The New GWAR for Graduate Students

Beginning in August 2010, a new Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) specifically for graduate students will be in place. Graduate students will follow a two-step process to meet the GWAR: in the first step, your writing will be assessed to determine your readiness for graduate-level writing tasks. The second step is the completion of the culminating experience.

There will be three methods by which graduate students may take this first step in the graduate GWAR process. Choose one of the three options below:

Option A: If you meet one of the equivalency standards below upon entry to the university, you do not need to take a GWI course or take the WPG:

- Have an M.A./M.S., Ph.D., or J.D. from a US-Accredited University or equivalent degree with coursework in the English language as evaluated by the Office of the Graduate Dean (attach copy of school transcript with degree noted).
- Published a refereed first- or single-authored academic journal article in the English language (attach a copy of the journal/publication cover and first page of the article with your name).
- Graduated with a baccalaureate degree or equivalent from a US-accredited University with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or above (attach copy of school transcript).
- Received 4.5 or higher on the analytical writing portion of the GRE/GMAT (attach verification).
- Have been Instructor of record of a college-level writing course taught in the English language at a US-accredited University approved by the Office of the Graduate Dean.

Option B: If you do not meet one of the equivalency standards, then you may complete the first step of the Graduate GWAR by earning a grade of B or higher in a Graduate Writing Intensive (GWI) course in your graduate program.

Option C: If you do not meet one of the equivalency standards and your graduate program does not offer a GWI course, then you will need to take the Writing Placement for Graduate Students (WPG), a timed essay examination.

The WPG will ask writers to compose two pieces of writing, after reading a selection of brief texts, which represent a variety of genres typical in scholarly and professional writing, such as graphs, charts, tables, bullet lists, and scholarly prose. The WPG will be offered by the Writing Programs Office twice each year. The Fall 2010 WPG will take place on 16 August. The Spring 2011 WPG will take place on 10 January. Online registration for the WPG will be available through the campus Testing Center approximately 6 weeks before each test date. Students who are identified as needing additional help in order to complete graduate-level writing tasks will be required to take a GWI course in their program or to take ENGL 220W (offered through CCE) before advancing to candidacy; alternatively, students may also attempt Option A (above).

All graduate students must complete one of these options before they may advance to candidacy. Then, the Graduate GWAR requirement ultimately is met through completion of your graduate program requirements.
Sacramento State University Graduate-Level GWAR Flowchart

Do you meet one of the equivalency standards (Option A)?

Yes → Complete the waiver form available on the Graduate Studies Office website.

No →

Does your graduate program offer a Graduate Writing Intensive course (Option B)?

Yes → Earn a ‘B’ or better in your graduate program’s Graduate Writing Intensive course.

No →

Take the Writing Placement for Graduate Students (WPG) test (Option C).

Yes → Earn a ‘B’ or better in your graduate program’s Graduate Writing Intensive course.

No →

Were you identified as needing additional help to complete graduate-level writing tasks?

Yes →

Earn a ‘B’ or better in your graduate program’s Graduate Writing Intensive course.

Or → Earn a ‘B’ or better in English 220W offered through the College of Continuing Education.

Or → Retake the GRE/GMAT and receive a 4.5 or higher on the analytical writing portion (Option A).

No → Advance to Candidacy
Preparation Time (30 minutes)

Read the Essay #1 question, then study the five texts that follow it. Use the scratch paper provided to plan and organize your essay response.

If you wish, you may also read the Essay #2 question at this time.

Essay #1 (60 minutes; 2 hours for M)

Several significant issues could emerge from the following five texts. Please read all the texts and write an essay in which you advance an argument about one significant issue arising from these texts. In your essay, you must not only identify one significant issue, but you must also articulate your own position and at least two other positions on that issue. Use information from Text #2 (required) and from at least two of the other texts, as well as from your own experience, to support your main ideas.

➢ Text #1

Adults were asked the following question: Do you feel that you will need more training or education in order to maintain or increase your earning power during the next few years? Their responses are tabulated below:

FEEL MORE TRAINING/EDUCATION NEEDED TO MAINTAIN/INCREASE EARNING POWER DURING NEXT FEW YEARS
(Based on ever employed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>DK/RF</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18-25 years</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-39 years</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-55 years</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65 years</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>127</td>
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<tr>
<td>66 and over</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than H.S.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S. grad.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc/Community college</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some 4-year college</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College grad.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Less than one-half of one percent.

If you want to understand the direction of this nation, examine the people who will lead the country during the first years of the next century. Where do you find these people? In our graduate schools. There are 1.5 million young adults enrolled in graduate programs in America today. If past performance is any indication -- and there is no reason to believe it is not -- they will quickly rise to positions of influence and authority in business, education, and government. A study of the CEO's of America's largest 1000 companies shows that the vast majority earned a graduate degree. Graduate training has become virtually a prerequisite for our federal lawmakers; more than three-quarters of our Congresspersons have a graduate degree on their resumes.

But what do we know about the graduate student population? In scouring the libraries and research computers for insights, it became clear that little attention has been focused upon the graduate student population. To address the paucity of information about this vital segment, the Barna Research Group worked in cooperation with Grad Resources to conduct a national survey of grad students. Using telephone surveys with a representative sample of 404 students, stratified by degree program and type of school, we evaluated their interests, lifestyles, and felt needs.

Anxieties and Concerns
Grad school is a time of high anxiety for most participants. In fact, compared with measures of anxiety across different occupational groups, we found that grad students are more anxiety-ridden than most segments we have tested. The most crippling anxiety affecting grad students was the struggle to achieve balance in life. While there is gratification earned from academic achievement, grad students fear being transformed into academic machine, devoid of any real life outside the classroom or library. In conjunction with this fear was concern for their personal health. Many grad students indicated that stresses and pressures of grad school were taking an emotional toll on them.
Success in career, finances, and scholarly pursuits, all ranked higher than their concerns about interaction with peers. This limited concern could be related to a fear that excess energy devoted to interpersonal activities might drain them of the focus they need to excel academically. Sadly, though, some grad students pointed out that the very emphasis upon academics, at the expense of deeper relationships, is what has led them to a point of emotional emptiness. The importance of the issue of balance in lifestyle cannot be over emphasized. Balance is not one of the post graduate realities for which students are being prepared. Discussions about balancing career achievement and personal wholeness are absent from classroom lectures, and missing from pages of the text books that are underlined and memorized. Yet the conclusion grad students arrive at regarding balance may be among the most important products of their studies. Their definition of balance, their means of achieving it, and the importance of balancing competing interests will set the pace for their post collegiate lifestyles. And that, as much as anything else they derive from their studies, will direct the quality of their lives.

Nine out of ten grad students concurred that stress and burnout were already major concerns in their life. Although the majority of grad students are in their twenties and early thirties, they are already wrestling with major issues ascribed to people in the later stages of life: those caught in the throes of a fast-lane career.

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Text #3

http://smartpei.typepad.com/robert_patersons_weblog/kathy%20sierra%20college%20ed.jpg

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Text #4

According to 2003 Census Bureau statistics on earnings in the United States:

--Associate's degree holders average $8,000 a year more than high school graduates.
--Workers with bachelor's degrees make nearly $23,300 more a year than high school graduates.
--Master's degree holders average $11,300 more a year than bachelor's degree holders.
Essay #2 (30 minutes; 60 minutes for M)

Please read the following text and write an essay in which you discuss to what extent this statement resembles your own learning experience with writing.

“Learning to write is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place over time with continued practice and informed guidance.”

*Statement on Learning Outcomes for First Year Composition* from the Council of Writing Program Administrators.
Writing Placement for Graduate Students (WPG) Placement Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1st Reader</th>
<th>2nd Reader</th>
<th>3rd Reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies an issue arising from the prompt and articulates its significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advances an argument by articulating the writer’s own position and at least two other positions in analyzing that significant issue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports the argument by incorporating specific details and examples from the texts provided and from the writer’s own experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of academic audience expectations: provides attribution of sources; employs formal tone and diction</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides evidence of awareness of writing as a process: demonstrates awareness of or reflects critically on writer’s own academic literacy history and practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows editing appropriate to an early draft: errors do not slow reader, impede understanding, nor seriously undermine authority of writer. Grammatical errors, inappropriate word choice, or incorrect usage may occur throughout but rarely interfere with effective communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ready for graduate-level writing

Needs GWI course
The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) is a system-wide requirement that is usually completed by undergraduate and second bachelor’s students in the junior year and by graduate students before advancing to candidacy. The purpose of the GWAR is for students to demonstrate their proficiency at writing in an academic setting at an upper-division level. All CSU students subject to the degree requirements of the 1979-80 and subsequent catalogs must satisfy the GWAR before graduation. However, within certain guidelines, each CSU campus is allowed to decide how students at that campus fulfill the GWAR. Recently, the process by which Sacramento State University graduate students fulfill the GWAR has been in transition. Over the Summer 2010, the new graduate GWAR process was finalized.

**Beginning August 2010**

Beginning in August 2010, a new GWAR requirement specifically for graduate students is now in place. Students who began but did not complete their GWAR requirement before August 2010 had the option to either complete the GWAR as previously outlined (before the end of Fall semester 2010) or opt into the new GWAR before advancing to candidacy. All other graduate students who had not already completed the GWAR requirement as graduate students by August 2010 will follow a two-step process to meet the GWAR:

**Step 1:** The first step of the graduate GWAR will assess your writing to determine your readiness for graduate-level writing tasks. Graduate students will choose one of the three options below to complete the first step; students should consult with their graduate program advisors to choose the best option for them. All graduate students must complete the first step of the GWAR requirement before they may advance to candidacy.

**Option A: Meet one of the equivalency standards upon entry to the university**

If you meet one of the equivalency standards listed below, fill out the waiver form available on the Office of Graduate Studies’ website (www.csus.edu/gradstudies/gwar.html), attach the appropriate accompanying materials, and submit everything according to the instructions on the form.

- Have an M.A./M.S., Ph.D., or J.D. from a US-Accredited University or equivalent degree with coursework in the English language as evaluated by the Office of the Graduate Dean (attach copy of school transcript with degree noted).
- Published a refereed first- or single-authored academic journal article in the English language (attach a copy of the journal/publication cover and first page of the article with your name).
- Graduated with a baccalaureate degree or equivalent from a US-accredited University with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or above (attach copy of school transcript).
- Received 4.5 or higher on the analytical writing portion of the GRE/GMAT (attach verification).
- Have been Instructor of record of a college-level writing course taught in the English language at a US-accredited University approved by the Office of the Graduate Dean.

**Option B: Earn a grade of ‘B’ or higher in a Graduate Writing Intensive (GWI) course in your graduate program**

The GWI course will immerse graduate students in the discourse of their academic or professional discipline and prepare graduate students to participate effectively in that discourse. Below is a list of GWI classes that are currently available. Please note: This list is subject to change. Please visit www.al.csus.edu/writing/gewritingrequirements/gGwar.php for the most up-to-date list of approved GWI courses.

- ART 206
- BIO 220
- CHDV 242 (Fall ’12)
- CRJ 200
- EDLP 250 (Spring ’12)
- ENGL 200A
- ENGL 200D
- GEOL 200
- HIST 200
- HIST 203
- MBA 202
- ME 209
- NURS 209
- PPA 200
- PPA 220A
- PT 208
- SWRK 250

**Option C: Take the Writing Placement for Graduates (WPG) timed essay exam**

The WPG will ask writers to compose two essays, after reading a selection of brief texts, which represent a variety of genres typical in scholarly and professional writing, such as graphs, charts, tables, bullet lists, and scholarly prose. The WPG will be offered by the Writing Programs Office twice each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upcoming Exam Dates</th>
<th>Online Registration Available*</th>
<th>Make-Up Exam Date†</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 5, 2013</td>
<td>Monday, July 8 – Friday, July 26, 2013</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 6, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 6, 2014</td>
<td>Monday, November 25 – Friday, December 13, 2013</td>
<td>Tuesday, January 7, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*REGISTRATION: Registration for each WPG exam is available online at [www.csus.edu/testing](http://www.csus.edu/testing) during a specific period. Late registration for the WPG will NOT be accepted.
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students who are registered with the Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD) may be eligible to receive testing accommodations for the WPG. Students should request accommodations through the SSWD office at least one week before the registration deadline, and then register for the WPG online. For more information about receiving testing accommodations as a student with a disability, please contact the SSWD office in Lassen Hall, Room 1008 or at (916) 278-6955.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS: Multilingual students who have an English Diagnostic Test (EDT) score of 2-5 are eligible to receive an additional hour and 15 minutes to take the WPG exam. These students should register for the WPG online. For more information about the EDT test, please refer to the FAQs page on our website at www.al.csus.edu/writing/gewritingrequirements/gGwarFaqs.php. Or contact the English department office in Calaveras Hall room 103 (phone 916-278-6586, option 1).

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM: At the end of the online registration process, at the bottom of your registration confirmation page, you will find a link to help you sign up for a GWAR workshop. These workshops are free, one-time, one-hour informational sessions for students who are getting ready for the WPG. The workshop will give you information about the exam, show you a sample WPG exam, and give you a chance to ask any questions you might have about the exam.

ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM you must bring the following (an exam booklet and scratch paper will be provided):
- check or money order for $20 made out to "Sacramento State" – cash will NOT be accepted
- 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

MAKE-UP EXAM: A make-up exam is available after each WPG exam for students who aren't able to attend the day of the exam for religious, academic, medical, or emergency reasons. To qualify for the make-up exam, students must present one of the following to the Testing Center located in Lassen Hall, Room 2302:
- During the online registration period: a written statement on letterhead from your clergy, proof of a conflicting exam appointment, a class schedule showing a conflicting course, or a letter from your coach showing a conflicting athletic event.
- By 12PM on the day of the exam: a doctor’s note or police accident report proving an emergency on the day of the exam.

Students who have other, compelling reasons for missing the exam may submit a written request to take the make-up exam to the English department office in Calaveras Hall room 103 by 12PM on the day of the exam. Once the online registration period for the WPG closes, make-up requests will only be considered for students who already registered online for the Monday exam.

AFTER THE EXAM: Scores for the WPG exam should be available two to three weeks after the exam is completed (at the latest). Students who are identified as needing additional help in order to complete graduate-level writing tasks will be required to take a Graduate Writing Intensive (GWI) course in their graduate program or to take ENGL 220W (offered through the College of Continuing Education). Alternatively, students may also attempt to retake the GRE/GMAT and obtain a score of 4.5 or better on the analytical writing section (see Option A above). The WPG scores and instructions are as follows. To find your score, just log on to MySacState, go to your Student Center, and select “Test Score Summary” from the drop down menu located near the middle of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Requirement met through Option A equivalency standards. No further classes required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Requirement met through WPG test score. No further classes required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Requirement not met. Take a GWI course through your graduate program or ENGL 220W through CCE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Graduate students must complete Step 1 of the graduate-level GWAR requirement before they advance to candidacy. The graduate-level GWAR is then met through the completion of each student’s graduate program requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
For answers to the most frequently asked questions about the GWAR requirement, the WPG test, the GWI courses, and other related topics, please visit our FAQs page at www.al.csus.edu/writing/gewritingrequirements/gGwarFaqs.php.

PLEASE NOTE
Effective Fall 2010, completion of the undergraduate-level GWAR requirement at Sac State or any other CSU campus will NOT fulfill the graduate-level GWAR. Students who graduated from a CSU campus who intend to complete their graduate degrees at Sac State will need to follow the above graduate-level GWAR requirement to graduate.
Writing Placement for Graduate students (WPG) Workshop Survey

Thank you for attending this WPG preparatory workshop. We ask for your cooperation with this brief, anonymous survey. The information you provide will help us to adjust the workshop content and format to better serve the Sacramento State community.

Please circle the number below that most accurately answers the question. You may use the space at the bottom of the form for additional comments or explanations.

How well prepared for the WPG did you feel before attending this workshop?

Not at all prepared 1----------2----------3----------4----------5 Fully prepared

How well prepared for the WPG do you feel after attending this workshop?

Not at all prepared 1----------2----------3----------4----------5 Fully prepared

Please indicate below how helpful you found the workshop treatment of each of the following items. Please circle 1 if the item was not at all helpful and 5 if it was extremely helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>(Not at All Helpful)</th>
<th>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</th>
<th>(Extremely Helpful)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts &amp; Bolts of Test Day</td>
<td>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</td>
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<td>WPG Scoring Rubric</td>
<td>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning/Prewriting</td>
<td>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editing/Revising</td>
<td>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions/Answer Period</td>
<td>1----------2----------3----------4----------5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you recommend this workshop to another student preparing to take the WPG?

Yes          No

Please use the space below for additional comments (what you liked best, what you’d like added, what didn’t work well for you, etc.):
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!