WRITING PROGRAM

As part of the undergraduate program, a student must successfully complete three writing-intensive courses (known as “W courses”), *i.e.*, a W1 course in the first year, followed by two W2 courses. These courses use writing to help students acquire both subject knowledge and writing proficiency. The W1 courses aim to teach expository skills and writing as a process, and include foundation seminars and some introductory courses. The W2 courses are offered in most departments and they may include courses required for a particular major, courses that help fulfill a general education requirement, and courses that a student may choose as electives. A complete list of W1 and W2 courses is available at https://www.bucknell.edu/writingprogram or through the Registrar's Course Information page at https://www.bucknell.edu/x6864.xml, searchable by W1 or W2 requirement.

Not every course that contains writing, even a great deal of writing, will be a W course. Courses approved as W courses have certain characteristics, as follows:

1. A W course provides explicit writing instruction. In writing and revising, students receive the help and advice of their instructor and/or peers. Writing instruction may take the form of written or oral responses to drafts and papers and may include discussion and reading about writing.
2. The W course instructors pay attention to and encourage the different stages of writing as a process: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Writing is treated as a dynamic process of expressing one’s ideas in words and revising one’s ideas and words by reconsidering them in light of feedback from others. Writing is, therefore, not merely a written end product, but a tool for learning and critical thinking.
3. The W course instructors will teach the conventions of writing that students need. These conventions may vary from discipline to discipline and class to class. Students will learn and practice expository skills and the conventions appropriate to writing in the discipline of the course.
4. In a W course, students write frequently. Writing frequently does not necessarily mean numerous assignments. Students may write multiple drafts of a few assignments. The point is that to improve one’s writing, one must write. W courses provide the opportunity for the practice and feedback that are vital to writing effectively.
5. Students write to learn the subject matter of the course. “Writing to learn” may take many forms: notebooks, journals, laboratory reports, fieldwork reports, essays and other formal and informal assignments. Students must think about the material to write about it, and understanding develops from opportunities to articulate the principles and ideas of the course.

Rules governing the University writing requirement are included in the introductory material for the College of Arts & Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the Freeman College of Management.