

EPSA

Resolution on the Establishment of Junior-Composition Equivalency (JE) Courses

Faculty Senate, October 17, 2011

Second Reading and VOTE

Whereas,

The University, through its Tier I General Education writing curriculum, is committed to undergraduate education that promotes written communication that is clear and precise, as well as writing as a means of exploration and reflection;

Whereas,

There will be a demonstrated need for additional Junior-level writing courses as we move to semesters, because there are insufficient numbers of Junior Composition courses to fill demand;

Whereas,

It was the original intent of the J-course requirement to distribute these courses throughout the curriculum;

Whereas,

It is the responsibility of the University Curriculum Council to establish guidelines for the creation and continued health of the curriculum and the monitoring of general education;

Be It Resolved:

That UCC establish a category of composition courses at the junior undergraduate level called Junior Composition Equivalency courses (JE), and that departments and schools be encouraged to create such courses in their major curricula. These courses will meet the requirements outlined below. It is also expected that UCC will create a means of monitoring all J- and JE-composition courses at regular intervals to ensure that each course requires at least the minimum quantity and quality of writing as specified below:

A. Completing the Junior-Level Composition Requirement

1. Students can complete the university's junior-level composition requirement by passing an approved J course, by passing two JE courses within their programs of study, or by passing one JE course within their programs of study and one JE course outside their programs of study as approved by their departments or schools. Students may use two JE

courses outside their programs of study, providing both courses are approved by their departments or schools.

B. General Criteria for JE Courses

1. The aims of the course are sufficiently broad to justify its status as a writing course that fulfills a general education requirement.
2. The course should be a requirement or an elective within a major and should be taught annually.
3. Each JE course must have a minimum of 2 semester credit hours.
4. Credits for JE courses will only be awarded to students who have completed their tier I Freshman Composition requirements and have earned at least 30 semester credit hours.
5. Writing assignments with varying purposes and different forms of writing appropriate to the department or school's discipline may be required.
6. Enrollments for such courses typically will be limited to 25 students to permit rigorous evaluation of students' writing. Departments and schools may request an exemption to this criterion. An example of an exemption request would be a department or school that plans to teach a JE course in a large lecture format that would offer 4 break-out sections with no more than 25 students in each section.
7. Instructors for JE courses should be dedicated both to teaching the craft of writing in their disciplines and to helping students achieve higher levels of competence as writers.
8. Instruction in writing and evaluation of writing are significant parts of the JE course and specified as such on the syllabus. The typical expectations are that (a) students write regularly during the term, (b) a specific percentage of class time is devoted to discussions of writing, (c) each student will produce several minor or one major piece of work, comprising at least 10-15 total pages of original writing, (d) each student

will have the opportunity to revise and submit written work, and (e) peer critique, where appropriate, is used as a pedagogical strategy.

9. Two courses within a program of study that satisfy the above criteria for JE courses must be passed to fulfill the university's junior-level composition requirement.

C. Implementation of JE Courses:

1. The University Curriculum Council is charged with approving JE courses.
2. UCC will be provided the resources necessary to monitor the quality of all J- and JE courses.
3. University support for faculty teaching JE courses is necessary for the success of the JE initiative. Support can take many forms, including but not limited to stipends for faculty who participate in writing workshops designed to help them revise existing courses to meet the criteria for JE courses or release time to support a faculty member's initial teaching of a JE course. It is expected that such forms of support, appropriate to each department or school, will be available to faculty to help them effectively teach JE courses.
4. The Student Writing Center (SWC) will provide tutoring and remedial instruction to students as needed to support this effort. It is expected that the university will provide the necessary resources to support the SWC in this endeavor and support to units as necessary for the continued success of the program.