Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Common Summer Reading selection for 2016?
The Composition Program has selected a collection of TED Talks (short for Technology, Entertainment and Design) and corresponding articles focused around the common theme of “Thinking like a Human.”

Why does the SUNY New Paltz Composition Program require first-year students to read over the summer?
SUNY New Paltz, like many colleges and universities across the country, has implemented a common summer reading program for several reasons. We want to reinforce the principle that engaging in critical reading is an important part of being a member of an academic community. To that end, we create a study guide that includes discussion questions and writing assignments to help students think about the text(s) as they are reading. We also hope that this program will provide a means by which our incoming students become part of the academic community here at SUNY New Paltz. By encouraging first-year students to engage in critical reading, discussion, and to think about rhetorical situations in written and oral texts—whether in their Composition classrooms or in extracurricular settings—the reading initiative invites dialogue among students as well as between students and faculty. We are currently coordinating extra-curricular programming (in previous years, we have sponsored a photography exhibit, author speaking engagements, film screenings, and residence hall discussion groups), to be announced in Composition classes this fall.

Does every first-year student read the selection(s)?
Almost. Those students enrolled in Composition I or Composition II in the Fall semester will be required to read the text. However, we encourage those students who are in General Honors English and Intermediate Composition to read them, too, and to take part in campus discussions and events. Check with your instructor if you have questions.

Where do students find the background material, discussion questions, and writing assignments associated with the summer reading?
Throughout the summer, first-year students can visit the following link to introductory materials.

Other Common Summer Reading materials may later be posted on Composition course sites by individual instructors. When students come to SUNY New Paltz, they will be issued a computer ID and password to allow them access to our campus Blackboard site for this purpose. Students should check their campus email accounts regularly for updates on related study materials and events.

If you have any questions, email Joann K. Deiudicibus, Composition Program Staff Assistant: deiudicj@zmail.newpaltz.edu