

**Wheaton College
Education Department**

**Statement of Writing Educational Goals
June 2005**

Through foundations courses open to all Wheaton sophomores, juniors and seniors and upper level course work for licensure minors, the Education Department seeks to develop students' critical reading and writing skills, particularly the discipline-specific literacy skills needed in the public and professional roles many will assume as educators. Education minors develop their ability to think critically and analytically about pedagogy through their writing. They also develop the academic, professional and persuasive writing skills that help them to deepen their conceptualizations of and theories about teaching, learning, schooling, and curriculum.

While members of the Education Department sometimes teach freshmen seminars, the department does not currently have regularly scheduled course work open to freshmen. Writing assignments that education minors encounter during their sophomore, junior and senior years include, but are not limited to, the following:

- In-class writing assignments (exams, "quick writes," reflection pieces)
- Short informal writing assignments (essays and reflection papers)
- Reflection papers based on school-based field observations
- School-related communications such as newsletters and notes and letters to parents
- Academic journal entries reflecting upon textual readings and teaching practice
- Written plans and outlines for in-class presentations
- Discipline-specific, professional writing (lesson plans, unit plans)
- Written descriptions that summarize, analyze and integrate elements of curriculum-focused and professional portfolios
- Short, multiple-draft assignments that are either peer-edited or receive extensive comments from the professor
- Research papers

200-level Writing assignments, requirements and instruction at this level include:

- In-class discussion of readings based on students' notes, journal entries, or discussion questions
- In-class writing assignments (exams, "quick writes," reflection pieces)
- In-class modeling by the professor (or writing associate), where exemplary writing samples are examined and analyzed

- Short, informal writing papers such as essays, reflection papers, observational notes that relate to reading, field work and/or in-class discussions
- At least one multiple draft assignment that is either peer-edited or receives extensive

comments from the professor

200-level courses may also require students to write longer research papers, create interview protocols and conduct field-based interviews that are then analyzed and synthesized in final writing papers.

300-level Writing assignments, requirements and instruction at this level include:

In-class discussion of readings based on students' notes, journal entries or discussion questions

In-class writing assignments (exams, "quick writes," reflection pieces)

Short, informal writing papers such as essays, reflection papers

Observational notes that relate to reading, field work and/or in-class discussions

Discipline-specific writing assignments such as lesson plans, unit plans and portfolios.

These assignments are often multiple-drafts and are frequently revised

Written descriptions that summarize, analyze and integrate elements of curriculum-focused portfolios

Out-of-class, informal writing such as field-based observational notes

At least one multiple draft assignment that is either peer-edited or receives extensive comments from the professor

Research paper

In addition, those students who are licensure candidates complete the following kinds of writing during their practicum semester (in the spring of the senior year):

Discipline-specific writing assignments such as lesson and unit plans, which are often written, submitted for grading, then rewritten after they are used in teaching. The final drafts of such work include extensive analysis of lessons taught with the goal of refining and revising future pedagogical strategies and approaches.

Shorter, multiple draft assignments such as a statement of a philosophy of education that comprises a part of their professional portfolio

One or two page, weekly professional listserv entries that critically examine practice, share and describe pedagogical strategies, and analyze classroom experiences

Performance assessments written in preparation for 3-way conferences between student teacher, classroom supervising teacher and college supervisor

A final portfolio that is comprised of samples of all the above assignments, with descriptions that summarize, analyze and integrate its different elements. The portfolio, which also includes samples of pupil work, serves as a summation and self-portrait of the teacher candidate as a rising professional educator.