an upper-division level. The GWAR requires a two-step process:

Step 1: Receive a WPJ Placement Score

Step 2: Take a Writing Intensive class (with or without additional writing instruction dependent on your placement).

► When should I start the Undergraduate GWAR Placement Process?

Once you have completed your sophomore-level writing class and are a junior who has 60 units towards your degree, you may start the Undergraduate GWAR Placement Process.

Transfer Students: If you satisfied the GWAR at another CSU campus, contact the Writing Programs office to see how you can transfer that completed requirement from your previous campus to Sac State.

Second Bachelor's Students: If your first bachelor's degree is from a non-CSU campus or a CSU campus, you may have already completed the GWAR requirements. Contact the Writing Programs office for more information.

► How do I receive an Undergraduate GWAR Placement?

You have two options for receiving your GWAR Placement. For more guidance on how to make this choice and where to get additional help, see the Undergraduate GWAR webpage (listed above).

Option 1: Take the timed Writing Placement Exam for Juniors (WPJ) exam. The exam asks students to review several texts and write an essay based on the texts.

Option 2: Take a semester-long writing class, English 109M or English 109W. This class will focus on writing in your specific major. At the end of the semester, your revised work will be collected in a portfolio that will be evaluated. Students who are multilingual can choose 109M or 109W. Students who are native English-speakers should choose English 109W.

► What are the Undergraduate GWAR Placements?

The GWAR Placement determines whether you will need additional writing instruction or assistance before or during your Writing Intensive class. The placements are described below:

You will see	What it means
90	Placement fulfilled at another CSU campus. Pass a Writing Intensive course with a 'C-' or higher to meet General Education/Graduation Requirements.
80/81	3-unit placement - Pass a Writing Intensive course with a 'C-' or higher
70	4-unit placement - Pass a Writing Intensive course and ENGL 109X concurrently
60/50	6-unit placement - Pass ENGL 109W or ENGL 109M, then pass a Writing Intensive course with a 'C-' or higher

► **How do I choose my Undergraduate GWAR Placement option?**

Use the following list of questions to assess your own experience and comfort with college writing. If you find that you agree with the majority of the statements in the left column, you may want to choose to take English 109W/M. If you find you mostly agree with the statements in the right column, taking the WPJ may be a good option.

Take English 109W/M	Take the WPJ
I do not read frequently.	I read frequently.
I have not been asked to write frequently in my college classes.	I have been asked to write frequently in my college classes.
I am unsure whether my writing will earn me a satisfactory grade in my upper-division classes.	I feel confident that my writing will earn me at least a satisfactory grade in my upper-division classes.
I am not entirely comfortable writing formal academic papers.	I am comfortable writing formal academic papers.
I prefer having the chance to revise my writing on my own schedule.	I am comfortable writing in a timed-writing situation.
I depend on teacher feedback to tell me if I'm doing a good job with my writing.	I can assess and revise my own work without relying on teacher feedback.

Advantages to taking English 109W/M	Advantages to taking the WPJ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better learning opportunity - more personal attention - direct writing instruction for preparation of upper-division coursework - learn writing time-management skills - review and learn academic writing concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - less money - less time-consuming

► **Where can I get help deciding which GWAR Placement option to choose?**

Academic Advisors: Lassen Hall 1012
(916) 278-6351

Writing Programs Office: Calaveras Hall 101
(916) 278-6409

Writing Center: Calaveras Hall 128
Phone: (916) 278-6356

Writing Programs Website
<http://www.al.csus.edu/writing/gewritingrequirements/index.php>

► **Where can I get more information about the WPJ exam?**

On the Undergraduate GWAR webpage (listed at the top of this handout), you will find sample tests, a description of the grading criteria, as well as a list of frequently asked questions. You can also find more information on page 4 of this handout.

► **Where can I get more information about the English 109W/M class?**

On the Undergraduate GWAR webpage (listed at the top of this handout), you will find a link to the "GWAR Workshop Packet" that includes the English 109 program syllabus. You can also review the course catalog and English Department webpage for more information about this class.

The Writing Placement for Juniors (WPJ)

The WPJ is a two-hour essay exam. **Students are not allowed to retake the exam as it is a placement exam.** The exam asks students to write two essays. The first essay will ask students to respond and make an argument about a topic represented by several texts. The second essay asks students to discuss their writing history and practices. On the day of the exam, bring the following (an exam booklet and scratch paper will be provided):

- two forms of photo ID (e.g. Sac State One Card, Driver's License, passport, Military ID, etc.)
- several pens and pencils (final draft must be in ink)
- printed dictionary (optional) – thesaurus and electronic dictionaries are not allowed

▶ WPJ Exam Dates

Upcoming Exam Dates	Online Registration Available <small>registration closes at 12pm (noon) on the last day listed</small>	Make-Up Exam Date *
May 19, 2018	April 30 - May 11, 2018, noon	May 23, 2018
July 21, 2018	July 2 - July 13, 2018, noon	July 25, 2018
October 13, 2018	September 24 - October 5, 2018, noon	October 17, 2018
January 5, 2019	December 3 - December 14, 2018, noon	January 9, 2019

▶ Registration & Fees

Register online at www.csus.edu/testing during the two-week period indicated above. Late registration is NOT accepted. You can request accommodations during registration for the following:

Students with Disabilities: Students who are registered with Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD) may be eligible to receive accommodations. For more information, contact SSWD in Lassen Hall 1008 (phone: 916-278-6955).

Multilingual Students: Multilingual students are eligible to receive an additional hour and fifteen minutes for the exam.

Multilingual accommodations will be given to students who answer the multilingual question during online registration.

The \$25 exam fee is NONREFUNDABLE and NONTRANSFERABLE.

Your exam fee will be posted to your MySacState account within one business day after you complete registration. Though the fee may be posted sooner, please allow until the end of business the day after you register for the fee to show on your account. Be sure to check your account frequently for an update of your fees. Exam fees must be paid by the due date listed on your MySacState account. If you fail to pay your exam fees by the due date, your exam registration will be cancelled.

-**Paying in person** at the Bursar's Office located in Lassen Hall room 1001. Normal Fall hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm. In person payment will be accepted through 5:00pm on the last day of registration. OR

-**Paying online** through your MySacState Student Center, choose Account Inquiry, then click the green button to make online payment. Additional fees will apply. Online payment is accepted through Sunday following the close of registration.

▶ Preparation Workshops

At the end of the registration process you will find a link to sign up for a free, one-time, one-hour informational WPJ workshop, which will give you information about the exam, show you a sample, and give you a chance to ask questions.

▶ *Make-Up Exam

A make-up exam is available for those who are not able to attend the Saturday exam for religious, academic, medical, or other compelling reasons. Make-up requests are only considered for those who already registered for the exam. If your request is approved you will receive an email at your Saclink email address by 12pm on the Tuesday following the exam. To qualify for the make-up exam, students must send a request in writing according to the following instructions:

- Written requests can be sent via email to english@csus.edu or delivered to Calaveras Hall 103.
- All requests must be received by 12pm on the Monday following the original exam date.
- All requests must include the following information: 1) Name, Student ID #, Registration Confirmation #, and 2) supporting documentation (e.g. a written statement on letterhead from your clergy, proof of a conflicting exam appointment, a class schedule showing a Saturday course, a letter from your coach showing a conflicting athletic event, a doctor's note or police accident report proving an emergency on the day of the exam, etc.).

▶ Exam Results

Placement scores will be made available as soon as possible—typically within three to four weeks after the exam date. You will find your score on MySacState. Go to your Student Center and select "Test Score Summary" from the drop down menu located to the left of your weekly schedule.

Frequently Asked Questions about the WPJ

1. How long with the exam take? What are the time limits for the exam?

Please plan 2 1/2 hours for this exam or 3-1/2 hours if you signed up for the WPJ as a multilingual student.

WPJ Time Limits: The test proctor will take about 15-20 minutes to check in all students, verify identifications, mark the roster, and have students fill out a short questionnaire. Then, you will have 15 minutes to read the prompt and to plan your essays. You will be given 60 minutes to write Essay #1 and 30 minutes to write Essay #2. Test proctors will not remind you of these time limits. It is your responsibility to manage your time.

Multilingual WPJ Time Limits: If you are taking the multilingual version, it will take 15-20 minutes for check in. You will be given 30 minutes to read and plan your work, 90 minutes to write Essay #1 and 60 minutes to write Essay #2. Test proctors will not remind you of these time limits. It is your responsibility to manage your time.

Students with Disabilities Time Limits: If you are a student registered with SSWD accommodations and require additional time, your time will depend on your approved accommodations. Contact the Testing Center at 916-278-6296 for more information.

2. Will there be holds on my registration if I don't take the exam or enroll in the course?

No holds will be placed on your registration if you do not take ENGL 109 or the WPJ. However, we strongly suggest you do one of the above by the time you reach 74 units. Delaying one of these options could delay your graduation progress.

3. Where can I see some sample WPJ student essays?

Since the WPJ is a placement test, we do not provide any sample student essays.

4. What are the possible WPJ prompt topics?

The prompt topics for the first question will ask writers to read several short texts, to identify an issue arising from those texts and to write an essay taking a position on that issue. The several short reading texts that we provide in a WPJ may be on any topic about which a college student may have some background knowledge. The second essay typically asks that students reflect on his or her writing process.

5. How long should the essays be for the WPJ?

Your essays will not be scored on the length. You should plan accordingly so that you have time to draft and write both essays.

6. What format should I write the essay in?

There is no required format for the essays. However, we do recommend that you skip lines between paragraphs (but not between each line) as you write; this makes your work easier to read and leaves you room to make some revisions if necessary.

7. Does the prompt change for Essay #2 or will it always be about writing processes?

The prompt for Essay #2 will not always be the same; however, it will always ask writers to focus on some aspect of themselves as writers or on some aspect of their writing processes.

8. Can I retake the WPJ if I am unhappy with my score?

No, the WPJ is a placement exam that may only be taken once.

Frequently Asked Questions about English 109W/M

1. What is ENGL 109M/109W like?

ENGL 109M/109W is a writing class designed to review academic reading and writing skills, help you improve upon those skills, and prepare you to be successful in upper-division writing courses. Through the semester you will write and revise several documents about the research and writing methods in your major discipline; you will use these to create a GWAR Portfolio. Your instructor will grade your GWAR Portfolio at the end of the semester, and you will be given a GWAR placement score.

2. What is the difference between ENGL 109M and ENGL 109W?

ENGL 109M and ENGL 109W are equivalent classes. They both help students get their GWAR placement scores and/or help students complete their GWAR. The difference between the two classes is that ENGL 109M is meant specifically for multilingual students (students whose first language is not English). ENGL 109M is taught by instructors who are experienced with teaching multilingual students and who know many of the common difficulties multilingual writers can have when writing in English. These instructors use their experience to help their students improve their writing skills.

ENGL 109M is neither easier nor more difficult than ENGL 109W, simply more specialized. Students in both classes will fulfill the same course objectives and requirements.

3. Are there any prerequisites to taking ENGL 109M/109W?

To take ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W, you will first need to complete 60 units toward your GPA (have junior standing) and have passed English 20 or the equivalent.

4. If I pass ENGL 109M/109W, do I have to take the WPJ?

No. The first step to fulfilling the GWAR requirement at Sac State is for a student to choose to take EITHER the WPJ test OR the ENGL 109M/109W class. If you choose to take the ENGL 109M/109W class to receive your GWAR placement score, that means that you will not (and cannot) take the WPJ test.

For more information about the English 109W/M class, see the GWAR webpage at <http://www.al.csus.edu/writing/gewritingrequirements/gwarFaqs.php#q301>

Taking a Writing Intensive

► Receiving Your Placement score

WPJ Placement scores are not mailed to you. Students are responsible for checking their student center for these placement scores. Please allow 3-4 weeks after the WPJ exam for the placement score to show in your student center. Placement scores received in ENGL 109M/W are generally available during finals week of the semester you are enrolled.

To find your score go to your **Student Center**. In your **Academics** tab, there will be a pull down menu to the left of your class schedule. Select **Test Score Summary**, then press the arrows >>.

► Placement score What it means

80	3-unit placement – You can enroll in a Writing Intensive course of your choice. It is recommended that you consult with your major advisor for Writing Intensive course. You must pass your Writing Intensive course with a C- or better.
70	4-unit placement – You must enroll in a 1-unit tutorial course, ENGL 109x, with your Writing Intensive course. ENGL 109x must be taken concurrent with your Writing Intensive course. You must pass your Writing Intensive course with a C- or better.
60/50	6-unit placement – You must enroll in ENGL 109W or ENGL 109M and receive a placement score of 70 or 80, then pass your Writing Intensive course with a C- or better.

Once your placement score is posted in your student center you can plan how you will complete the second part of the GVAR requirement: taking a Writing Intensive course.

Writing Intensive course lists can be found in the current catalog online:

<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/academic-affairs/general-education/#text>

ANTH 102	The Nature of Culture	HIST 105	Great Ages and Issues in Modern European History
ANTH/HRS 170	The Religious Landscape of the Sacramento Valley	HIST 106	Everyday Life and Society in Antiquity
ANTH 186	Culture and Poverty *	HIST 122A	History of Women in Western Civilization, Prehistory-Middle Ages
ART 111	Latin American and Latino Art History	HIST 122B	History of Women in Western Civilization, Renaissance-Present
ASIA/HIST 140	Modern East Asian Cinema	HIST 138A	Colonial Latin America
ASTR 131	The Solar System and Space Exploration	HIST 138B	Modern and Contemporary Latin America
ASTR 132	Stars, Galaxies and Cosmology	HIST/HRS 168	Images Of America *
CHDV 143	Mind and Brain in Developmental Context	HRS 120	Reason and Revelation: The Origins of Western Culture
COMS 100B	Critical Analysis of Messages	HRS 132	Renaissance
CRJ 190	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice	HRS 140	Exploring World Religions
EDUC 121	Multicultural Children's Literature *	JOUR 135	Public Affairs Reporting
EDUC 160	Urban Education *	KINS 133	Integration of Concepts
EDUC 165	Sex Role Stereotyping in American Education *	LBRS 100/SOC 176	Labor and the American Social Structure
ENGL 120C	Topics in Composition	MGMT 117	Business, Ethics and Society
ENGL 120P	Professional Writing	MUSC 110	Research in Music History
ENGL 120R	Topics in Rhetoric	MUSC 127	The American Musical Theater
ENGL 130M	Art of Autobiography	MUSC 129	American Society and Its Music
ENGL 140M	Modern British Drama, 1889-Present	NURS 120	Nursing Application of Research and Critical Analysis
ENGL 141A	The Essential Shakespeare	NURS 179	Professional Communication and Reasoning Development
ENGL 150B	American Romanticism	PHIL 101	Ethics and Social Issues
ENGL 165D	Postcolonial Literature	PHIL 105	Science and Human Values
ENGL 170H	Introduction To Comedy	PHIL 112	History Of Ethics
ENGL 170I	Introduction To Tragedy	PHIL 115	Philosophy In Literature
ENGL/ETHN 180A	Forms of African-American Poetry	PHIL 117	Existentialism
ENGL/ETHN 180B	Forms of African-American Fiction *	PHIL 145A	Chinese Philosophy
ENGL 180L	Chicano Literature	PHIL 145B	Philosophies Of India
ENGL 180M	Asian American Literature	RPTA 122	Perspectives On Leisure
ENGL 185B	Twentieth Century Fiction by Women	SOC 133	Sport in a Global Perspective
ENVS 112	International Environmental Problems	SOC 168	Self and Society
ETHN 100	Ethnic America *	SWRK 126	Theories of Criminal Behavior
ENGL 100Z	Topics in Literary Theory and Criticism	SWRK 191	Exploration of Veteran Studies: An Ethnographic Approach
ETHN 145	Native Voice, Memory, and Biography	THEA 170	African American Theatre and Culture
FACS 112	Current Topics in Nutritional Sciences	WOMS 136	Gender, Race, and Class*
FACS 150	Family Stress and Coping: Multicultural Focus *	WOMS 138	Women and Work
GEOG 190	Senior Research Seminar in Geography		
GEOL 140	Geology and the Environment		
GOVT 165	Politics of the Underrepresented *		

*Courses also fulfill Race and Ethnicity. Please see catalog for details.
Please note: this list is as of Fall 2017