I. Course Objectives

On completion of ENG 101, Standard Freshman Composition, the student will be able to:

1. Plan and write preliminary drafts of a series of papers. Some processes involved include brainstorming, making lists, outlining, keeping a journal, and doing freewriting.

2. Revise drafts so that they have clearly stated or implied main ideas which are developed fully.

3. Edit final drafts to produce papers that are relatively free of errors in spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure.

4. Demonstrate the ability to use this writing process to produce a series of well-organized, fully-developed essays of various types and learn different ways to organize and develop an essay according to purpose and audience. Some methods might include examples, anecdotes, logical reasons, statistics, and references to authority.

5. Demonstrate the ability to incorporate secondary material in support of the central point and use the appropriate documentation format(s).

6. Demonstrate those skills needed to:
   a. add specific details and facts, as needed;
   b. change passive verbs to active where appropriate;
   c. improve sentence variety through sentence combining;
   d. eliminate wordiness;
   e. use appropriate transitional words, phrases, or paragraphs where needed;
   f. correct unnecessary shifts in verb tense and pronoun reference;
   g. edit diction for appropriate level of usage, connotation, specificity, and figurative language;
   h. correct the punctuation.

Course’s Approach to Writing

1. Everyone is a writer, whether or not he or she has realized it.

2. Everyone is an expert on his / her own experience, which is a richer mine of material for writing than we at first realize. For the writer to concentrate fully on writing, subject matter must be left open to the writer’s choice and experiment, eliminating the confusion of a writer wrestling with alien subject matter.

3. To be successful as writers, people must construct — put themselves into — what happens in them to trigger off writing. As we re-encounter events, people, and ideas, we grow in imagination, empathy, and understanding.

   Writing starts with looking at what's there in us — the "felt sense" that yet has no words, that mysterious underlying element which we can't yet put into words, like a "tip of the tongue" sense, something we might call "inner speech" or the wisdom that's stored in our bodies. The more we project ourselves into the subjects we write about, the better a writer we can be.

4. We must learn effective use of the full, non-linear writing process — prewriting, writing, and rewriting, as discussed later in this outline. Early in the process, the writer must develop flow and effectiveness in treating the subject. The process can be mastered only through consistent practice and attention.

5. In the later global and local editing phases, the writer must focus on purpose and audience, on successfully realizing purpose for the intended audience.

Purpose. A successful piece of writing is planned, drafted, and revised with a clear and steady sense of its overall purpose. In final draft form, every sentence, paragraph, or overall essay must succeed in organization, development, and expression.

Organization. There is a clear main purpose throughout, and all portions of the writing directly carry out that purpose.

Development. There are enough ideas or detail to engage the reader and directly fulfill the purpose of the writing.
Expression. The writing is clear, purposeful, efficient, and appropriate, which is no small achievement!

6. The Writer’s Growth. Writing is a learning process, a process of growth. To be effective, the writer must grow as:
   a. A writer with a subject to communicate.
   b. A friendly, constructively critical editor of writing, someone inside who says, "I bet that can be done better" and then goes ahead to do so.
   c. A reader fully aware that what gets communicated in writing can come only through words on the page.

Our Potential as Writers. There is no writer who cannot do something well in writing; our hope is to bring other writing elements up to that mark. All writers have great untapped resources within themselves.

II. Methods for Accomplishing Objectives
   1. Instructor’s presentation provides introductory material and sets the context of class discussion and other activities.
   2. In-class writing exercises reinforce basic concepts of developing sentences, descriptive detail, paragraphs, and short essays through a succession of drafts. These also help improve writing skills in all areas — organization, development, and expression.
   3. Specific reading and writing exercises from texts or handouts target development of specific writing skills and awareness.
      All writing assignments are accompanied by sample papers that give specific direction for fulfilling the assignment. Close examination of these samples is essential. On preassigned reading material, quizzes may happen at any time.
   4. Peer editing in small groups helps provide the sense of audience and helps develop editing and self-assessment skills in the student. Writing is fostered well by a small community of people — here, the class — who feel comfortable sharing writing, ideas, and generous, constructive suggestion. All this works only when people are willing to take risks and open up in class.
   5. Comment on submitted drafts and subsequent guided instructor supervision, often one-on-one, helps identify writing strengths and weaknesses in the individual case and fosters strengthening of all needed skills. In some cases, conferences may be needed for one-on-one instructor / student exchange. Collectively, course activities exercise a wide range of skills in structuring, developing, and expressing ideas for a variety of purposes.

III. Student Requirements for Completing the Course
   1. Required readings and specific essays are assigned. Since learning to meet a deadline is important, all written work must be completed on time. Students who lag in this respect generally do not complete the course.
   2. Many in-class writing exercises are given, such as memory writing, dialogue writing, sketches, editing, sentence revision, diction choice, etc. Full student participation is expected.
   3. Students must regularly and successfully participate in the peer editing process. Students provide audience reaction and generous, constructive commentary on sample assignments.
   4. Students must produce a series of revised "final draft" writing assignments during the semester, including a personal narrative, a process paper or comparison / contrast, and an argumentative paper. In addition, one sample of in-class writing is included. Essays generated are the result of the complete writing process — brainstorming, planning, drafting, successive revision, and global and local editing.
   5. In addition to these essay, the student completes an assigned research project, according to very specific requirements.
   6. Students who have been absent are responsible for being prepared in class when they return from absence.
   7. In all cases, students are responsible for what they do, for what they may fail to do, for what decisions they make, and for the consequences of those decisions.

IV. Grading Practices, Lateness, Rewrites
   90% of the student's grade is based on performance on the assigned papers (60% on the series of four essays, 30% on the research project); 10% is based on class discussion/ participation / engagement in the writing process, and effective improvement on any early deficiencies.

Lateness Policy. All papers are expected on time. For paper due dates, absence does not excuse failure to deliver a paper on time. The same rules apply to all, and it is absolutely unfair to all other students that someone absent be allowed an automatic extension.

What If...

... you are absent on the due date but want to get the paper in on time? Submit the paper early. Or if you know you will be absent on that date, tell your
instructor in advance and, before the due date, make approved arrangements for delivery. Otherwise, your late paper is — late.

... your computer has problems? Use another computer, either a free-access computer at the college or at a public library. Keep backups on disk of all your work.

... your printer doesn’t work? Bring in your paper on disk and print it at the college on the due date.

... you want to e-mail submissions? This can be done only in extraordinary circumstances and with prior permission, since providing printed copy is the student’s responsibility. Also, at home, I cannot open attachments; it’s better if you paste your text into the whole message.

Penalties for lateness of up to one week. During the semester, the student may have one first draft up to one week late without grade penalty. This does not apply to the research project, which must be on-time.

Beyond one paper late by one week, lateness diminishes by one grade level the final grade that any paper may get. For all cases of lateness — first or subsequent — I also will accept no further rewrites on that paper.

Maximum allowable lateness. No first drafts more than one week late will be accepted at all. Since the student must complete all papers to pass the course, this also means that the student cannot finish the course. Do not put yourself in this situation.

Rewrite Policy. Since student writing greatly benefits from successive revision, the personal narrative, the structured paper (process of comparison/contrast), and the argument may go through two drafts reviewed by the instructor. To qualify for a rewrite, the papers must be:

Delivered on time (no late papers may be rewritten).

Good faith efforts (careless, hasty, tossed off efforts with great problems in development or expression simply to qualify as on time submissions will be denied a rewrite).

To be accepted, all revisions must have the previous markup attached.

√ All assigned papers must be completed for the student to receive a passing grade in the course.

√ Any instance of plagiarism results in a failing grade in the course. See Section IX.

V. Student Absence, Lateness, General Behavior

1. Attendance is mandatory. If a student finds it absolutely necessary to be absent, he/she has a maximum of four allowable absences. Naturally, absences are to be saved for emergencies. After four absences, the student is removed from the class roster and will get a final grade of W or F.

Since wearing headphones is a way of shutting out the surrounding world, students who wear them in class are considered absent.

2. Students must commit themselves to be in class on time. Late students must see that the record is altered at the end of the class. Depending on duration, two to three latenesses may count as one full absence.

3. Students are responsible for all material covered during a period of absence and are expected to enter prepared for all classes; absence is no excuse for lack of preparation.


I expect you to:

√ Attend every class, to arrive at class on time, and to work until the class period has ended.
√ Bring in, and have with you, all needed in-class items — e.g., books, paper, pens.
√ Prepare reading and writing assignments on time.
√ Turn off all cell phones or messaging devices, etc. People playing with personal electronic devices during class will be dismissed from that class.
√ Refrain from wearing headphones. Students who wear headphones in class are considered absent.
√ Complete all the daily assignments and be prepared to respond in class.
√ Follow assignments in terms of content and format.
√ Notify me if an emergency prevents your attendance.
√ Help your classmates learn by your responses to their writing and to writing samples that we examine as a class.
√ Spend about six hours a week out of class for writing and class preparation.
√ Out of respect for your classmates, your instructor, and the educational process, behave in class as a mature and responsible student.Behavior detrimental to education can cause expulsion from the class session; in repeated
cases, it can result in expulsion from the course itself.

You may expect me to:

√ Be in class every day (or provide qualified substitute and assignment in case of emergency).
√ Expel disruptive students.
√ Have no headphones or cellphones.
√ Prepare each topic thoroughly.
√ Help you set writing goals by analyzing your strengths and needs.
√ Keep established office hours.
√ Read your written work promptly, thoughtfully, and objectively.
√ Be courteous and considerate.

VI. Texts


Much text material comes through handouts distributed through the semester. These make practically a textbook in themselves; *hang on to them*.

Also useful and helpful are:

- a solid dictionary (150,000 words or more)
- a thesaurus
- a spelling lookup.

VII. Manuscript Format For Submitted Papers

"Final" copy for all revised, out-of-class writings are typed — or printed via computer — with an appropriately dark ribbon or adequate ink or laser cartridge. With all such drafts, attach previous drafts, with numbers (D1, D2. etc.) and dates indicated.

Use double space or space-and-a-half spacing. In all cases, write only on one side of the paper. Single-spaced submissions will not be accepted.

Proofread and make manual corrections if necessary. All submitted papers are assumed to be proofread and correct according to the student’s judgment.

VIII. Weekly Outline of Topics:


September 6, 8: Sept. 6: No class — Labor Day. Basic Writing Problems. Preliminary Writing Assignment.


20, 22: Preliminary Writing Assignment returned. Review of Personal Narrative Assignment.


18, 20: Assignment for Argumentative Paper. Argumentation and Argumentative Tactics. Sample Papers


November 1, 3: The Research Assignment. Argumentative Paper First Draft Due (11/3).

8, 10: In-class essay.


29, Dec. 1: First conferences. Research outline due for approval.

December 6, 8: Second conferences. Partial draft due.

13, 15: Research Assignment Due (12/15).

20: No class: Friday classes meet. Final outcomes available in Orient-123.

IX. Plagiarism

SCCC catalog: "Students should realize that presenting the words and ideas of others as their own is dishonest. In writing, students must fully acknowledge the source of any paraphrased passages and any ideas which they have borrowed. Failure to conform to these academic standards is plagiarism and may result in a failing grade and/or serious disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Code of
Conduct." Plagiarism, p. 57. One instance of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

Grade Levels / Symptoms

The Threshold Principle: All papers are graded on a composite of organization, development, and expression, as they fulfill the purpose of a specific assignment. In successfully carrying out any purpose, a competent paper needs a basic threshold strength, a critical mass of strength in all three areas. Likewise, serious deficiency in any area can make a paper significantly weak.

On the college level, basic problems in usage or sentence structure do serious damage to papers. In the "real" world, people routinely lose job and life opportunities when letters of application or résumés contain basic errors; employers regard the writers as illiterate and careless and throw their papers immediately into the trash. The survivor learns to avoid this!!!

A Paper: The A paper demonstrates originality, clarity, and complexity of thought. The author has developed a distinctive voice and has satisfied all the requirements of the assignment. The author’s intentions are clearly stated. Treatment of material is thorough, while the essay remains a unified, cohesive whole.

The thesis statement is supported throughout with concrete detail, specific examples, and lively language. Paragraphs have clearly stated topic sentences, all of which establish a clear pattern of development and maintain the essay’s focus. Transitions throughout are natural, strong, effective, and fluid, without the hint of contrivance or artificiality.

Diction is fresh, economical, and vigorous. Sentences clearly establish their main ideas and employ a refreshing variety of structures. There are few, if any, mechanical lapses.

B Paper: The thesis or topic is clear and generally well-developed or supported, with clear competence in presenting and organizing details, framing an argument, developing an idea.

The writer may be attempting something unique or original in terms of style and presentation; this attempt may not be wholly successful, but the paper reflects both the writer’s vision and willingness to take risk. The writer is developing a distinctive voice, although this voice may not be as strong, consistent, or original as in the A paper.

The paper demonstrates overall mechanical and syntactical skill.

C Paper: This paper contains a clear topic sentence / thesis statement supported by some examples. The central idea may require more support, examples, or other means of development than the writer provides. The paper shows basic understanding of organization, but transitions sometimes may be abrupt or mechanical. It may show clarity in thinking while lacking complexity in its presentation of those thoughts; it may use clichés combined with simplistic reasoning.

Sentences are reasonably clear, with some variation in structure. The paper contains few errors in language and mechanics. It shows some originality or variation in syntax.

The C paper may show greater strength in the areas cited above while containing more mechanical lapses. Likewise, it may be stronger in the areas cited above while being significantly shorter than the length requested.

The C paper may be an otherwise excellent essay that demonstrates one of the following weaknesses — fails to explore the assigned issue sufficiently, uses a different rhetorical strategy from the one assigned, lacks a thesis and / or enough supporting detail, has been inadequately proofread by the writer.

Overall, the C paper does not show the degree of careful judgment, development of ideas, and attention to editing / proofreading that is evident in the B paper.

D Paper: This paper may contain a thesis statement but little or no supporting concrete detail, or it may not have a clear thesis statement at all. The essay may be on the topic but is not organized in any logical pattern; it also may neglect to follow the assigned strategy (i.e., narrative, contrast, etc.) or topic.

This paper contains many serious errors in punctuation and / or spelling. Language is flawed by weak word choice (poor diction) and sentences that are almost identical in structure and length (no syntactic variation). The D essay may be shorter than the length assigned and / or give the impression of begin a hurried draft with little or no revision.

F Paper: Like the D paper, only worse.

Commentary on Papers

All submitted papers receive extensive commentary aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses and to help direct effective rewriting of the paper. Marginal and end commentary deals with issues of organization and development as they occur.

Specifics of sentence structure, punctuation, style, documentation, and usage generally are handled by a numbered code keyed to an attached sheet,
which refers directly to a source that explains the problems indicated.

Remember that the competent student must become responsible as his or her own editor, and papers submitted are assumed to have been proofread and are assumed correct in the student’s eyes. It is my role to evaluate your paper, but it is not my role to be your copy editor.

Additional text markups:
- problem in spelling
- W word selection problem
- eliminate item crossed out
- wordy wordy as written – revise
- move (according to arrow)
- reverse order
- start new paragraph here
- join together (e.g., take over)
- awk awkward expression – revise
- ? unclear meaning or reference

Appendix: A Brief Checklist
(What to Ask Yourself toward Revising or Rewriting)

Organization:
- √ Main point: Does the paper have a clear thesis or main point? Is the purpose made clear early in the paper?
- √ Relevance: Are all ideas, examples, or details in the paper relevant to the paper's main purpose?
- √ Order of development: Is there a better, more effective order for presenting your material? If you suspect so, probably there is a better order. Try outlining and then rewriting. Make a second approach with fresh eyes.
- √ Straightforwardness: Is there unnecessary repetition of ideas, examples, or illustrations? Does the paper ramble or wander too much? An essay should develop its purpose clearly and straightforwardly, crisply enough to be understood fully when it is first read.
- √ Lead: Does your lead draw in the reader, arouse curiosity, act as an effective “hook”? Does the ending effectively draw your article to a close?
- √ Order of arguments: If the paper is persuasive, are your arguments arranged so they get more forceful as you reach toward the end?

Development:
- √ Sufficiency of support: Are there enough supporting ideas, examples, or specific detail to carry out your overall purpose?
- √ Development of support: Are the supporting ideas or illustrations developed as much as they need to be to carry out your purpose or carry your subject alive to your audience?
- √ Loose ends: Does anything need further explanation? Are examples needed to clarify very abstract phrases?
- √ Oversimplification: Are ideas too oversimplified to carry out the paper's purpose?
- √ Fairmindedness (argument): If the paper is argumentative, do you give a sense that you have thought through the issue on both sides, enough to make you seem reasonable and fair-minded?

Expression:
- √ Straightforwardness: Are ideas expressed simply and straightforwardly, with a good density of meaning to words? Clear, straightforward prose is no small achievement!
- √ Clarity: Are all ideas clearly expressed, or do sentences and phrases labor hard to express their meaning?
- √ Movement, emphasis: Are sentences choppy or clogged with too much material? Are they awkwardly strung together? Do your words and sentence patterns lend the right amount of emphasis to your ideas?
- √ Sentence variety: Is there sentence variety, or are sentences strung out at length in the same monotonous form?
- √ Wordiness, etc.: Is the line-by-line writing burdened by wordiness, clichés, or excessive passive voice?
- √ Diction: Is selection of diction appropriate, purposeful, and effective?
- Many routinely lose one or two grade levels by not working on these last two —
- √ Grammar, mechanics: Have you checked the following thoroughly: usage, grammar, sentence structure, spelling? Poor writing mechanics can devastate an otherwise good paper and, unfortunately, probably the writer as well. Spare yourself from this!
- √ Proofreading: Has the paper been proofread? And proofread again?

Keys to Success in ENG 101

1. Time Management. Plan your time well. Don't be overcommitted — don't take too many classes combined with too many hours of work, childcare,
etc., or whatever may be your situation. Try to budget for what you need. Remember that course work requires much more time out of class than it does in class.

2. **Commitment to the Course.** Look at taking the course as taking on a job — for what you do and how well you do, you are accountable to your supervisor. Based on what you do and how well you do it, your supervisor will evaluate how well you perform.

**Finish all assignments on time.** Good time management will help this happen. How well you keep focused and organized will be very clear soon into the semester.

**Don't look for shortcuts or rely on magic.** Taking shortcuts usually means you learn very little of what the assignment could teach you, and usually this means you do poorly as well. If the paper is due the next day and you have not even started it, you are in a tight spot and probably will do poorly.

**Ask questions when you are confused or seem lost.** Try to meet with your professor during office hours to discuss what you're concerned about. Or call up your professor. Overcome shyness, reach out, and help yourself. No one can do well when confused and bewildered; when you connect with your professor or the Skills Center, you'll be more confident about yourself and your progress.

**Be an active learner — all learning means that you have to take an active approach.** This is not like K-Mart, where you hand over some money and then take home a product. Instead, learning means making something new become a part of you. Growing means action. After all, do we think hockey or football players get in shape by being couch potatoes? An active learner needs an exercised and active mind.

3. **Understand that this is College. Quality Counts. The Buck Stops Here.** In high school writing, you often may have handed in papers that get very little comment, so you learned practically nothing about what you need to do to make your writing better.

**If that was the case, you often have to make up a lot of ground to work on a college level.** When the first paper is evaluated, many do very poorly and seem surprised. When I go over your papers, I write many comments on organization and development. **When it comes to expression, I look at every sentence, word, and punctuation mark. So expect that up front.**