

## ENGL 101: WRITING AND RHETORIC I PROGRAM AND COURSE GOALS

**Catalogue Description:** The goal of this course is to provide students with reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies for their college work and beyond. Students will study and practice the writing process while reading and writing about each other's works, as well as the works of published writers. Students will learn how to make effective arguments and how to locate, synthesize, and evaluate relevant information. Prerequisites: Satisfactory score on the ACT, SAT, ASSET, or ACCUPLACER tests or satisfactory grade in Introduction to Critical Composition, ACFN 010. Prerequisite to all other English courses.

**Course Description:** English 101 follows one or more related themes including writing, literacy, and/ or rhetoric. The goal of this course is to provide students the rhetorical tools (see the Writing Program's "Core Rhetorical Concepts" below) to navigate the discourse communities of the university and beyond. This course introduces students to the idea of writing as both a course of study and as a social practice and helps them become flexible writers in a world with increasingly diverse means of communication. Students will study and practice the writing process of academic and public genres and will gain a range of experiences as they learn to write for different audiences. They will not only read the works of published writers but also will read and examine each other's writing.

### **Core Rhetorical Concepts:**

While English 101 and 102 are separate courses with different aims, they share a focus on three core rhetorical concepts: rhetorical knowledge; literacy; and process. Serving as a "common language," these concepts create a clear bridge and a union of purpose between our writing classes and provide students with a rhetorical "toolbox" to help them navigate the various discourse communities and writing tasks they will face as college students and engaged citizens. A description of the core rhetorical concepts shared by both classes follows:

**Rhetorical Knowledge:** understanding how discourse is used to persuade and how texts are situated

*Includes a focus on:*

- Rhetorical analysis – analyzing texts for rhetor choices, situatedness and contextual meaning
- Rhetorical reading – reading a text as situated and motivated, for what it does, not just what it says
- Rhetorical situation – what gives rise to discourse
  - Exigence – need or reason for communication
  - Context – social environment that gives rise to the communication
  - Audience – invoked (imagined) and addressed (actual)
  - Rhetor – writer/speaker

**Literacy:** fluency in forms of communication and culture and recognition of the ways discourse shapes individuals and the relationships between language, knowledge and power

*Includes a focus on:*

- Discourse community – a group that shares goals, beliefs (ideologies) and methods of communication among members, creating a common body of knowledge
- Genre – identifiable types of texts that follow particular conventions
- Conventions – agreements that guide writing and distinguish genres
- Enculturation – learning how to become a member of a discourse community
- Situated knowledge- meaning as contextual and placed within discourse communities
- Digital literacy/ new media literacy – ability to compose and analyze multimodal texts (sound, oral, written, multiple media, online)

**Process:** a recursive variety of activities that comprise writing (incl. planning, drafting, revising, editing)

*Includes a focus on:*

- Dialogue – writing as inquiry-based and as a means of creating shared solutions and knowledge
- Argument (as conversation) – a means of persuading and dialoguing with others
- Claims – assertions that are backed up with evidence
- Critical thinking – analyzing situations and texts; knowing how to frame inquiry
- Reflection – thinking carefully about one’s own thinking and writing processes, including but not limited to self-assessment
- Closed and open research – sources internal to the classroom versus those found through traditional research methods and individual evaluation
- Primary and secondary research – first-hand, collected research like interviews and experiments and research generated by sources other than the writer

**General Studies Competencies and Areas Satisfied:**

This course will satisfy the requirements of the **First Tier, Area 1: Written English**. It addresses the required competencies in **critical thinking** and **lifelong learning**.

**Essential skills and outcomes to be acquired through the course include:**

**Introductory expression of**

- 1) generating thoughtful ideas and rendering focused claims;
- 2) adhering to discourse community conventions and audience expectations;
- 3) synthesizing information from multiple sources and illustrating relationships between ideas
- 4) organizing essays appropriate for a particular rhetorical task;
- 5) thinking and writing about one’s own writing and examining learning progress;
- 6) understanding writing technologies and their impact on 21<sup>st</sup> C literacy practices;

**Writing and Research Requirements:**

This course asks students to work mostly within a “closed,” (or teacher-controlled) research process, which may include drawing from sources such as: class readings; additional teacher-provided texts; primary research; and reflection. While the course might introduce the basics of the open research process, it’s primary objective is not to teach students *how* to conduct academic research. Rather, it aims to provide students a *means* of approaching the concept of research to be built upon in the second-semester course.

English 101 teaches writing as a process and stresses revision, allowing for ample opportunities for students to draft and revise their essays and valuing writing activities such as peer review and conferences.

Students will compose the equivalent of at least 20 polished pages over the semester, with the length and focus of each project left to the instructor’s discretion. However, each course should include:

- At least one project four or more pages long;
- Ample discussion and implementation of the writing and revision process;
- A mix of “high stakes” and “low stakes” writing;
- A focus on writing as a means of learning and creating knowledge and not simply a way of displaying learning or a method for evaluation.

**Portfolios:**

All students in 101 **must** produce a writing portfolio by the end of term minimally consisting of two substantially-revised projects and one reflective letter. This portfolio must account for 25% of each student's final course grade. Students should be informed that a random sample of portfolios will be collected for program assessment each fall, which may require them to submit projects electronically.

**Required texts:**

One of the following rhetoric/ argument guides:

- Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*.
- Lunsford, Andrea and John Ruszkiewicz. *Everything's an Argument*.
- Rottenberg, Annette and Donna Haisty Winchell. *The Structure of Argument*.
- *Writing Spaces: An Open Textbook Project*. <http://writingspaces.org/>
- Or another reader or rhetoric guide approved by the department.

*And:*

The Writing Program Handbook

Bullock, Richard and Francine Weinberg, *The Little Seagull Handbook*

Other texts/readings determined by the instructor.

**Academic Support Center:**

To receive individual instruction and feedback on writing in progress, students should be encouraged to visit The Academic Support Services Center in the basement of Scarborough Library. Tutors are available in-person by [appointment](#) or virtually through [ShepOwl](#).

**Common Reading and Appalachian Heritage Writer-in-Residence:**

Instructors are encouraged to utilize selections from University's Common Reading and related writing contest and/or themes inspired by the Writer-in-Residence and incorporate related events into their syllabi.

**Grading:**

Grades should be consistent with the Writing Program's grading structure outlined in the Handbook and should follow the values: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 0-59=F.

**Works Consulted:**

Beaufort, Anne, *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction*, 2007.

WPA, "WPA Outcomes Statement" <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>

WPA, NCTE & NWP, "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing"  
<http://wpacouncil.org/framework>