Committee on Undergraduate Education approved on 3 February 2022
Academic Coordinating Commission endorsed and charged CUE with developing implementation plan on 1 March 2022
Faculty Senate endorsed and approved the ACC's charge to CUE on 7 March 2022

CUE Recommendations Regarding Variability of Writing Proficiency Points
February 3, 2022

WWU students are required to obtain at least three writing proficiency (WP) points before graduation. These points are obtained by passing courses that award between one and three WP points.[1] Currently, the number of WP points awarded for passing a class are not a fixed attribute as, for example, the number of credits or the GUR status of a course is. This can lead to WP values of various offerings of the same course changing as it is taught by different professors or as individual professors wish to teach the course differently.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, ACC informally tasked CUE with examining and making recommendations regarding the currently flexibility of writing proficiency (WP) points: *"ACC requests that CUE develop recommendations for changes to the implementation of the WP system in order to address challenges students encounter in course schedule planning when WP attributes change unpredictably between offerings of a given course."*

CUE discussed the pros and cons of making the WP point value of a class a fixed attribute that would need to be changed through the Curriculog process. Making this change would provide more stability for students when planning out their future class schedules to minimize time to graduation, especially for students in majors where it is uncommon to have a substantial excess of WP points. Making changes in the WP value of courses go through Curriculog would also mean that WP point changes would involve collegial communication with other departments that would be impacted by the change, which could be of particular benefit to interdisciplinary departments and majors.

However, if the WP value of a course were fixed, this would reduce flexibility on the part of the instructors who teach the course. If various instructors in a department wished to teach a certain course with different amounts of writing instruction, a potential result would be that the number of WP points for that course would be set at the lowest value of what the various instructors wanted, since anyone who wished to teach more writing in that course could still, of course, do so. Fixing the WP point value would also reduce departmental control of their curriculum since they would no longer be able to rapidly update WP values.

CUE solicited feedback from department chairs on November 29, 2021 via email regarding their thoughts on making the WP value a fixed attribute of a course. CUE received feedback from 14 of the 40 individuals that we reached out to. While the responses from the chairs were not unanimous, a strong majority of those who responded were in support of making the WP value a fixed attribute.

After considering the feedback from the department chairs and the various tradeoffs of making WP points a fixed course attribute that would be changed through the Curriculog process, CUE recommends that this change be made. Additionally, CUE recommends that all departments develop an explicit plan as to how students in each of their majors will be able to obtain the necessary WP points for graduation.

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[1] The requirements for a course to qualify for a certain number of WP points can be found at
https://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=18&navoid=4641

Committee on Undergraduate Education approved on 29 April 2022.
Academic Coordination Commission approved on 10 May 2022 and forwarded and passed an additional motion further elaborating implementation details (see ACC motion of 10 May 2022, below).
Faculty Senate approved adoption of CUE proposal and additional ACC motion on 16 May 2022.

CUE Proposal to Implement "Fixed WP Values"

On March 1, 2022, ACC passed the following motion: "*Motion (forwarded by Kristi Tyran and seconded) to accept and endorse the CUE's recommendation that Writing Proficiency points be made a fixed course attribute to be changed through the Curriculog process and to charge the CUE with developing a plan for implementation of this change, outlining the information, processes, and workflows it recommends be added to new or existing Curriculog forms.*"
This document outlines CUE's proposed plan for implementing WP points as a fixed course attribute.

- INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION
    - The current policy of departments being able to change WP values in Banner would continue through 2022-2023, while the implementation of "fixed WP values" would take effect in the 2023-2024 academic year.
    - CUE (with the help of the Registrar's Office) will develop department-level lists of all courses in the WWU catalog for each department and the WP value associated with that class the most recent time it was taught (zero WPs through three WPs).
    - CUE will send the appropriate list to each department chair and ask the chairs if they would like to make any changes to the WP values for any of their courses. This message to chairs should will state that these fixed WP values would take effect in 2023-2024 AY and the initial fixed WP value for any of their courses can be set to any value (0-3) that they wish without external review, however any further changes starting in 2023-2024 AY would need to occur via Curriculog.
    - CUE will work with Jamie Lawson (and others, as necessary) to implement whatever technical changes need to occur to prevent WP values from being changed in Banner and making these permanent course characteristics that would change via Curriculog.

- Curriculog forms should be updated to reflect this new policy. These updates ideally should be completed by Fall 2022 to be ready for course revisions and new course proposals that would take effect in the 2023-2024 academic year.
    - Proposals for new or revised majors should ask whether there is a plan for students to obtain at least three WP points in that major (yes/no). Note that it is not *required* that such a plan be in place, however having this information will be informative when evaluating WWU's writing programs in the future.
    - Curriculog forms for new or revised courses that offer WP points should confirm via yes/no questions that the WP requirements regarding the share of the final grade coming from writing assignments and the opportunity for students to revise their writing will be met (see Catalog).
    - Class proposals that are not currently routed to CUE should not be routed to CUE because of these changes; ACC can review responses to the WP-related items

ACC Motion of 10 May 2022:

To add Writing Proficiency details to new course and program proposal Curriculog forms for the 2023-24 Catalog, with questions to be added to course revision forms for the 2024-25 Catalog, thereby allowing time during the coming 2022-23 academic year to implement CUE's recommendations regarding existing courses.