Faculty Council on Academic Standards Policy on C (Composition) Course Proposals

While both Additional Writing (W) and Composition (C) courses require writing in English, a distinguishing feature of C courses is their treatment of writing as the core focus and subject of the course. As such, the "C" designation isn't simply about volume of writing: C courses cannot be determined only by requiring a certain amount of writing (page number, word count, number of drafts); these alone do not define a C course. By treating writing as the core focus and subject, we mean the following:

* Developing writing/rhetorical capacities, skills, techniques, dispositions, and habits of mind/practice must be the core subject matter and aim of a C class. In a C course, the central content and intellectual weight of the course needs to be on composition/rhetorical knowledge, skills, and capacities.

* In C courses, student writing itself should be a primary text of the class, as should peer-to-peer engagement over it. Thus, the instructional techniques in the course will usually include workshopping, peer feedback, student conferences with the instructor on written work, and/or similar techniques.

* C courses should teach transferable habits and dispositions that will help students write and communicate in various future contexts within and beyond the university. Such transferable skills/dispositions might include rhetorical awareness, revision strategies, working with feedback, research, genre and metacognitive awareness, etc. A C course should explicitly engage in providing students with a vocabulary for discussing and occasions for practicing these habits of mind.

Departments that propose C courses must demonstrate in their course applications how instructors are or will be trained in composition pedagogy.

Approved by FCAS November 29, 2017