

Writing in the Disciplines: An Inventory

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These questions may be used by a department or sub-field within a department to establish the basis for a **coordinated writing plan**. They will enable the group to generate, debate, and agree upon **common writing goals for undergraduate majors** (or bring to light differences within the group). They can serve as points of departure for **curricular revision** (to incorporate writing) and for **assessment**. A picture of the **development** of writing abilities in particular disciplinary areas over the undergraduate years may emerge from the discussion. **Terms, genres, and expectations** can be consciously adopted and repeated from course to course, providing consistency across the course of study.

What do you want your students to know and to be able to do as a result of studying in your discipline?

Through what genres of writing/speaking does your discipline disseminate knowledge to its members? to the public?

What are the methods of proof your discipline honors? How do writers/speakers convince their audiences? Are methods of proof different in different contexts (i.e., in shifting from academic to public discourse)?

In what forms of writing/speaking do your students currently demonstrate or communicate their knowledge of this discipline? (examine writing assignments on current syllabi)

Who are your audiences for disciplinary discourse? How do you change your form, style, and tone for each?

Who are your students' audiences when they write/speak in this discipline? How do you instruct them to adapt their form, style, and tone for each?

Where in the current undergraduate curriculum are students introduced to the forms of writing listed above? Where are particular genres reintroduced and developed at a higher level of difficulty?

How might existing courses be changed to incorporate writing experiences appropriate for the level and content of the course? What new courses might be necessary to enable your students to achieve the disciplinary writing goals you've articulated above?