

Writing Intensive at Kapi'olani Community College

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. What is a Writing-Intensive Course?

A. A W.I. course is a course that receives a W.I. sanction at K.C.C. indicating that it meets all relevant criteria to serve as a Writing-Intensive Course by the W.I. Coordinator and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Students fulfill the W.I. requirement for the A.A. core requirement by taking 2 (two) W.I. courses while here at K.C.C. In the U.H. System, to receive a B.A. degree, 2 courses at a Community College are acceptable, but if the student is enrolled at U.H. Manoa, they must take 3 W.I. courses at the upper division level.

2. Q. Where are WIC courses listed /designated?

A. WI courses are listed at the [Class Availability Website](#). You would typically read something akin to DL, HAP, and WI in the left hand margin next to the course name. The letters to the left mean "Designation: Literature | Hawaii-Asia-Pacific focused | Writing Intensive. Therefore, this class meets 3 requirements at the College.

3. Q. What do all WIC courses have in common?

A. WI courses are generally upper division content courses in the major, are at least 3 credit hours, and are taught by faculty in the major. In WI courses, informal ungraded or minimally-graded writing is used as a mode of learning course content. Students also are introduced to formal writing appropriate to the discipline or field, receive instruction in writing in the discipline, and are allowed to revise formal assignments after receiving feedback on drafts. The basic mantra of Writing Intensive is "Writing to Learn" / "Learning to Write." In other words, students will write in the class to make sure that they learn course content; at the same time, students will learn to write in the discipline-specific conventions of that major.

4. Q. When should I take my WI course?

A. It is generally suggested that the WI course be taken during a period in which you have earned a CR grade or a C, B, or A grade in ENG 100/ESL 100. At the College, a major prerequisite for entry into a WI course is a "C or better" grade in those courses.

5. Q. Does my WI course have to be taken in my major department?

A. No. At KCC, a student may take a WI course outside of their given discourse. Let us say that you enjoy Writing and Literature. You could feasibly take a WI course in Physics and still receive WI credit.

6. Q. If I intend to have a double major at West Oahu/Manoa/mainland, do I have to take a WI course in both departments?

A. The purpose of the Writing Intensive requirement is to ensure that each graduate is prepared to write in the discourse, conventions, and genres of his or her major field.

But at the College, it is not mandatory to take a course in both departments since KCC is not a baccalaureate-granting institution. If you are concerned about WI policies at UH Manoa or West Oahu, please address concerns about this dual-course for the major policy.

7. Q. Can I get WI course credit for a course taken at another school?

A. WIC courses are taken at KCC because courses at other schools are not likely to conform to all requirements of a WI course. But in most cases, with consultation of Registrar and Department Chair(s), students have in fact made petitions to allow WI course credit to transfer effectively.

8. Q. Can I take more than one WIC course? Even beyond the cap of two courses?

A. Yes, certainly you may take as many WI courses as you like, but your WI requirement must be satisfied by taking 2 courses. Nothing stops you from taking beyond those two designated WI courses especially if you enjoy writing. The vast majority of students, however, concerned about tuition and finances, usually take the two courses and take other WI courses at a 4 year institution.

9. Q. Where can I get help with my writing?

or other subjects: math/phys./SLT/language/chem/etc.

A.THE [KCC Lama Library Study Hub](#) is located at the first floor of Lama Library. You can make an appointment with a writing assistant who will work with you on whatever stage of the writing process you need help with understanding the assignment, generating ideas, organizing the paper, developing ideas, revising a draft, editing and proofreading. Writing assistants will help you work on revising, but they **will not correct your paper** for you. You will be expected to be an active participant in the study session, and be therefore expected not to text, play Pokemon Go, or be distracted; after all, the paper is your paper to revise and edit—not the writing mentor's job. The writing mentors/volunteers cannot guarantee you a higher grade in your WI course.

The University of Hawaii at Manoa also offers an [Online Learning Academy](#) in which you can have trained writing mentors look at a paper that you upload. OLA also allows for math mentoring.

Your tuition also pays for a service called [Brainfuse](#), a service offered within your MyUH Portal Tools box. It typically takes their writing mentors ~3-4 days to receive your paper via attachment and to comment on the content therein. Most students seem somewhat pleased with the attention paid to matters of correctness that Brainfuse offers, but others feel that face-to-face mentoring is a better service.

NOTE: The Study Hub is an interim mentoring service and there are future plans in the work to make a Student Success area a permanent feature on campus.

There are other mentoring hubs on campus:

TRIO Labs (but you must be a TRIO student)
STEM CENTER mentoring

10. Q. My WI course requires a library research paper. I am not very experienced in doing library research. Where can I learn more about this?

A. The [Lama Library](#) has a reference desk in which you can receive assistance regarding research projects. You should also verbally ask your teacher if your class will have embedded Library Research instruction as part of the class.

You should also talk with your WI teacher about the skills you feel you are lacking in library research. And you may want to discuss your research needs with a paid writing mentor or a volunteer writing instructor.

The librarians also created amazing research guides within the subject of study: [Library Guides](#).

All of the major databases that the library offers can be found, [here](#).

11. Q. How can I learn my way around the [Lama Library](#)?

A. Check out all of the resources the library offers, here: [Services](#).

12. Q. I need major help on my writing, but I like to do things on my own, just looking at online resources. Got any helpful places to look?

A. Check out all of the resources that can be found here: [Resources for Student Writers](#).

13. Q. What are the major 'rules or stipulations' about a WI course that I need to know?

A. To evaluate W proposals, the Writing-Intensive Focus Board uses these Hallmarks:

1. The course uses writing to promote the learning of course materials. Instructors assign formal and informal writing, both in class and out, to increase students' understanding of course material as well as to improve writing skills.

2. The course provides interaction between teacher and students while students do assigned writing; in effect, the instructor acts as an expert and the student as an apprentice in a community of writers. Types of interaction will vary. For example, a professor who requires the completion of one long essay may review sections of the essay, write comments on drafts, and be available for conferences. The professor who requires several short papers may demonstrate techniques for drafting and revising in the classroom, give guidance during the composition of the papers, and consult with students after they complete their papers.

3. Writing contributes significantly to each student's course grade. Writing assignments must make up at least 40% of each student's course grade. If not, the course syllabus must state that students must satisfactorily complete all writing assignments to pass the course with a "D" or better.

4. The course requires students to do a substantial amount of writing--a minimum of 4000 words, or about 16 pages. This may include informal writing. Depending on the course content, students may write analytic essays, critical reviews, journals, lab reports, research reports, or reaction papers, etc. In-class exams and drafts are not counted toward the 4000-word minimum.

5. To allow for meaningful professor-student interaction on each student's writing, the class is restricted to 20 students. Professors who team teach or who are assisted by a teaching assistant may request that the enrollment be higher as long as a 20-to-1 student to faculty ratio is maintained.