

Report on Writing Intensive Courses for 2014-15

Department of Philosophy

Sergio Tenenbaum

Due to smaller enrolment than expected in PHL 332 and a rare opportunity to have a tutorial class also be designated WI, we moved the WI designation from PHL 332 to PHL 210. Students in PHL 210 had two mandatory rewrites and one optional rewrite. Fortunately, all of these assignments were scheduled and marked prior to the strike, so the writing intensive aspect of the course was not affected by the strike. The TA (Owen Pikkert) would write extensive comments on the first draft of papers and meet with the students to discuss how they could improve their paper. Students would then write a final version of the paper responding to the oral and written comments they received from the TA. Professor Rozemond, the course instructor, comments that Mr. Pikkert wrote extremely helpful and extensive comments on the first drafts, and that students were very appreciative of the feedback they received. She also reports a very clear and marked improvement in the quality of writing of all the students throughout the course. This was a particularly successful experience that will have a significant impact for students as they progress through the program; PHL 210 is a required course for our majors, so the skills they acquired there will greatly helped them in succeeding in their other philosophy courses.

I would like to emphasize that these positive results are not a one time only success; instructors and TA invariably comment on a very noticeable improvement in the quality of student writing by the end of a WI course.

Unfortunately, PHL 300S was heavily affected by the strike, and all the rewrites had to be cancelled. I have, therefore, nothing to report on this course.