

Getting to Know Us:
The Engineering Writing Program
USC Viterbi School of Engineering
University of Southern California

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Writing Across the Curriculum: The WAC efforts at USC are minimal at this time. In the Viterbi School of Engineering, the Engineering Writing Program (EWP) has worked with several senior design courses to integrate writing instruction into the capstone projects. For example, the Communication System Design course faculty requires project design groups to consult with EWP faculty in the preparation of reports. The EWP is also working with faculty who teach introductory and freshman-level courses to establish a writing component.

First Year Composition: Freshman writing courses are taught by the USC College, and there is no formal EWP involvement. The EWP Director sits on the University Writing Committee, which has oversight of the FYC.

Required Technical Communication Courses: WRIT 340 fulfills the advanced writing requirement and is taught by several units on campus, including the EWP. The junior-level course addresses more sophisticated writing tasks and prepares students to write for academic, professional, and public audiences. Traditional technical writing assignments are included as well as a collaboratively written community consulting project. Students work with local non-profits to solve real-world problems by completing oral and written consulting reports. The EWP has worked with over 85 non-profit agencies and many student ideas have been implemented. Several student reports have resulted in funding for the organizations. Illumin Magazine (see attachments) is also a course and program outcome.

Writing Center: USC College runs the main writing center for the university, but the EWP oversees a satellite writing center housed in the Viterbi School. The center is staffed by engineering graduate students (trained by the College) or by part-time EWP faculty.

Land Beyond: The EWP offers three graduate-level communication courses: ENGR 501x, Communication Skills for Masters Students; ENGR 502x, Writing Skills for Engineering Ph.D. Students; and ENGR 503x, Oral Communication Skills for Engineering Ph.D. Students. All are electives and are designed to help graduate students in engineering master the forms and methods of communication their academic programs and professional communities require. Students also receive guidance on individual writing projects such as conference papers and dissertations.