

# WRITING AT INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

## 2018

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# WRITING AT INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY 2018

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## INTRODUCTION

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*Writing at Indiana State University (WISU)* is the official document of the Department of English concerning the composition program at ISU. This document contains descriptions, rationales, and policies adopted by the Department of English on April 6, 2015. The main purpose of the document is to define the general nature and scope of writing courses, while leaving the specific planning and teaching of the courses to faculty members.

### *The Composition Committee*

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The Composition Committee is appointed by the chairperson of the Department. It is chaired by the Director of Writing Programs and includes four additional faculty members. The Committee is responsible for devising and revising the composition program and preparing rationales and policies for teaching the courses.

When the Composition Committee proposes curricular changes to the composition program, the changes are subject to review and approval by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and by the Department faculty.

### *Objectives of the Program*

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Reading and writing are essential for successful academic work. The courses described in *WISU* offer opportunities for ISU students to achieve the competence in reading and writing that is essential for success in their academic work and professional lives. This competence encompasses rhetorical effectiveness, as well as mechanical correctness.

### *The Writing Sequence at Indiana State: An Overview*

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The writing sequence at ISU consists of two requirements: first-year composition and advanced composition.

The first-year requirement consists of a two-semester sequence of English 101, writing from personal experience, and English 105, writing researched papers. Students with

SAT critical reading scores of 510 or above or ACT English usage scores of 20 or above take English 107 or English 108, both of which are accelerated versions of 101 and 105, in lieu of the two-semester sequence.

The advanced composition requirement consists of one course at the junior level. Students may enroll in the course with forty-eight credit hours and the successful completion of the first-year composition requirement. Courses currently offered in the writing program that fulfill the advanced composition requirement are described below in *Courses*.

### *Rationale for the Writing Sequence*

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Because the Writing Program at ISU is committed to helping our students achieve success in their writing, we are committed to maintaining the two-semester first-year writing sequence so that our students can move into their advanced composition class knowing that they have learned the key concepts and skills required for writing academic prose.

Demographic research of ISU's student population has shown that over half of our first-year students are first-generation college attendees, and over half are Pell Grant recipients (*Pathways to Retention and Student Success: The Indiana State University Strategic Management Plan, 2013-2017. Student Success*. Indiana State University. Jan. 2013. Web. 11 Mar. 2014). The Middle 50th SAT total for ISU students is 1210-1250 (out of 2400), lowest of the four year publics (SEM Data Team. *Indiana State University: Setting the Stage for SEM Enrollment Behavior*. Indiana State University. 22 Aug. 2012. Web. 23 Mar. 2015). SAT writing scores for ISU students averaged 443 in 2011, thirty-two points lower than other Indiana institutions and forty-six points lower than the national average (*Pathways to Retention and Student Success: The Indiana State University Strategic Management Plan, 2013-2017. Student Success*. Indiana State University. Jan. 2013. Web. 11 Mar. 2014). A departmental study has demonstrated that there is a strong correlation for our student demographic between success in first-year writing and SAT critical reading scores, with a score of 510 or above as the most accurate predictor of success in the accelerated one-semester class. Therefore, we are committed to a two-semester sequence for our students because our experience has shown that it best prepares them for success in their academic work.

Although the [Conference on College Composition and Communication \(CCCC\)](#), the [Modern Language Association \(MLA\)](#) and [Association of Departments of English \(ADE\)](#) specify that classes should have enrollments below twenty, composition courses at ISU are capped at twenty-five.

## *Course Requirements and Offerings*

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Students at Indiana State University must complete one of three writing sequences, depending on their SAT verbal or ACT English usage scores or their major, minor, or Honors Program designation.

### **Group 1: SAT critical reading score below 510 or ACT English usage score below 20**

Students with SAT critical reading scores below 510 (or ACT English usage scores below 20) take three courses: English 101 (Freshman Writing I), English 105 (Freshman Writing II), and English 305 (Advanced Expository Writing) or one of its equivalents.

### **Group 2: SAT critical reading score of 510 or above or ACT English usage score of 20 or above**

Students with SAT critical reading scores of 510 (or above or ACT English usage scores of 20 or above) take two courses: English 107 (Rhetoric and Writing) and English 305 (Advanced Expository Writing) or one of its equivalents.

### **Group 3: English majors and minors**

English majors and minors follow one of two sequences depending on whether they are pursuing English (Liberal Arts) or English Teaching degrees: (1) those pursuing English (Liberal Arts) degrees take English 108 (Writing about Literature and Culture) and English 308 (Practical Literary Criticism); (2) those pursuing English Teaching degrees take English 108 (Writing about Literature and Culture) and English 307 (Writing for Teachers of English).<sup>1</sup>

### **Group 4: Honors Students**

Students with SAT critical reading scores of 650 and above (or ACT English usage scores of 33 and above) satisfy their freshman composition requirement with completion of University Honors GH 101 and 102.

When other Departments express interest in designing and teaching upper-division, discipline-specific writing courses, the Composition Committee reviews rationale, syllabi, assignments, and activities to determine whether proposed courses are acceptable substitutes for English 305 (Advanced Exposition).

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<sup>1</sup> English majors and minors with SAT critical reading scores below 510 or ACT English usage scores below 20 are required to take English 101 before taking English 108.

## *Course Syllabi and Outlines*

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Regarding the composition program, the Department of English adheres to the policy in the *Indiana State University Handbook*:

Faculty members are required to prepare course outlines or syllabi for their courses. . . . An outline of each course shall be available to students from the beginning of each term. (*Indiana State University General Counsel and Secretary*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015. 310.1.2)

As Foundational Studies classes, composition classes should follow the requirements for Foundational Studies syllabi. All composition classes have had representative syllabi, outcomes statements, and rationales approved by the Foundational Studies Committee. These documents are available in Word format on Indiana State University's Blackboard Course Management System in the course OTH-ENG 101: Department of English Writing Programs. Instructors who wish access to this site may request to be added by contacting the Director of Writing Programs. Copies of these syllabi are also available upon request from the Director of the Writing Program and the Chairperson. Many of the following requirements may be met by copying the relevant sections of the approved Foundational Studies documents onto course syllabi.

The web document *Policies Relating to Foundational Studies Syllabus* states that all Foundational Studies syllabi must contain certain key elements. The descriptions of these elements are quoted below:

- Statement explaining the FS requirement the course is meeting.
- Statement identifying specific FS learning objectives for the course.
- Statement explicating how the assigned work assists students in meeting the program goals as well as the goals of the specific FS category under which the course falls.
- Statement encouraging students to review the University's Academic Dishonesty Policy found in the Code of Student Conduct.
- When appropriate, a statement outlining the citation style the instructor wishes students to use and the repercussions they will face if they plagiarize or act in other academically dishonest ways.
- Statement explaining course attendance policy.
- Statement describing the central tenets of academic freedom and how these relate to the course.
- One of the four designated statements on laptop computers.

- The University statement on students with disabilities. (*Indiana State University Foundational Studies*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015)

The Writing Program uses the following statement, quoted from “The Sycamore Standard,” as our academic freedom policy:

Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. (*Information for Faculty Teaching FS Courses*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015)

Instructors are also encouraged to include the URL to the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) policy statement as well: Click here for [AAUP Statement](#) (“The Sycamore Standard.” *Information for Faculty Teaching FS Courses*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015).

The website [Policies Relating to Foundational Studies Syllabus](#) (*Indiana State University Foundational Studies*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015) also requires that instructors include a statement on the use of laptop computers in the class.

“The Sycamore Standard” lists the following four approved laptop policy statements. Instructors must choose one and include it on the syllabus. Instructors may also add additional provisions to the chosen statement, but one of the four statements must appear, verbatim, on the syllabus:

- Laptop Required for Course: Regular Usage: For the purposes of this course, it will be assumed that you are in compliance with the mandatory laptop policy of the University. You will be expected to bring your laptop and be ready to use it for every class period. Usage of the laptop must conform to the provisions of this course as laid out in this syllabus as well as the Code of Student Conduct.
- Laptop Required for Course: Irregular Usage: For the purposes of this course, it will be assumed that you are in compliance with the mandatory laptop policy of the University. You will be expected to bring your laptop and be ready to use it for those class periods noted (below/above). Usage of the laptop must conform to the provisions of this course as laid out in the syllabus as well as the Code of Student Conduct.
- Laptop Not Required for Course: Usage Permitted: While there will be no assignments or examinations for which the laptop will be used, your use of a laptop is generally permitted as long as such usage remains within the bounds of the Code of Student Conduct and it conforms to the provisions of its use as laid out in this syllabus. There may be

occasions where laptop usage is forbidden and if that occurs, failure to comply with this direction will be viewed as a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

- Laptop Usage Forbidden: While the University has chosen to require laptops of its students, the University also recognized and respects the right of faculty to conduct their classes as they deem appropriate. In this course, no laptop may be used in class. Failure to comply with the direction is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. (*Foundational Studies Information for Faculty Teaching FS Courses*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015)

The University requires a statement on students with disabilities. The program uses the following statement to comply with Foundational Studies requirements in this regard:

Special Needs Students: By federal law you are entitled to and eligible for accommodation through the Center for Student Success, Gillum Hall 210E, x7920. Such accommodation may include more time on in-class writing or a transcriber for out-of-class work. Instructors cannot grant accommodation unless they have authorization from CSS, and CSS will not authorize accommodation until you have submitted to their office all required paperwork. You are not required to disclose your disability to your instructor; however, if you would like to request accommodation for this class, you will need to contact CSS directly to initiate the process.

In addition to the above University-mandated syllabi components, the program expects that, like good syllabi in any field, syllabi for composition classes will also include the following: the number and title of the course; the instructor's name, office hours, telephone number, and e-mail address; a list of materials required or recommended for the course, including textbooks, folders, and other items; policies for the course relating to grading, attendance, the handling of late papers, conferences, plagiarism, and other procedural matters; a description of the goals and objectives for the course, specifically relating to papers, projects, and classroom work; descriptions of the approximate number, type, and length of major writing assignments; and a daily calendar of course activities, including reading assignments and due dates for papers and projects.

If syllabi and course outlines do not include a rationale for the course, one could be appended—briefly explaining the organization of class activities, the relationship of class work and paper assignments, the skills to be developed through readings and discussions, and other relevant issues. Faculty should note that these materials will be useful for Performance Review portfolios.

Electronic document versions of syllabi should be forwarded to the Chairperson at the beginning of each semester. The University also requires that the electronic versions of syllabi be posted on Blackboard.



In addition to the Foundational Studies syllabus requirements noted above, the Department of English also requires certain elements be present on the syllabus as well. For a list of departmental guidelines for syllabi, see Appendix C of this document.

## *Textbooks*

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The Committee recommends that faculty use a combination of texts and reference materials to provide formal instruction in composition, as well as practice in reading and critical thinking. See descriptions of individual courses for specific guidance about textbook selection.

In choosing textbooks, all instructors should consider the descriptions, rationales, and policies for each course, as outlined in *WISU*, as well as list price. The Committee recommends that instructors consider an "all-in-one" textbook that combines a rhetoric, reader, and handbook. OER (Online Educational Resources) are also viable options.

## *Grading*

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Although instructors' individual grading systems are unique, commonalities should exist to ensure that instructors and the Department are not perceived as capricious or idiosyncratic. The following guidelines may be helpful in diminishing disparities in grading:

1. Students' grades should be based primarily upon their performance in writing. While it is certainly legitimate to require some knowledge of subject matter (for example, of rhetorical strategies), writing courses are primarily performance courses, and grades should measure students' writing performance. (See also 5 and 7.)
2. We are more interested in the quality of writing students do at the end of courses than at the beginning or intermediate stages. Extra weight is properly given to writing toward the end of the term. Thus, while all graded essays may be considered in computing grades, final grades should not be flat averages of all grades.
3. The Department of English adheres to the University policy that requires a class meeting during the final two-hour examination period scheduled by the Vice President for Academic Affairs:

The two-hour final examination period assigned is part of the total commitment required for completion of a course, and it is scheduled to provide a longer class period for the administration

of a comprehensive examination. Exceptions may be made in courses in which student projects, term papers, demonstrations or performances are more suitable measures of the student's achievement. (*Indiana State University Handbook. General Counsel and Secretary of University*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015. 3.10.1.4)

Instructors may elect not to require a final written examination if the course includes a substantive final project or paper, but they are obligated to meet with the class during the examination time.

4. There is no “curve” in our composition classes, i.e., no preset quota of As, Bs, etc. If an entire section, for example, should do what experience tells us is above-average work, the entire class should earn above-average grades; the contrary is also true.
5. Students are expected to attend class and to participate in course activities. Instructors should describe in their syllabi how attendance and participation influence course grades.
6. Students are expected to submit all work (daily work, as well as major papers and projects) on time. Instructors should specify the penalties that result when work is submitted late or not at all.
7. Instructors have an obligation to make their grading standards clear at the beginning of each course.
8. Faculty should be prepared to explain their grades. To that end, faculty should maintain clear, complete records of grades for individual papers, attendance, and other matters that determine students’ final grades.
9. All ISU faculty are required to post their grades in the Blackboard Course Management System site for their classes.

### *The Math and Writing Center*

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The Math and Writing Center provides one-on-one tutoring for students who require extra help with any stage of the writing process. Both walk-in and scheduled appointments are available. For more information about current Math and Writing Center policies, visit [the Math and Writing Center's home page](#).

## *Computer Literacies*

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The Laptop Initiative of 2007 requires that all entering freshmen have a laptop computer. In 2012, wireless printing was made available throughout campus. Instructors, then, should require that students word-process major papers and projects. Since students enter campus with reasonable levels of skill in employing word processing programs such as Word and Google Drive, instructors should focus their instruction not on teaching software but on demonstrating ways that software contributes to the writing process.

Such computer use during the writing of papers will allow students to (1) explore ideas freely; (2) compose drafts with the understanding that modification is possible without complete retyping; (3) use available methods to delete and add elements, as well as rearrange materials; (4) use support programs – such as spell checkers and dictionaries – during the editing process; and (5) take advantage of formatting capabilities (line spacing, justification, font selection, and so on) to prepare professional-looking final papers. Additionally, in courses that require research, students need to learn to search subject-specific databases to enhance their abilities to gather information.

When students have difficulties with their computers, either with hardware or software, they should be directed to the IT Help Line at 812.237.2910.

The Department has dedicated laptop classrooms in Root A274 and A275. Instructors interested in using these dedicated classrooms should contact the Chairperson to request that the location of their classes be moved, if possible, to one of these rooms.

Many classrooms where composition classes are held will be equipped with SmartSymposium lecterns with computers, projectors, and audio/DVD capabilities. If instructors are in classrooms without such capabilities, they should contact the Chairperson to request relocation if possible. Alternatively, a computer cart can be ordered for their room.

## *Digital Writing Technologies*

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The introduction to the WPA (Writing Program Administrators) *Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition* (17 July 2014. Web. 26 Feb. 2015) explains the importance of technology in twenty-first century writing practices:

In this *Statement* “composing” refers broadly to complex writing processes that are increasingly reliant on the use of digital technologies. Writers also attend to elements of design, incorporating images and graphical elements into texts intended for screens as well as printed pages. Writers’ composing activities have always been shaped by the technologies available to them, and digital technologies are changing

writers' relationships to their texts and audiences in evolving ways.

Additionally, the following outcomes were included in the statement:

- Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
- Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities

Because our program adheres to the outcomes set by the WPA, *Writing at ISU* recognizes the increased importance of composing with digital technologies and for digital spaces. We understand technologies, broadly, to mean the tools we use to compose, research, edit, revise, and deliver texts. We further recognize that these technologies alter composing processes and also provide new environments for compositions, making them essential to composition in the twenty-first century. Because our students need intense writing instruction during their time in the first-year writing program, digital technologies should not be the focus of these courses, but should rather be utilized in ways that enhance instruction and provide opportunities for students to better understand the importance of a variety of rhetorical situations.

[Click here to access the complete WPA Outcomes Statement.](#)

## *Information Literacy*

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Students must become skilled in the changing processes of information gathering. Although these goals were once achieved through instruction in traditional, print-based research, technology has altered and will continue to alter the processes of gathering information, and faculty have, as a result, expanded their instruction in research methodologies.

Faculty in courses with research components continue to acknowledge the value of traditional, library-based research methodologies and can arrange for formal instruction from Cunningham Memorial Library's Information Services faculty. However, acknowledging the availability of information on the Internet, faculty now address issues that have become increasingly important because electronic sources allow for broad dissemination of materials: comprehensive research that takes advantage of sources available from multiple sites; critical evaluation of sources which have not been filtered through traditional means of publication; and new techniques for selecting information, verifying its value and reliability, and documenting sources accurately.

Further, with the wide availability of full-text materials (papers, articles, books) via the Internet, faculty must give additional attention to the ethical use of these materials.

## *Online Composition Courses*

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As of Spring 2018, nearly one-third of our sections of English 105 and English 305 are being taught online. Below are some best practices, as generated by the Composition Committee and the group of instructors who teach these courses:

- Be aware that online students may require more extensive and detailed guidelines than a traditional face-to-face class.
- State your “digital office hours” (email and phone policies, the possible option for video conferencing or other communication methods) clearly on your syllabus.
- Emphasize using the library’s Distance Services, and make sure that students understand that texts can be mailed to them. This policy also applies to Inter-Library Loan.
- Discuss the possible limitations of using local public libraries to conduct research.
- Spend time discussing how to make the most of Google Scholar. Warn students that they should not pay for access to articles, as our library can provide them.
- Clarify and discuss the difference between an electronic text and the web at large. For students experiencing the course entirely through a screen, this difference can be a crucial distinction.
- Be aware of the specific needs and expectations of online students, particularly regarding the speed with which you provide feedback.
- Implement “checkpoints” with students to be certain that they are working toward course goals may be helpful.
- Integrate detailed guidance for the peer review process – perhaps including an instructor review of rough drafts – in order to maximize effectiveness.
- Consider some flexibility regarding deadlines due to time zone differences.
- Keep in mind that students may require some acclimation to the Blackboard environment at the beginning of the course.
- Simplify your course interface as much as possible.
- Be aware of opportunities to give feedback in multiple ways (papers, discussion boards, blogs, journals, quizzes, etc.).

## *Plagiarism*

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The Department of English adheres to the University's plagiarism policy as presented in the *Code of Student Conduct*:

### 2.1.2 *Definition*

Plagiarism is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has wholly or in part been created by another. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources. Students must consult instructors for clarification in any situation in which documentation is an issue. Students will be considered to have plagiarized whenever their work is improperly cited. (*Student Conduct and Integrity*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015)

The *Code of Student Conduct* also lists multiple submissions as possible integrity violations. The policy regarding multiple submissions is quoted below:

### 2.1.4 *Multiple Submission(s)*

Multiple submissions are the submission of all or part of the same or substantially the same work for credit in two or more courses. Multiple submissions include the use of any academic work previously submitted for academic credit at this or another institution, including high school work. Multiple submissions shall not include those academic exercises when written approval by the current course instructor authorizes use of prior academic work. When multiple submissions are allowed, instructors will specify the expected academic effort applicable to their courses. (*Student Conduct and Integrity*. Indiana State University. n.d. Web. 12 Mar. 2015)

# COURSES

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**101 Freshman Writing I**—Writing expository and argumentative essays based on personal experience and readings. Freshmen with SAT critical reading scores below 510 or ACT English usage scores below 20 must take this course during their first semester before taking English 105 during their second semester. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

*Overview:*

English 101 is designed for freshmen who need instruction and practice in reading and writing.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 5,000 words (approximately twenty typewritten, double-spaced pages).

*Outcomes:*

By the end of English 101, students should be able to

- understand and discuss texts of appropriate complexity;
- understand the writing process—generating ideas, organizing and drafting, revising, and editing;
- understand how to write for a specific audience or writing situation;
- write clearly organized, well-developed, focused, short expository and argumentative essays structured around a thesis;
- understand how and when to apply a number of rhetorical modes, including description, narration, illustration, comparison-contrast, and analysis in their writing;
- “understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences” (Council of Writing Program Administrators. *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition 3.0*. 17 July 2014. Web. 26 Feb. 2015);
- recognize and assess the use of visuals as a means of conveying information or making an argument;
- consider argument from a personal perspective in reaction to a text;
- evaluate their and others’ writing based on concepts covered in *WISU* grading

standards (see Appendix A);

- edit their own writing for clarity, directness, and variety in diction and structure; and
- express themselves coherently through effective use of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics.

### *Using Digital Technologies:*

Below are a few ideas for how digital technologies can be utilized in our first-year writing courses, though these examples are not exhaustive or prescriptive. Instructors of writing at ISU should use these examples as models and should feel comfortable including digital technologies in their courses in other ways as long as they support students' improvement of their writing processes, adhere to the *Writing at ISU* objectives and WPA outcome statements found below, or aim to improve students' rhetorical abilities.

[Click here to access the complete WPA Outcomes Statement.](#)

- *Narrative:* Have students compose a "This I Believe" essay (find more information here: [This I Believe](#)). Originally a podcast, "This I Believe" asks participants to compose a narrative that explains a specific belief they have. (These range from tipping the pizza man to a belief in higher powers.) After students compose a written essay, ask them to edit and revise the composition for a different technology: a podcast. This assignment helps students experience how different mediums and audiences alter the presentation of a text while also providing them with practice revising and editing their own compositions.
- *Description:* Ask students to describe a person based solely on what they post to social media. This assignment challenges students to rely on digital technologies for information, illustrating how much (or little) we can learn from something as simple as a Facebook or Twitter page.
- *Compare and Contrast:* Have students compare and contrast a text that can be found in two different formats. This comparison can range from a book that has been adapted into a film to a written argument or news story that is accompanied by a video presentation of the same topic. Students could also compare and contrast a person they know with that person's presentation of self on a social media platform. This assignment encourages students to understand how texts are adapted due to the environment in which they are presented.

### *Textbooks:*

Writing instruction is most commonly provided by the use of an all-in-one textbook that includes a rhetoric and a handbook, or through the use of OERs.



**105 Freshman Writing II** – Writing documented papers synthesizing information from several different sources, with emphasis on reading and writing as processes of discovery in thinking critically. Freshmen with SAT critical reading scores below 510 or ACT English usage scores below 20 must take this course the semester after successfully completing English 101. Prerequisite: English 101 or 103B. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

**107 Rhetoric and Writing** – Writing documented papers synthesizing information from several different sources, with emphasis on the application of rhetorical principles to critical reading and effective writing. Freshmen with SAT verbal scores of 510 or above or ACT English usage scores of 20 or above must take this course during their first semester. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

*Overview:*

English 105 and 107 share similar goals: to provide instruction in reading, writing, and thinking. In particular, these courses focus on academic writing, including the study of the elements of effective writing, the writing process, the writing situation, patterns of organization, research, and manuscript preparation.

English 105 and 107 differ primarily in their student audiences. Instructors of English 105 select readings, design writing assignments, and employ classroom methodologies to challenge students to become effective writers; instructors of English 107 assume a somewhat greater degree of student skill and, as a result, select readings, create writing assignments, and employ classroom methodologies more suitably matched to students with higher levels of verbal skill than those in 105. For example, readings in 107 may be more demanding than those in 105, assignments in 107 may be more challenging in terms of length requirements and complexity than those in 105, and instruction in 107 may be less directive than is necessary in 105. While acknowledging that these two courses share the same goals, we want to recognize the differing abilities and needs of students in the two courses.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five typewritten, double-spaced pages), including at least one documented researched paper.

*Outcomes:*

*Reading:* By the end of the course, students should be able to

- recognize and understand the functions of standard rhetorical techniques of writing for an audience, organization, paragraphing, sentence structure, and logic; and
- understand and discuss texts of appropriate complexity.

*Writing:* By the end of the course, students should be able to

- apply the principles of the writing process – generating ideas, gathering information, organizing and drafting, revising, and editing;
- understand the elements of the writing situation, including audience analysis;
- understand the conventions of academic discourse communities;
- “understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences” (Council of Writing Program Administrators, *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition 3.0*. 17 July 2014. Web. 26 Feb. 2015);
- write clear, precise expository prose on topics of some complexity and sophistication;
- develop and support a clearly stated thesis with specific, relevant, concrete detail;
- organize material clearly and use transitions to indicate that order;
- write coherent, unified body paragraphs of various lengths;
- write effective introductions and conclusions;
- use relatively sophisticated sentence structure and correct grammar and mechanics;
- research effectively, present quotations and paraphrases accurately, incorporate facts effectively, and document correctly; and
- use headings, white space, visuals, and fonts to enhance the effectiveness of their papers.

*Thinking:* By the end of the course, students should be able to

- evaluate their own writing;
- evaluate expository and/or argumentative readings;
- recognize fallacies and flaws in logic;
- recognize and employ common patterns of reasoning, particularly reasoning from evidence and assertion as they are employed in argumentation; and
- deal with topics, questions, and problems that (1) have relevance to real life, (2) have no “right” answers, (3) become more complex as students gather more information, (4) require students to recognize what they already know and

what they need to research in order to get sufficient information, and (5) may require a variety of research sources and techniques (such as the library and the Internet).

### *Using Digital Technologies:*

Below are a few ideas for how digital technologies can be utilized in our first-year writing courses, though these examples are not exhaustive or prescriptive. Instructors of writing at ISU should use these examples as models and should feel comfortable including digital technologies in their courses in other ways as long as they support students' improvement of their writing processes, adhere to the *Writing at ISU* objectives and WPA outcome statements found below, or aim to improve students' rhetorical abilities.

[Click here to access the complete WPA Outcomes Statement.](#)

- *Research Paper:* Require students to include images or figures in their final research paper after providing instruction on how visual elements can enhance and support compositions.
- *Invention and Revision:* Rather than asking students to turn in a variety of process-related, printed documents throughout the semester, have students create and keep a blog throughout the course. This blog can be used for a variety of exercises, from turning in outlines and invention exercises to reflecting on their own writing process. Students can also use this blog to help one another revise or to turn in smaller parts of their essay (like an introduction) and receive formative feedback from the instructor. Instructors can also give students the option to record (via sound recording, slideshow, or video) their reflections and inventions and post those to the blog instead of completing printed versions of a similar exercise.

### *Textbooks:*

Writing instruction is most commonly provided by the use of a combined rhetoric and handbook, a collection of readings for the application of principles of critical thinking, or through the use of OERs.

**108 Writing about Literature and Culture** – Writing documented papers synthesizing information from several different sources, with emphasis on analyzing ideas that have shaped Western literature and culture. English majors, minors, and candidates in University Honors must take this course during their first semester. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

### *Overview:*

English 108 is an enriched writing course with both writing-specific and broad conceptual goals; consequently, it shares the primary goals of English 105 and English

107, while at the same time including other specific goals related to the study of literature and culture.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five typewritten, double-spaced pages), including at least one researched documented paper.

***Outcomes:***

*Reading:* By the end of English 108, students should be able to

- recognize and understand the functions of standard rhetorical techniques of writing for an audience, organization, paragraphing, sentence structure, and logic;
- understand critical texts and cultural studies of relative complexity;
- read critically and interpret a wide range of literary texts (i.e., texts from different disciplines, written in a variety of styles);
- ask thoughtful and critical questions based on their reading and in response to the ideas of others; and
- discuss what constitutes “great works” from a variety of canonical traditions, while recognizing diversity within those traditions.

*Writing:* By the end of English 108, students should be able to

- apply the principles of the writing process – generating ideas, gathering information, organization, paragraphing, sentence structure, and logic;
- understand the elements of the writing situation, including audience analysis;
- understand the general criteria for academic writing;
- write clear, precise prose of varied lengths and formats (including exposition and argumentation) on relatively complex and sophisticated topics;
- support and develop a clearly stated thesis with specific, relevant, concrete detail;
- organize material clearly and use transitions to indicate that order;
- write coherent, unified body paragraphs of various lengths;
- write effective introductions and conclusions;

- use relatively sophisticated sentence structure and correct grammar and mechanics;
- revise and edit written work;
- evaluate both peer and professionally written essays;
- research effectively, present quotations and paraphrases accurately, incorporate facts effectively, synthesize material with some degree of sophistication, and document correctly; and
- use headings, white space, and fonts to enhance the effectiveness of their papers.

*Thinking:* By the end of English 108, students should be able to

- evaluate their own writing;
- evaluate literary, expository, and argumentative readings;
- recognize fallacies and flaws in logic;
- recognize and employ common patterns of reasoning, particularly reasoning from evidence and assertion as they are employed in argumentation; and
- deal with topics, questions, and problems that (1) have relevance to real life, (2) have no “right” answers, (3) become more complex as students gather more information, (4) require students to recognize what they already know and what they need to research in order to get sufficient information, and (5) may require a variety of research sources and techniques (such as the Internet).

***Textbooks:***

Writing instruction is most commonly provided by the use of a literary anthology and/or selected primary texts for the application of principles of critical thinking, and a handbook or research text for additional work on technical matters and documentation style.

**305 Advanced Expository Writing** – Writing reports, proposals, reviews, and papers in styles appropriate to various professional and academic activities, with emphasis on discovering arguments and arranging material. Topics vary. This course or a substitute approved by the Department of English is required of all students. Prerequisites: English 105 or 107 or 108, and the successful completion of 48 semester hours of course work. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

### *Overview:*

English 305 presents a more sophisticated rhetorical approach to writing than lower-division writing courses, and it emphasizes writing for an audience. Sections may focus on a variety of subject matter including writing in the workplace, citizenship in a democratic society, cultural issues, or professional interests.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five word processed, double-spaced pages), including at least one researched documented paper.

### *Outcomes:*

By the end of English 305, students should be able to

- demonstrate fluency in the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and preparing final papers;
- demonstrate increasing mastery of the varied elements of writing: thesis, stance, content, organization, sentences, diction, and technical matters;
- demonstrate an awareness of rhetorical strategies in various forms of writing;
- exhibit critical thinking as readers and as writers;
- synthesize and critique material from a variety of sources with an emphasis on scholarly and professional publications;
- assess the usefulness and reliability of sources, including Internet sources;
- revise appropriately;
- demonstrate mechanical and grammatical competence;
- document sources properly; and
- understand the relevance of good writing to real-world situations.

### *Textbooks:*

The textbooks for this course are chosen to relate to the emphasis of each section of the course, although instructors often require rhetorics and/or handbooks.

**305T Technical Writing** – Writing in subjects, conventions, formats, and styles applicable to world-of-work and specialized professional settings. Recommended for majors in science, technology, and related areas. Satisfies English 305 requirement.

Prerequisites: English 105 or 107 or 108, and successful completion of 48 semester hours of course work. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

*Overview:*

The purpose of English 305T is to prepare upper-level students to write technical documents in their specialized work and professional careers.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five word processed, double-spaced pages), including at least one researched documented paper.

*Outcomes:*

By the end of 305T, students should be able to

- prepare documents by engaging in a recursive writing process that includes focusing a topic, searching information sources, planning and composing a draft, integrating graphics, documenting sources, revising, editing, and proofreading;
- analyze the inter-related elements of the communication situation, including writer, subject, purpose, and audience;
- write technical prose that is clear, accessible, concise, precise, coherent, and unambiguous;
- produce descriptive, explanatory, and argumentative technical documents in a variety of formats from memos to formal reports;
- prepare résumés and cover letters;
- write abstracts, proposals, and progress reports for a major project;
- write formal reports that include transmittal correspondence, front matter, and back matter;
- organize and format technical documents with multi-level sections, headings, and graphics;
- engage in research on current scientific and technical topics using traditional library and electronic sources;
- interpret, evaluate, and integrate information from varied sources;
- document sources correctly and ethically;
- produce finished documents using word processing and graphics; and

- prepare and deliver oral presentations that use graphics.

*Textbooks:*

Textbooks for English 305T should include a general textbook in technical writing and may include a specialized handbook.

**307 Writing for Teachers of English** – An advanced course in expository writing designed for students in the English Teaching curriculum. To provide experience with the kind of writing expected of secondary teachers, a variety of papers and projects are required, including recommendation letters, request memos, book critiques, and field-researched school profiles. Required of English Teaching majors. Satisfies the English 305 requirement. Prerequisite: English 105 or English 107 or English 108, and successful completion of 48 semester hours of course work. Foundational Studies Credits (FS 2010)

*Overview:*

English 307 is designed to prepare future teachers of English to write during their professional lives; consequently, it has unique, content-specific and project-specific goals.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five word processed, double-spaced pages), including at least one researched documented paper.

*Outcomes:*

By the end of English 307, students should be able to

- demonstrate fluency in the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and preparing final papers;
- demonstrate increasing mastery of the varied elements of writing: thesis, stance, content, organization, sentences, diction, and technical matters;
- exhibit critical thinking as readers and writers;
- write clear, detailed, organized papers of varied lengths in a variety of professional formats: reflective essays, book reviews, critical evaluations, and descriptions of pedagogical practices;
- prepare materials appropriate for future job searches – cover letters, résumés, and course lists;
- synthesize and critique material from a variety of print and electronic sources



with an emphasis on scholarly and professional publications;

- document sources properly;
- discuss and write about the history of English teaching in secondary schools;
- discuss and write about the characteristics, values, and impacts of journals and the opportunities they provide secondary English teachers; and
- discuss and write about critical issues of pedagogy: writing as a process, writing to learn, collaborative work, evaluation and grading, designing writing assignments, and writing within language arts curricula.

*Textbooks:*

Because of these unique goals, the course is best taught with a collection of articles from major pedagogical journals in English and excerpted materials from professional books. A handbook that addresses conventions of research and documentation is a useful supplement.

**308 Practical Literary Criticism**—An advanced writing course exploring and applying various critical approaches to literature. Several papers, including a research paper, are required. Required of English majors and minors on the liberal arts curriculum. Satisfies English 305 requirement. Prerequisites: English 105 or 107 or 108, and the successful completion of 48 semester hours of course work. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

*Overview:*

Designed for English majors and minors in the Liberal Arts curriculum, English 308 provides an introduction to the practices and complexities of literary criticism.

Instructors should assign and grade papers totaling a minimum of 6,500 words (approximately twenty-five word processed, double-spaced pages), including at least one researched documented paper.

*Outcomes:*

By the end of English 308, students should be able to

- demonstrate critical reading and advanced writing skills;
- discuss, write about, and learn to distinguish among major approaches to literary criticism;
- understand the complementary nature of reading literature and responding to and writing criticism;

- respond in writing (e.g., journals) to a variety of literary texts;
- analyze readers' responses to works of literature;
- analyze a critical essay;
- research and write a documented critical essay on a literary topic; and
- compile a work-in-progress portfolio that illustrates and evaluates the process of researching for, reflecting upon, and writing a critical essay on a literary topic.

*Textbooks:*

Because of its unique goals, English 308 is best taught through the use of (1) a primary text that discusses and illustrates different critical perspectives about literature or (2) selected works of literature in a casebook with rich critical commentary. A handbook that addresses conventions of research and documentation is a useful supplement.

**313 New Media Writing**— Composing narratives, blogs, and arguments while also producing new media arguments with memes, videos, websites, and visual narratives for online writing environments. This course uses a rhetorical approach that helps students learn how to critically examine both textual and visual arguments and asks students to create a variety of texts found in online spaces. Prerequisites: English 105 or 107 or 108, and the successful completion of 48 semester hours of course work. Foundational Studies Credits (FS2010: Composition)

*Overview:*

English 313 asks students to critically reflect on their consumption and production of new media technologies while working on their writing processes (drafting, revising, editing). Students use academic writing to critically examine the ways new media technologies have altered the way we present arguments while still utilizing traditional rhetorical practices. Additionally, this course asks students to compose arguments in digital formats (blogs, memes, videos, etc.) while considering how the addition of visual texts alters rhetorical techniques. This course, then, builds students' abilities to critically read and write visual, textual, and digital (online) arguments, a necessary skill for work in the technology-driven twenty-first century.

Instructors should assign a combination of written and new-media assignments with a minimum of 6,500 words.

*Outcomes:*

By the end of English 313, students should be able to

- demonstrate fluency in the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and preparing final papers and digital projects;
- demonstrate increasing mastery of the varied elements of composition: thesis, stance, content, organization, sentences, diction, and technical matters;
- demonstrate an awareness of rhetorical strategies in various forms of writing, both in print and online;
- exhibit critical thinking as readers and as composers with regards to both textual and visual arguments;
- synthesize and critique material from a variety of sources with an emphasis on new media compositions (memes, visual narratives, videos, websites, etc.);
- understand and recognize rhetorical techniques and rhetorical fallacies within print and digital arguments (especially in memes and videos);
- recognize how different genres and mediums of composition are best suited to specific audiences;
- assess the usefulness and reliability of sources, especially academic and Internet sources;
- revise appropriately;
- demonstrate mechanical and grammatical competence;
- document sources properly; and
- understand the relevance of rhetoric and composition to real-world, online situations.

***Textbooks:***

This course uses Sean Morey's *The New Media Writer*.

## APPENDIX A

### What Constitutes an A-F Paper

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#### The Superior Paper (Grade A or B)

**Content.** A significant central idea with some originality or freshness, clearly defined, and supported with concrete, substantial, and consistently relevant detail.

**Overall Organization: Rhetorical and Logical Development.** Theme planned so that it progresses by clearly ordered and necessary stages, and developed with originality and consistent attention to proportion and emphasis; paragraphs coherent, unified, and effectively developed; transitions between paragraphs explicit and effective.

**Sentence Structure.** Sentences skillfully constructed (unified, coherent, forceful, and effectively varied).

**Diction.** Distinctive: fresh, precise, economical, and idiomatic.

**Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling.** Clarity and effectiveness of expression promoted by consistent use of standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

#### The Average Paper (Grade C)

**Content.** Central idea apparent but trivial, trite, clichéd, or too general; supported with some concrete detail, but detail that is occasionally repetitious, irrelevant, or sketchy.

**Overall Organization: Rhetorical and Logical Development.** Plan and method of theme apparent but not consistently fulfilled; developed with only occasional disproportion or inappropriate emphasis; paragraphs unified, coherent, *usually* effective in their development; transitions between paragraphs clear but abrupt, mechanical, or monotonous.

**Sentence Structure.** Sentences correctly constructed but lack distinction.

**Diction.** Appropriate: clear and idiomatic.

**Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling.** Clarity and effectiveness of expression weakened by occasional deviations from standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

#### The Unacceptable Paper (Grade D or F)

**Content.** Central idea lacking or confused, or unsupported with concrete and relevant detail.

**Overall Organization: Rhetorical and Logical Development.** Plan and purpose of theme not apparent; undeveloped, underdeveloped, or developed with irrelevance, redundancy, or inconsistency; paragraphs incoherent, not unified, or undeveloped; transitions between paragraphs unclear, ineffective, or non-existent.

**Sentence Structure.** Sentences not unified; incoherent, run-together, or fused; incomplete, monotonous, or immature.

**Diction.** Inappropriate: vague, unidiomatic, or substandard.

**Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling.** Communication obscured by frequent deviation from standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

## APPENDIX B

### Textbook Suggestions for Composition Classes

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Instructors assigned to composition sections should select textbooks that meet the objectives outlined for the course in *Writing at ISU* and are appropriate for the student demographic enrolled in the course.

Instructors who use rhetorics, readers, and handbooks in their courses are asked to consider if there are available all-in-one textbooks (combined rhetorics, readers, and handbooks) that would be appropriate. Such all-in-ones are often less expensive than buying three different books.

Instructors are also asked to consider whether there are e-book versions of texts available that would be appropriate for their courses. Some publishers offer e-book versions for direct purchase at their websites; others offer such books for purchase in the Kindle or Nook online bookstores. OER (open educational resources) may also be acceptable.

### TEXTBOOKS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

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As new teachers of composition, teaching assistants require textbooks that not only meet the outcomes for first-year composition but also meet the needs of teachers who are new to the classroom or new to the field of composition. Such textbooks will clearly relate pedagogy to scholarship and theory in the field and present a rich apparatus to supplement unit plans provided by the program.

The Director of Writing Programs selects the texts that will be used by teaching assistants with these issues in mind. Other instructors teaching English 101 and English 105 are welcome to use these texts, as well as any other materials prepared for the teaching assistants, if they choose, but they are not required to do so.

#### **English 101**

Taylor, Tim and Linda Copeland. *Ideas and Aims for College Writing*. Pearson, 2016. ISBN: 9780205830602.

#### **English 105:**

Perrin, Robert. *Handbook for College Research*. 4th ed. Mason: Cengage, 2010. Print. ISBN: 99781424083251.

## APPENDIX C

### Course Syllabi and Schedules<sup>2</sup>

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Although no two syllabi are the same, good syllabi include common elements.

***Identifying Information:*** A syllabus should contain

- the course number and official title.
- the semester and year.
- the meeting time and the room.
- the instructor's name, office number, telephone number, e-mail address, and office hours.

***Course Information:*** A syllabus should contain

- the official course description from the *Indiana State University Undergraduate Catalog*.
- a brief rationale for the course.
- an explanation of where the course fits within the major or minor.
- an explanation, when appropriate, of where the course fits within the Foundational Studies program.
- a list of prerequisites, when applicable.
- the course goals, including, but not limited to, those contained in *Writing at ISU*.
- a clarification, when appropriate, of other Foundational Studies requirements: a disability statement, an academic freedom statement, and so on.

***Textbooks and Other Class Materials:*** A syllabus should contain

- full citations for the textbooks required for a course, including edition, when necessary, and ISBNs for texts that are available from online booksellers.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *Literature and Language at Indiana State University*. 2014. 3–5.

- full titles for ProfPaks and information about the vendor, including address and telephone number.
- detailed descriptions of required class materials (dictionaries, notebooks, bluebooks, folders, and other items).
- information on recommended texts and materials.

***Course Policies:*** A syllabus should contain

- policies on attendance and explanations of how it affects performance in the class and the calculation of the final grade; distinctions between excused and unexcused absences – if made – should be explained.
- policies on due dates for assignments, including circumstances for extending deadlines.
- policies for paper submission (i.e., submitted in class, no e-mail submissions, no papers under the office door, etc.).
- policies on plagiarism, with a clear reference to ISU’s “Policy on Academic Integrity.”
- policies on incomplete or unsubmitted work.
- policies about the use of or ban on electronic devices: laptop computers, Blackberries, I-Pods, cell phones, and so on.
- policies of manuscript preparation (i.e., MLA style, 7th edition).

***Course Requirements:*** A syllabus should contain

- a description of written work required for the course, including brief explanations of the number, type, and length of papers.
- an explanation of the number and kind of exams required for the course, with brief explanations of coverage (for example, comprehensive) and testing formats.
- an explanation of the number and type of presentations or projects.
- an explanation of other course requirements: faculty-student conferences, journals, panel discussions, portfolios, and so on.
- an explanation of participation requirements, including comments on expectations for completing in-class work.

***A Schedule of Course Activities:*** A syllabus or a separate first-day handout should contain

- identifying information (course number, semester, instructor), if the schedule is presented as a separate document.
- a day-by-day listing of activities.
- a brief description of each day's activities, including reading or writing assignments to prepare for the day.
- materials (textbooks, handouts, ProfPaks, other items) that are needed each day.
- easily identified due dates for major work: exams, papers, presentations, projects, and panel discussions.

***Information on Grade Calculation:*** A syllabus or a separate first-day handout should contain

- a table, outline, list, or easily interpreted form that identifies all graded work for the course.
- an explanation of the proportional value of all graded work.

***Other Kinds of Information:*** A syllabus or a separate first-day handout may contain

- a philosophy for teaching the course.
- responses to frequently asked questions about the course.



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