



## WRITING PROFICIENCY EXAM – UNIV 400

### WHO MUST TAKE UNIV 400?

**All Cal State L.A. undergraduate students (and most graduate students)** must satisfy the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) by taking the Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE). Students take the WPE by enrolling in a section of UNIV 400.

**Undergraduate students who fail to take and pass UNIV 400 before completing 135 units will have a registration hold placed on their academic records and *WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENROLL IN COURSES UNTIL THEY PASS THE WPE.* For more information, see the 2009-2011 University Catalog, page 111.**

### HOW TO REGISTER FOR UNIV 400

1. Look in the schedule of classes under UNIV 400 WPE/GWAR listing and select an open section.
2. Enroll in a section by adding UNIV 400 via GET registration system before the add deadline.
3. Once completed, the date, time and location will be listed on View My Schedule.
4. Pay the **NON-REFUNDABLE \$25** fee to the Cashier's Office **AFTER** fully registering for UNIV 400.

**Note:** Students who no longer have continuing student status will need to enroll in UNIV 400 through College of Professional and Global Education (PaGE). Students should contact PaGe at (323) 343-4900 for information or visit <http://www.calstatela.edu/page>

### PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

The University Writing Center offers 2 and 4 hour workshops to help you prepare for this exam. Students gain information about the WPE and learn some test-taking strategies. For information regarding date and time of workshops, please contact the **Writing Center in Library South, Room 1039A or call (323) 343-5350.**

**For WPE Sample Questions Visit:** [http://web.calstatela.edu/centers/write\\_cn/sampleessays.php](http://web.calstatela.edu/centers/write_cn/sampleessays.php)

### METHOD OF GRADING

Each exam will be graded independently by two readers. Readers will evaluate the essay in terms of how well it completes the task set by the topic, the effectiveness of its organization and development, and its demonstration of language control. Based on this evaluation, each reader will assign the essay a score from 1 (very low) to 6 (very high). These scores are added together, thus the highest possible score is 12 and the lowest is 2. To pass the exam, students must achieve a score of 8 or higher.

### NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Approximately 2-3 weeks after taking the exam, results may be viewed on the GET website under "View My Grades". A grade of "CR" means "Credit" and indicates the student passed the exam. A grade of "NC" means "No Credit" and indicates the student did not pass the test. If you do not pass the exam, you must meet with a WPE Consultant in the University Writing Center, Library South, Room 1039A or call (323) 343-5350.

***If you have a hold on your record, the hold will completely be removed if you pass the exam.***

## DAY OF THE EXAM

You are required to **1)** be on time, **2)** bring a valid photo-ID, and **3)** bring a blue or black ink pen (no pencils). If you wish, you may also bring a hardback or pocket dictionary. No thesaurus or electronic devices of any kind will be permitted. **(Note: The exam roster must reflect that you are officially enrolled for a specific time and section; otherwise, you will not be allowed to take the exam.)**

## TEN TIPS FOR WPE SUCCESS

(Adapted from John Edlund, Cal Poly Pomona)

1. Relax, you can do it!
2. Read the topic carefully. Look for specific instructions about what to do. If the questions that are designed to help you think about the topic confuse you, ignore them.
3. Make the topic your own. Write about some aspect of the topic that you know well or that interests you-*but make sure that you stay on topic.*
4. Take a few minutes at the beginning to do some brainstorming, list making, clustering, or rough outlining.
5. *Plan to write only a single draft.* There is not enough time to recopy. Feel free to cross out errors and to use circles and arrows to make changes and insert or rearrange things. Don't use white out.
6. Your introduction should probably state a main idea and some context of the issue or problem (Why is this important?). Your main idea can be qualified using "although": for example. "Although many people enjoy educational programs on television, I think that violent programs with lots of car chases and shootouts are best, because they get out your aggressions and reduce stress."
7. Be sure to support or illustrate your general points with specific evidence and concrete examples.
8. You can write a five-paragraph essay, but it is not recommended.
9. If you run out of time, try one of these emergency conclusions:
  - a. Write "For all of the above reasons," and then restate your thesis.
  - b. If you don't have time, simply don't write a conclusion; just make sure the ideas in support of your argument are clear and convincing.
  - c. Write "Sorry, ran out of time."
10. Save a few minutes at the end to proofread your essay for your most common mistakes.