

The Writing and Communication Requirement

The MISSION of the Program in Writing and Communication (PWC) is to integrate the practice of analytical writing and the techniques of both oral and visual communication into the Rice curriculum, with two goals in mind: To enable our students to articulate their ideas as we prepare them for academic and professional life; and to affirm the necessity of this ability and its fundamental value to every aspect of their education and across every University department and discipline.

Rules

1. All new students must take the Composition Examination prior to matriculating.
2. Students who receive a score of Not Satisfactory on the Composition Examination must successfully complete FWIS 100, *Fundamentals of Academic Writing and Communication*, a one-semester course carrying 3 hours of degree credit, **during their first semester at Rice and prior to enrolling in the First-Year Writing-Intensive Seminar (FWIS)** used to meet the graduation requirement.
3. The FWIS (but not FWIS 100) is a universal requirement for graduation. All first-year students must enroll in and successfully complete an FWIS during their first year at Rice.
4. **All first-year students will be notified prior to Orientation Week if they have been assigned to take the required FWIS during the fall or spring of their first year.** All FWIS courses are content-based, 3-credit hour seminars open only to first-year students that can be taught in any department and focus on any topic, and in which writing and communication pedagogy play a significant role in assignments and grading. **Enrollment for all FWIS is capped at 15 students.**
5. All incoming freshmen first-year students and new transfers will be randomly assigned to two groups. Students in the first group must take an FWIS course in the Fall (Group I-Fall); the second remaining group must take an FWIS the following Spring (Group II-Spring). Students determined to need FWIS 100 (by receiving a NS on the Composition Exam), will automatically be placed into the Group II-Spring group.
6. Students who matriculate as freshmen may not substitute transfer credit for the required FWIS. Similarly, students placed in FWIS 100 cannot satisfy FWIS 100 with transfer credit.
7. Transfer students who wish to satisfy the FWIS requirement with courses from another institution must apply for this credit before the end of their O-Week.
8. Neither freshmen nor transfer students may satisfy the FWIS requirement by taking an equivalent course at another institution after matriculating to Rice.
9. All FWIS courses carry the FWIS designation and **cannot be taken Pass/Fail**. Students are allowed to change FWIS sections during the first two weeks of classes, but they **cannot drop a FWIS section during this two-week period without simultaneously adding another**.

10. Students are allowed to drop their FWIS after week two of the semester only in the event of extraordinary circumstances. Students who wish to drop the FWIS must submit a petition to drop to the Committee on Examinations and Standing (EX&S), which may approve petitions on a case-by-case basis.
11. A student who fails the required FWIS in the first semester must take it in the second semester of his or her first year at Rice. Students who take the FWIS in the spring and fail, must take it in the fall of their sophomore year.

These strict rules underscore Rice's commitment to this course as a necessary part of an education in every major the University offers. The act of writing is an important tool for greater understanding in any discipline; an idea that cannot be communicated is not an idea.

Description of Courses

THE FIRST-YEAR WRITING-INTENSIVE SEMINARS will be offered across the whole curriculum, and they will be content based, rather than general rhetoric or communications courses. **FWIS courses do NOT receive distribution credit** in any division. Completion of a FWIS is required outside of the distribution requirements.

FWIS courses will be offered at times across the whole week in order to accommodate every student and all the vagaries of scheduling.