

## Motion to revise CTW requirement

Approved by Admissions & Standards, March 10, 2015

Approved by University Senate, April 16, 2015

Effective Summer 2015, Section 1430 of the Undergraduate Catalog is revised as follows:

Additions ~~Deletions~~

### 1430 Critical Thinking Through Writing (CTW) Requirement

~~Effective for students entering fall term 2009 and thereafter, all~~ All students seeking baccalaureate degrees are required to complete ~~two critical thinking through writing (CTW) courses in their majors~~ a **critical thinking through writing (CTW) requirement which includes a CTW course in their major**. Students should consult the section of this Catalog that describes their major for its CTW requirements. CTW classes are unique to Georgia State University and therefore students cannot transfer equivalent credit from other universities.

**Departments will develop and approve a plan to demonstrate infusion of CTW throughout the curriculum and submit their plan to the College for approval. The College-approved plan must be submitted to the Undergraduate Assessment Committee for approval by the end of Fall 2015.**

**Rationale:** The existing requirement that students complete two “critical thinking through writing” (CTW) classes to graduate was the core of the last Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) implemented by GSU, launched in the last full SACS reaccreditation cycle. Envisioned as a five-year institutional initiative, the program has achieved measurable improvements in critical thinking-connected learning outcomes, and the wider training and assessment mechanisms implemented through CTW have significantly strengthened a university culture supportive of feedback-intensive and iterated assignment critical thinking goals. As the funding commitment for the initiative winds down, the opportunity is available to envision a more permanently sustainable model (given enrollment growth, the need to facilitate progression-to-degree and graduation rate improvement, and constraints on funding the existing program). An unintended consequence of the two-CTW requirement has been the creation of a structural impediment to student graduation when departments have been unable to provide sufficient seats and/or sections to meet student needs.

The logic of this motion is to simplify the requirement (from two required CTW classes to one), while also requiring units to develop focused discipline-specific plans to assure critical thinking outcomes are explicitly strategized across the wider program of study.

**Process:** In preparing a CTW plan, departments should consider what they are already doing in their courses that involves critical thinking through writing. The intent is not to produce 50 different models for publication, but to create a process that is largely invisible to students as they progress through courses designed to achieve the objectives of CTW for their respective majors. CTW courses will be assessed through the existing assessment processes.

Credible departmental plans to demonstrate the delivery of critical thinking through writing within a one-required-CTW model might include, but are not limited to:

1. Demonstrating widespread use of CTW-type activities and teaching methods across the program of study.
2. Widespread student participation in research projects or honors theses.
3. Widespread student participation in signature experiences.
4. Consistent and thorough examination of critical thinking and writing skills as part of the overall departmental assessment of learning outcomes.
5. Widespread use of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) courses.