Possible Writing-Related Goals for W-Courses

I want my students to be able to …

In this course, students will learn to…

By the end of this course, students will be able to…

- Write in a specific genre or format (a lab report, an annotated bibliography, press release, etc.)
- Avoid using existing genres, and instead allow organizational structures to emerge from the content they are writing about.
- Produce texts that incorporate multimedia elements (audio, video, photographs, etc.)

- Take a strong position on a subject
- Make a formal argument, with a problem statement, evidence and counter-arguments
- Represent all sides of a contested issue in a non-partisan way
- Say something "new" about a subject; make an original contribution to an ongoing discussion
- Explicitly/honestly acknowledge areas of uncertainty
- Choose a worthy/appropriate/interesting topic to write about
- Develop a compelling story or angle on a topic

- Clearly document something they have observed or done
- Clearly describe a proposed course of action or sequence of events
- Describe empirical data in words
- Summarize data using charts or graphs

- Achieve conciseness in their writing by presenting lots of information in carefully-crafted tables and charts
- Achieve conciseness in their writing by presenting only the most salient point (ie. the writer must make decisions about what to leave out)
- Write papers that are long enough to do justice to a complex topic, without resorting to "fluff"
- Maintain a strong organizational structure in their papers, even when the papers are long

- Write in an elegant, literary style, with evocative metaphors, allusions, alliteration, etc.
- Write in a hip/irreverent style, mixing slang with more formal language
- Produce texts with a lively, personal, or unique "voice"
- Write texts that accurately incorporate specific legally required language

- Write in a language other than English; or write multilingual texts
- Use "plain" language that would be accessible by a very broad range of readers, especially non-specialists
- Use the specific jargon and disciplinary vocabulary developed by and for a field or profession

- Find a very broad range of external sources (books, articles, letters, reports, advertisements, etc.) and incorporate them into their texts
- Synthesize sources, rather than merely quoting from them
- Quote from sources, rather than merely synthesizing them
- Summarize sources accurately
- Cite sources effectively and appropriately (using APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)
- Demonstrate knowledge that derives from sources without explicitly reference sources
- Find and copy language that other writers have used, when appropriate (eg. boilerplate language in grants)

- Revise effectively for ideas and organization
- Edit and proofread their own texts effectively
- Participate effectively in peer editing/peer review activities
- Participate responsibly and effectively in group writing assignments