APPENDIX V

Assessment Summary Report, 2021-2022
Revised Draft – 2/17/21

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In Spring, 2018, the Hunter Senate passed a "Framework for Assessment of General Education," which included a schedule for a five-year cycle in which all general education outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, and related campus-wide requirements would be assessed. The academic year, 2021-2022, is the final year of that cycle; Hunter College is scheduled to conduct assessment related to several remaining campus-wide undergraduate requirements. These include:

- The Hunter Focus
- Pluralism & Diversity
- The Writing ("W") Requirement
- Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility

While these categories do not have learning outcomes stipulated by CUNY, courses that have been approved to fulfill these requirements do. In an effort to establish clear and consistent learning outcomes for the categories, the goal of the Senate Committees on Academic Assessment & Evaluation and General Education Requirements this year was to conduct evaluative research and analysis on the current state of these requirements, as well as to gather information from faculty on their understandings of them. The other reason for this type of assessment was A) the complexity of the task; and B) the broader campus conversations related to these areas, including the Racial Equity Task Force, the Civic Engagement Task Force, and informal conversations regarding the writing requirement.

The Hunter Focus

As explained in the Hunter Catalog, "Hunter Focus requires all students to take 4 courses of non-English language study. If you are already proficient in a non-English language and haven't declared a minor, second major or certificate program, you must choose a Concentrated Study."[1] Our current assessment focuses primarily on the language proficiency requirement. While the language proficiency requirement (i.e., foreign language requirement) has existed at Hunter College for decades, it has never been associated with specific learning objectives or outcomes, although Hunter's language programs do have course learning outcomes for fourth semester language proficiency.

The Senate Committees worked with Hunter's Institutional Research Office in 2020-2021 on some analysis related to how most Hunter students are fulfilling this requirement in practice, looking at students who graduated in Spring 2020. The main takeaways of this analysis were:

- The two most common fulfilment patterns are 9 credits of language & 3 credits of concentrated study or 12 credits of language. Each account for 1/3 of total, so together they make up a healthy majority of cases.
- It is also common to see 12 credits of concentrated study – 1 in 4 had this fulfilment pattern.
  - So 9 language + 3 concentrated study, 12 language, and 12 concentrated study together account for 91% of how students are fulfilling this requirement.
- The three most popular languages are Spanish, French and Japanese, with 56% choosing Spanish.
- The three most popular concentrated study areas are Psychology, Women & Gender Studies, and Computer Science.
  - Not nearly as narrowly distributed, the top 3 subjects only account for 23% of utilization.

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[1] https://ww2.hunter.cuny.edu/students/academic-planning/degree-requirements/hunter-core-requirement/hunter-focus/

For students who fulfill the requirements of the Hunter Focus with the Foreign Language requirement, we recommend utilizing course-level assessment in fourth semester language courses. For students who fulfill the requirement with concentrated study, we recommend that the Senate delegate to the GER and Assessment Committee the task of developing a process by which existing program-level assessments can be utilized to assess student learning outcomes in concentrated study across the campus, starting with the most popular programs in this area.
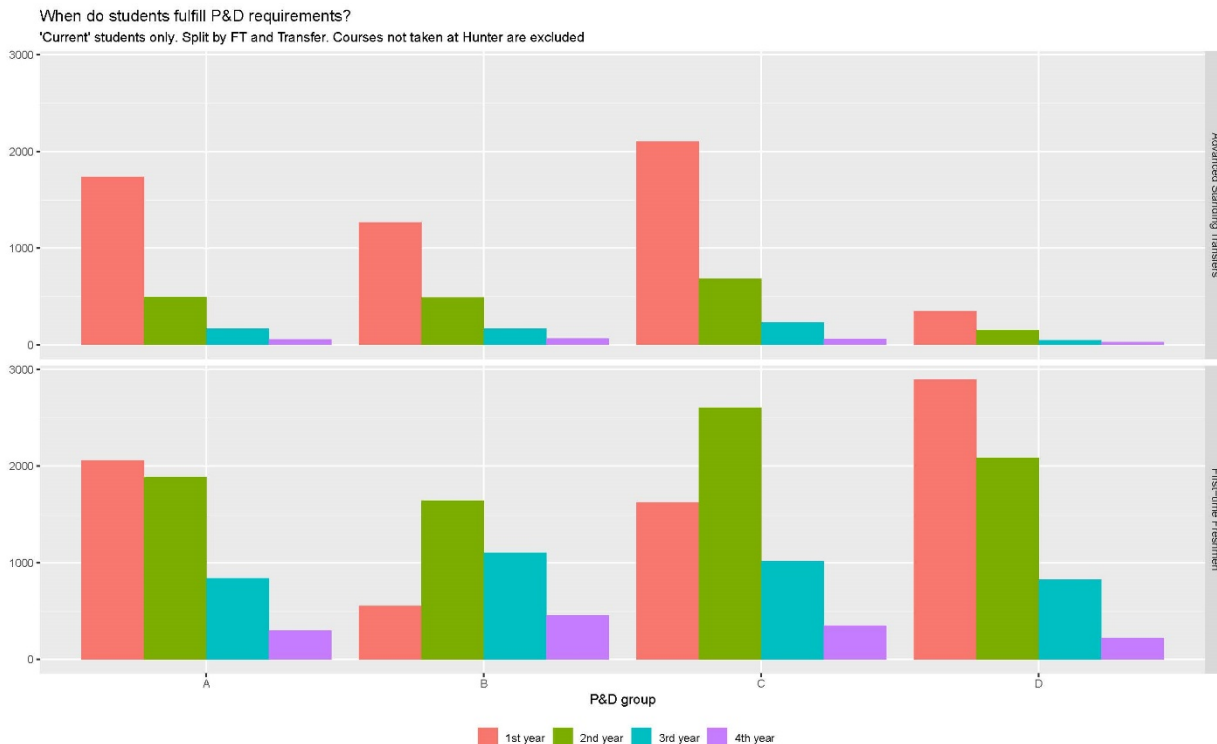
<div align="center">Pluralism & Diversity (P&D)</div>

To fulfill Hunter's Pluralism & Diversity requirement, undergraduates must complete four courses, including one in each area (the requirements vary for transfer students): A. Non-European societies; B. African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, or Native Americans; C. Women and/or issues of gender or sexual orientation; D. Europe.[2] While classes in each of these areas have been approved as meeting the Pluralism & Diversity Requirement based on course learning outcomes that align with the parameters of each P&D sub-category, as an Institutional Learning Outcome, this requirement does not currently have explicitly stated learning outcomes.

The charts below show the results of an analysis conducted for the committees by Hunter's IR Office, looking at the 25 courses most commonly taken in this category over a few years. The first row of the chart shows distributions for advanced transfer students, while the second chart shows distributions for students admitted as freshmen. Each row is divided by the four sub-categories of the Pluralism & Diversity requirement, then divided into bars showing whether students took these courses in their 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th years. As one might expect, transfer students were most likely to take these courses in their first year, while freshman admits were more evenly divided between 1st and 2nd years. Overall, the charts show logical enrollment patterns weighted toward the beginning of students' academic careers.

We again recommend that the Senate delegate to the Senate Committees on Academic Assessment & Evaluation and General Education Requirements the task of drafting a small number of learning outcomes for each of the four areas within the Pluralism and Diversity requirement, (probably 2-3 learning outcomes each) to enable assessment in these areas. Pending the recommendations of the Racial Equity Task Force, we recommend the development of learning outcomes to be ultimately approved by the GER committee and then moved to Senate approval. Institutional Learning Outcomes should be promoted overall so that stakeholders at the college can tangibly utilize them.

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[2] https://ww2.hunter.cuny.edu/students/academic-planning/degree-requirements/hunter-core-requirement/pluralism-and-diversity/

Minutes   **Page   6943**
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
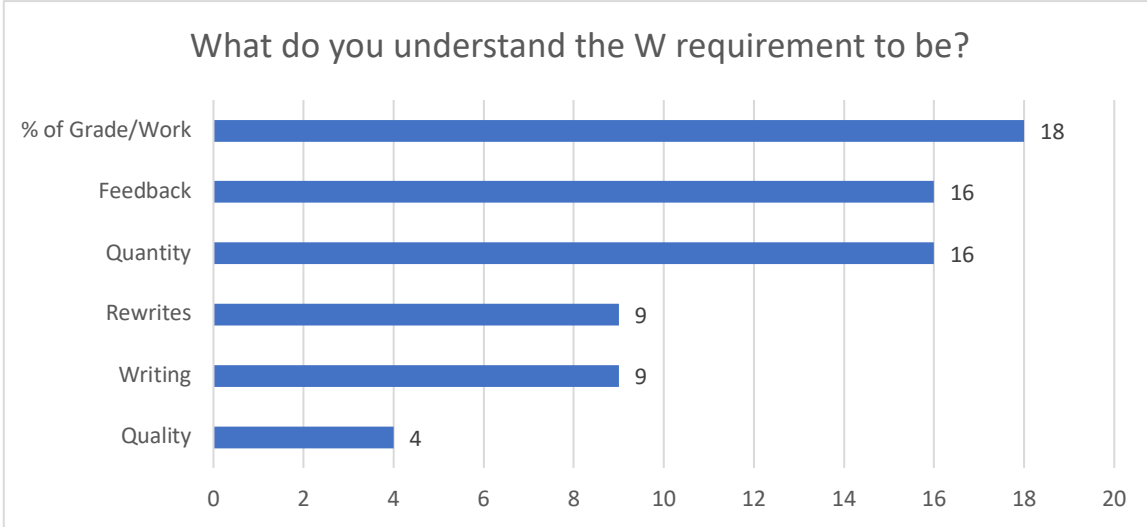**16 March 2022**

The Writing ("W") Requirement

Hunter students are required to take a total of three writing-intensive courses throughout their undergraduate careers, although transfers may exempt out of some of these. These classes may be in any subject, including their majors. Again, while classes in this area have been approved as meeting the Writing requirement, that requirement is not currently associated with any learning objectives or outcomes. In addition, while writing courses at many other colleges include requirements such as a certain number of pages, a certain number or type of papers, or opportunity to write a draft and then revise it, Hunter College's Writing requirement does not include any specific stipulations along those lines. The College's proposal guidelines for Writing Intensive Classes do stipulate that:

> "The syllabus must state that over 50% of the course grade is based on written work. The 50% can be achieved in a number of ways, but cannot be limited to in-class essay exams. Writing due dates must allow faculty feedback prior to the final exam date."[3]

However, no learning outcomes are associated with the writing requirement beyond these general requirements. To facilitate future conversations on the development of outcomes on refining the W requirement and the creation of outcomes, the committee decided to conduct a survey of faculty teaching "W" classes, asking what their understanding of the requirement is, and how they practice it in their own classes. Overall, the results showed wide familiarity with the "50% rule" and the requirements for providing feedback – as shown in the chart below, those two observations were the most common when faculty were asked what they thought the Writing Requirement currently entails. Others thought there was a requirement for some sort of draft/revision process or scaffolding of assignments, while still others thought the requirement was for a certain quantity of written work.
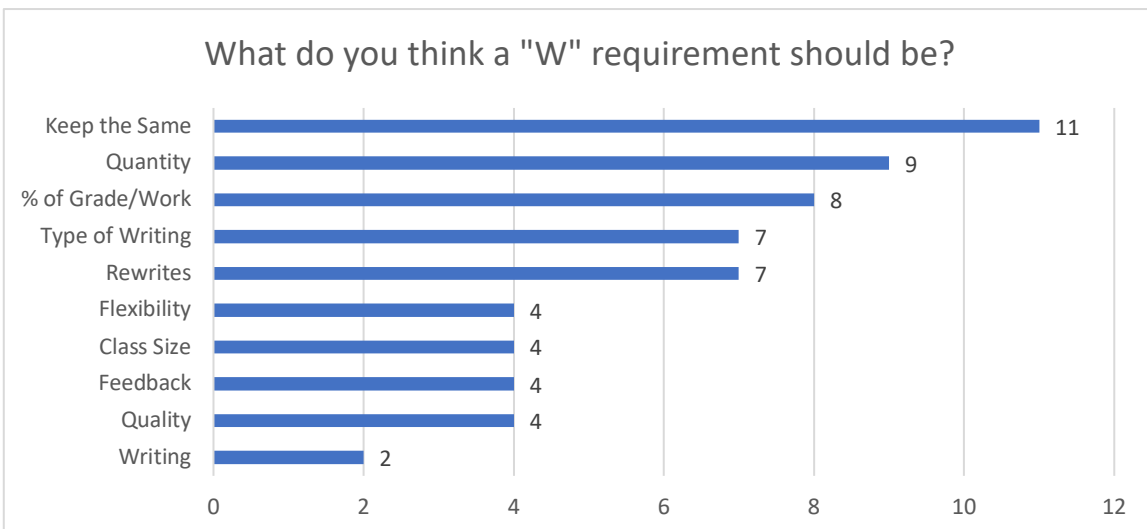
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[3] http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/senate/repository/files/curriculum-proposals-format/FormatforProposalsfortheHunterCoreWritingIntensive.doc/view?searchterm=

As the first chart below shows, the most common responses related to the percentage of the grade or work in the class required to consist of writing, the quantity of writing (usually stated in terms of pages or numbers of papers), and the requirement for providing students with feedback on their writing. Others thought that drafts and rewrites were required; others talked about what to them constituted good writing, while a few simply stated that the course needed to include writing.

What do you understand the W requirement to be?

Category	Value
% of Grade/Work	18
Feedback	16
Quantity	16
Rewrites	9
Writing	9
Quality	4

Because of the nature of the question, faculty responses on the other question on the survey, "What do you think a 'W' requirement should be?" were more varied. The most common responses were to keep the requirement the same, along with mentioning the quantity or percentage of written work. Several others discussed the benefits of different types of writing, and rewrites remained a popular response. Surprisingly, feedback was not a common response, likely because so many had already stated they wanted to keep the requirement the same. A number of respondents discussed the difficulty of teaching writing-intensive classes with larger enrollment caps, and several others appreciated the flexibility of the current system, and would like to retain it. A small number of comments suggested that writing skills of Hunter students are not where they should be.

Overall we see a general inconsistent understanding of the W requirement. Pending the establishment and recommendations of a Communication Task Force, we recommend the development of learning outcomes to be ultimately approved by the GER committee, and forwarded for final Senate approval. In any case, without goals, we can't develop learning outcomes, and without learning outcomes, we can't conduct assessment as required by CUNY and Middle States.

What do you think a "W" requirement should be?

Category	Value
Keep the Same	11
Quantity	9
% of Grade/Work	8
Type of Writing	7
Rewrites	7
Flexibility	4
Class Size	4
Feedback	4
Quality	4
Writing	2

Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility

While the Hunter College Senate approved Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility as an Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) in 2017 the proposed learning outcomes to accompany that ILO were not included in the final document. During the Spring Semester of 2021, a campus-wide Task Force on Civic Engagement was empaneled with the task of creating a working definition of Civic Engagement, and to make sure that we include the wide array (academic and extra-curricular) activities that could be said to be included in civic engagement. The definition they presented to the President in May, 2021 was as follows:

> Civic engagement can be an individual or a collective activity that addresses and identifies issues of public concern. It could include volunteering, service learning, field work, community partnerships, advocacy, and internships. At its core, civic engagement involves action and reflection allowing students to look back on, think critically about, and learn from their experiences and the work of others. It can occur both inside and outside the classroom, paid or voluntary. Specific examples outside the classroom might include but are not limited to: service trips, voter registration, community gardens, tutoring, soup kitchens, vaccine distribution, the census, community organizing, constituent service, campus leadership, or work with political or non-profit campaigns. Sometimes, civic engagement is designed to challenge systems, alter structures, and bring diverse populations together for the purpose of building an equitable and just civic sphere. This sphere has been a contested space, marked by exclusions of many types. Developing an understanding -- through research and focused discussion -- of how the civic sphere has been shaped historically, is important. Civic spaces may include the campus, the community, the neighborhood, the city, the nation, or the world. Their boundaries are dynamic and changing, reinforced by structural and systemic actions.

This definition remains to be developed into a measurable set of learning outcomes and then matched with specific courses or student activities in which to measure them. We recommend that the GER and Assessment Committee work with the Civic Engagement Task Force to create clear outcomes and participation metrics in this area.