

**“Getting to Know You: Program Descriptions”
Engi-Comm SIG
CCCC 2006 -Chicago**

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Three-part requirement for graduation at MU:
Freshman composition (focused on argumentation and academic writing)
One writing-intensive course anywhere in the curriculum
One writing-intensive course in the major

First Year Composition

Yes. A one-semester composition course is required for graduation.

Required Technical Communication Course

None. (The WI requirement supplanted the TC requirement years ago.)

Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines

Yes, but stay tuned.

Since 1985 – graduation requirement for at least one WI course
(anywhere in curriculum)

Since 1993 – **graduation requirement for at least two WI courses,
one of which must be in the major.** Today most engineering
departments offer several WI courses, more than are needed to
serve the graduation requirement. Typically, one WI course is a
senior design course.

Comment – The Campus Writing Program has been very successful but is undergoing a dramatic shift and its **future is uncertain**. (Remember the English Composition Board in Michigan?) For a number of reasons, Marty Townsend and I are resigning our positions within the CWP and returning full time to the Department of English (effective in August) and our colleague Jo Ann Vogt may do something similar. We predict that the WI requirement will stay on the books, but we predict that the faculty-governed Writing Board will change or disappear, and we have little confidence that there will be a strong program to provide oversight and faculty development. Nonetheless, there are some very committed WI teachers in every department who are likely to rally for continued attention to writing. And who knows . . .our predictions may be way off.

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Writing Center

Yes.

Comment: Until last year, MU had two writing centers, one of which served students taking WI courses and was staffed by professional tutors and graduate students in the disciplines (including engineering). For five years, the WI tutorial service (WITS) had one tutor who had degrees in chemical engineering and business and was working on a law degree who served many engineering students. Although the other writing center serves thousands of other undergraduates well, it sees few engineering students.

The land beyond required Technical Communication course(s)

Until recently, that might be the land of writing-intensive courses at MU. Engineers have played an active role on the writing board (two have served as chair) and at most Campus Writing Program functions.

I believe the ideal engineering program would have both stand-alone writing courses and writing-in-the-disciplines courses, and I will continue to advocate for both at MU (even though I will not be functioning as a WPA in our Campus Writing Program). I will continue to do research in engineering, which provides me with one avenue for continued conversation about writing.