STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT NEW PALTZ
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

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# Composition Program Handbook

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Composing texts involves complicated processes of analyzing a situation, thinking critically about options, and stylistically creating and revising material in the proper format. Because of the importance and complexity of writing for academic, business, and personal settings, SUNY New Paltz requires two distinct writing courses that ALL students must complete—Composition I (ENG 160) and Composition II (ENG 180) or its course equivalent Honors English II (ENG 206). Students placed into Composition I upon matriculation at SUNY - New Paltz must begin the course sequence in their first semester, and complete all required Composition courses within their first year. Students placed into Composition II or Honors English II must complete the course within the first year of matriculation at SUNY New Paltz. The first course teaches more general stylistic, mechanical, rhetorical, and analytical skills while the second teaches more advanced argument and research skills. Students eligible for Honor s English II are interested in literature and writing.

Please use this guide to be sure you meet your Composition I and II requirements.

1. Composition I and Composition II are taken in a two-semester sequence upon matriculation to complete the General Education III (GEIII) requirement. If, FOR ANY REASON, the Composition courses are taken out of sequence, this does not provide exemption status for Composition I. Both courses cover specific writing techniques and skills and are not redundant syllabi. CLEP scores must be received before the student matriculates; AP and IB scores must be received within the first week of classes of the semester that the student matriculates.
2. No student may take more than one Composition course at a time to satisfy the Composition requirement.
3. No student may withdraw from Composition for any reason.
4. Attending the library session as assigned is mandatory to comply with the GEIII Information Literacy Component for Composition I and II. If a student is absent from the library session, he or she must make arrangements to make up the session.
5. Any student with a disability should notify his or her instructor as early in the semester as possible so proper arrangements can be made to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. An attendance requirement is in effect in all Composition courses with grade reductions beginning with the third unexcused absence. Missing more than two class meetings will reduce a grade in this course by 1/3 of a letter grade per absence through six absences. Three late arrivals constitute an absence.
7. A student must prepare and submit a passing portfolio at the end of Composition I in order to move on to Composition II. A student who has exceeded the number of absences permitted, who has not completed all the work required, or who has not earned a passing grade (D or better) prior to the final exam may not submit a portfolio.
8. Some students with weak writing skills may need more than one semester to pass Composition I or II. If a student fails Composition I or II because his or her writing is too weak to pass (but is not failing due to excessive absence or inability to complete at least 60% of the assignments) a Repeat (“R”) grade may be granted. An “R” grade will not affect a student’s cumulative average, jeopardize tenure at the college, or endanger financial aid. An “R” grade requires the student to repeat the course the following semester. The student then is assigned the grade earned in the repeated class.
9. In some cases, students who submit Composition I portfolios will be given a provisional pass. This grade means that the student must immediately enroll in a Composition II Supplemental Writing Workshop (SWW). If a student elects NOT to enroll in an SWW section of Composition II, the student will receive an “R” and must repeat Composition I. Conversely, those students who demonstrate particularly sophisticated writing skills may be recommended to enroll in General Honors English II if they wish.
10. Statement on Academic Integrity: “Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their academic work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offences, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action” (Faculty Handbook, p. 33).

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged (intentional or unintentional) use of summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, language, statistics, or ideas from articles or other information sources, including the Internet. Cases of plagiarism must be reported to the Department of English Chair and the Academic Dean.
SUNY NEW PALTZ COMPOSITION PROGRAM TRANSFER & ACCREDITATION POLICIES

Under specific circumstances, you may qualify for Composition exemption or transfer credit.

**Composition I:**

1. Transfer students who have taken a Composition course at another college may submit transcripts to Transfer Advising for review. These must be received at the mid-point of the first semester the student matriculates (please check for specific deadline date with Transfer Advising).
2. If a student receives a score of 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language or Literature AP exams, the student may receive Composition I exemption. Transfer Advising must receive the official transcript within the first week of the semester that the student matriculates for the student to register for Composition II.
3. If a student receives a score of 70 or above on the CLEP exam (the **College Composition Exam** only, **NOT** the Composition Modular Exam), the student may be exempt from Composition I. CLEP scores must be received prior to matriculation.
4. If a student earns a 5 or higher in English through the International Baccalaureate Program, the student may be exempt from Composition I. IB scores must be received prior to matriculation.
5. If a student earns high school grades and scores on the SAT that meet the standards listed in the Composition Placement Rubric, the student may be exempt from Composition I.
6. Students who, after a significant time, are returning to college may submit a portfolio of work that must include samples of expository, argument, and informational essays. This material may include professional writing (i.e., work that the returning student may have completed in the workplace). One essay must have at least three sources cited in MLA format.

**Composition II:**

7. Composition II emphasizes academic argument, rhetoric, and research and is not redundant with Composition I. Unless a student has completed the Composition I and II sequence from an accredited college, only under exceptional circumstances may exemption be granted from Composition II.
8. If a student has successfully received exemption for the Composition I requirement and has not successfully passed a Composition II course (either Composition II is not offered at the prior institution of study or the student has not passed a course comparable to SUNY New Paltz's Composition II), the student must complete Composition II within the first year of study. An exemption for Composition I does not indicate an exemption for Composition II.
9. If a transfer student has completed a similar course elsewhere that meets Composition II objectives, then the student must submit, **before the end of the first week of classes**, the following to the Composition Program:
   a. Official description and syllabus for the course in question;
   b. Transcript from original college that notes the grade for the course in question;
   c. Portfolio of work (often 20-25 pages) completed for the writing course comparable to Composition II that includes a properly documented research paper (typically 6-8 pages) and three other academic essays (3-5 pages) from the course in question.
   If appropriate, the Composition Program will ask each student seeking exemption to write a timed essay in our office.
10. Any student denied exemption is required to register for the appropriate level of Composition as soon as possible. **Completion of the Composition sequence is mandatory to graduate.**
11. All students who matriculate at SUNY New Paltz must complete the Composition sequence through Composition II in order to fulfill the General Education III requirement for Composition. Composition I and Composition II are taken in a two-semester sequence. If, FOR ANY REASON, the Composition courses are taken out of sequence, this does not provide exemption status for Composition I.

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PART ONE:

THE ESSENTIALS
Overall, courses offered by the Composition Program assist students in developing the capacities to think critically and to expand their depth of knowledge in order to become lifelong learners as well as productive citizens and members of their society.

In particular, students who complete courses in Composition should be able to:

- Write well-developed, well-organized personal, academic, and professional essays in different rhetorical situations (i.e., for different purposes, occasions, and audiences) using a variety of rhetorical modes (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and particularly argument and interpretation).

- Understand and practice composing processes (i.e., gathering, shaping, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading) and be able to transfer these skills to effectively read and critique their own writing as well as that of others.

- Use critical thinking and reasoning skills to analyze, to infer, to synthesize, to interpret, and to evaluate effectively, including information, arguments (i.e., premise, deductive and inductive reasoning, forms of appeal, and forms of evidence), and literary works as well as to argue effectively (i.e., to develop a position, reasons, evidence, and warrants) when presenting information or analyzing and interpreting texts.

- Conduct and document research (i.e., develop a research topic and search strategy; use general or specialized databases; use Internet search engines; locate, retrieve, and evaluate information sources; organize, synthesize, and evaluate information; construct a bibliography; cite information sources used in-text for summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, and ideas; and follow guidelines for academic integrity governing use of primary and secondary sources).

- Improve oral presentation skills (i.e., to present expressive, informative, or persuasive speeches) and critique the oral discourse of members of diverse learning communities.

- Continue to develop writing, critical thinking, critical reading, research, documentation, and speaking skills in discipline-specific classes beyond Composition classes (e.g., in a writing-intensive course in their selected majors).

- Remain conversant in developing texts, technologies, composing strategies (including those requiring computer skills), and standards recognized in the field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies.

- Initiate reading, writing, and speaking experiences independent of course work (e.g., read self-selected works for pleasure, intellectual enrichment, or critical investigation and examination; attend, perform, or participate in public forums, such as poetry or fiction reading or a research conference; or submit writing to campus or professional publications).
The Composition Program consists of Composition I and II, Composition I and II SWW, Composition I and II ESL/SWW, and General Honors English II courses.

Students are required to complete Composition I and II: this is a college requirement for graduation and holds for all majors; other English courses will not substitute for them. Students who earn a score of 3 or better on an Advanced Placement in English Exam may be exempted from Composition I. Those with a 4 or 5 are then are placed in General Honors English II, if possible.

Students must take their Composition courses in a two-step sequence: first, Composition I; second, Composition II. Composition I stresses the composing process, emphasizes reflection about writing itself, and moves from expressive to expository and persuasive writing; i.e., from writing for self to writing to inform and influence others. The course concentrates on writing modes, genres, and situations; it also considers forms of writing required in courses across the disciplines. Composition II stresses the development of critical and analytic thinking and is devoted to a discussion of research and argumentation, focusing on the discourse around a specific topic. Both Composition I and Composition II include critical analysis of texts.

Supplemental Writing Workshop
Students who score levels 1-2 on the placement scale for Composition will be required to enroll in specially designated sections of Composition I entitled Composition I-Supplemental Writing Workshops (SWW). Students placed into these sections must take these sections. A companion course will be offered in the second semester, and students who are successful in the first will be urged to continue their requirements in Composition II SWW. (This curricular initiative is the result of a collaboration of the Educational Opportunity Program, The Center for Student Success, the Haggerty English Language Pathway Program, and the English Department.) These sections will be composed of the regular class sessions, a one-hour non-credit supplemental writing workshop, and required tutoring. Through these supplemental forms of instruction and tutorial assistance students will gain the skills needed to succeed in the course. Composition I and II SWW courses count as regular first-year Composition courses.

Composition I and II ESL/SWW courses are designed for students whose native language is other than English. Composition I and II ESL/SWW courses count as regular first-year Composition courses. These courses are designed for students still making a transition from their native language to English. Some students who have weak writing and language backgrounds, however, may need more than one semester to pass the course; they will be able to receive an “R” grade and repeat the course (without hurting their GPA) the following term.

Students interested in literature who have demonstrated expertise in writing on the departmental placement examination are placed into General Honors English; students also may enter the General Honors English sequence by referral. The curriculum of the General Honors English sequence is quite different from Composition I and II. The courses focus on analysis and in-depth discussion of literary texts while requiring a substantive amount of writing.
CATALOG DESCRIPTIONS

ENG160 COMPOSITION I (3)
Training in critical reading, the process of composing, academic forms of writing, and computer literacy. Movement from expressive to expository writing. Papers assigned to develop particular writing techniques. A first-semester English course.

ENG180 COMPOSITION II (3)
Training in critical reading and academic writing, particularly research, critical analysis, and argumentation. Oral presentation and library component. Papers assigned to develop academic writing skills, including the research essay. Prerequisites: ENG160

ENG206 GENERAL HONORS ENGLISH II (3)
A writing course based on thematically related readings in literature, the arts, and sciences. Designed for intellectually curious and industrious students who have demonstrated writing proficiency. May be substituted for Composition II. Prerequisites: PI OR PC ENG160 OR ENG205

ENG207 INTERMEDIATE COMPOSITION (3)
Designed to prepare students for college writing assignments in various disciplines. Offers opportunities to enhance critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. (This course is primarily a Composition II equivalent-course designed for transfer students with some writing experience.)

Composition I

Composition I develops students’ abilities to write grammatical and coherent sentences and to develop ideas fully and in an organized fashion. The course will develop students’ abilities to produce distinctive pieces of writing based upon individual thinking and experience. It also will stress and lead students through the composing process as they develop better understanding of their own writing processes. This orientation requires that students write and revise. Revision skills are stressed as students practice different writing strategies in successive drafts. This process also includes discussion of selected readings and written responses to them. Students completing the course will be capable of producing expressive, expository, and argumentative writing as well as other papers reflecting a variety of approaches to thinking and writing. In short, all Composition I classes concentrate on the development of critical thinking and reading, the process of writing, and forms of academic prose to promote effective communication skills.

Composition I Course Objectives
By semester’s end, students will demonstrate the ability to:
1. Write well in different rhetorical situations and modes, i.e., for different purposes, occasions, and audiences.
2. Understand and reflect on key concepts about writing and rhetoric (style, exigence, voice, invention, etc.).
3. Craft well-developed, well-organized, clear, and grammatical sentences, paragraphs, and essays.
4. Think and write as college students (reflecting, observing, explaining, comparing, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting).
5. Approach writing as a process (planning, shaping, drafting, revising, and editing).
6. Critique one’s own writing and the writing of others through reflection on important concepts and issues in composition studies.
7. Evaluate sources of information using criteria such as currency, authority, objectivity, accuracy, specificity, and relevance.
8. Use information ethically and legally.
9. Develop oral presentation skills.
10. Develop computer and library information literacy skills.

**Composition I Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution**

- Four take-home essays of approximately 750-1000 words each: 60% (or more)
- An in-class timed essay: 5%
- Quizzes and informal writing exercises: 10%
- Reader-response journal: 10%
- Oral component: 5%
- Class participation and attendance: 5%
- Participation in library skills workshop: 5%
- Final-exit essay/in-class timed essay: P/F
- Portfolio: P/F

**Course Exiting Requirements**

In order to fulfill the GEIII Composition requirement students must earn a course grade of D or better and are required to submit portfolios of their work for review by Composition Program faculty. Each portfolio includes a **required** final-exit essay, which must be prepared on Common Final Exam Day as scheduled by the university.

No student passes Composition I without submitting a satisfactory portfolio. To be eligible to submit portfolios, students must demonstrate competency in grammar and usage through an editing exercise. No student who has exceeded the number of absences permitted in the course, or who has not completed all the work required in the course, or who has not earned a passing grade (D or better) as of the day of the final-exit assessment will be allowed to submit a portfolio.

Portfolios are graded as passing if they are deemed a level 4 on the placement and proficiency scale (see Appendix A, *Composition Program Handbook*, “Placement and Proficiency Standards,” including rubric, p. 44). Portfolios that do not contain the required work (see below) are not graded. Students whose portfolios receive a failing grade receive a Repeat (R) grade and must repeat the course. There are no additional procedures of appeal.

Students who are not eligible to submit a final portfolio and who are not failing the course or earning a D- because of poor work, excessive absence, or inability to complete the requirements also may be assigned an “R” instead of a D- or F, if the instructor chooses to do so; i.e., the R grade may be assigned to students who have done their best but are still failing (or nearly so) the course. This grade does not affect a student’s cumulative average or endanger financial aid. He or she will repeat the course the following semester, and his or her grade will be based on the work done in the repeated course.

**The Portfolio**

The final portfolio consists of the following:

- The diagnostic essay.
- Two revised essays (clean copies with drafts), one of which demonstrates argumentative writing, basic research, and proficiency in basic MLA documentation methods.
- Mid-semester in-class timed essay.
- Final exam in-class timed writing (i.e., Common Final Exam).
- A cover letter—a final reflective statement in which the student articulates the writing processes for the essays therein, and reflects on progress in the course.
Composition II continues the development of writing skills begun in Composition I. The course reviews as necessary basic writing principles: grammar, sentence structure, and style; it also emphasizes writing cogent, coherent prose. The course focuses, however, more intensively on the development of critical thinking and reasoning abilities, stressing the skills needed to interpret, to evaluate, and to synthesize information. Other emphases of the course are discussion and critical interpretation of a body of rhetorical works. Special attention is paid to research techniques, methods of argumentation, and critical reading skills. There are required oral presentation and library skills components in Composition II.

Composition II Themes
Designed as a first-year seminar, each section of Composition II is organized around a specific theme selected by individual instructors. The themes should emphasize the discourse around a multi-disciplinary topic (e.g., “Food Fights,” “Earth: Discourses of Our Planet,” “Science and the Public Sphere,” “Jazz: Arguments about Music,” etc.).

Composition II Course Objectives
By semester’s end, students will demonstrate the ability to:
1. Write persuasively and stylistically in an increasing variety of rhetorical situations, i.e. for different purposes, occasions, and audiences.
2. Craft sustained, logically-organized, stylistic, and grammatical sentences, paragraphs and essays.
3. To enter intelligently into academic and cultural conversations (understanding and representing other views; developing a position; establishing exigence), with a focus in one particular arena of discourse.
4. Analyze and evaluate arguments from multiple genres by considering aesthetic elements, rhetorical strategies, premises and assumptions, deductive and inductive reasoning, logical fallacies, and forms of evidence.
5. Use a body of knowledge about a topic for creating breadth and depth in documents, and to take that skill set to future work.
6. Conduct research as a means of discovery (develop a research question and search strategy; use general or specialized databases and search engines; locate, retrieve, and evaluate information sources; construct a bibliography; organize and synthesize information).
7. Critique one’s own written and oral discourse and the discourse of others.
8. Select the best information and use it ethically and legally, considering the ethical ramifications of different arguments.
9. Expand formal oral argument skills.
10. Enhance computer and library information literacy skills.

Composition II Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution
- A minimum of three take-home essays of approximately 1,000-1250 words each 45%
- A documented research essay of approximately 1,250+ words 20%
- An in-class timed essay 5%
- Reader-response journal/informal writing exercises 10%
- Participation in library workshop and library-skills assignment 5%
- An in-class oral presentation 5%
- Class participation and attendance 5%
- Timed final essay exam 5%
Supplemental Writing Workshop
Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW

This intensive Composition course includes a required weekly one-hour, non-credit writing workshop and extra tutorial assistance. English as a Second Language/Supplemental Writing Workshop sections of this course include two required, one-hour non-credit workshops and required tutoring, as well.

Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW Course Objectives
The aims and objectives of Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW are the same as those for Composition I. Additionally, satisfactory attendance and class participation during all required contact hours (including attendance at the workshop and tutorial sessions) is mandatory.

Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution
The writing requirements and suggested grade distribution of Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW are the same as those for Composition I.

Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW Course Exiting Requirements
The course exiting requirements for Composition I SWW and ESL/SWW are the same as those for Composition I, including preparation and assessment of a portfolio of student work.

This intensive Composition course includes a required weekly one-hour, non-credit workshop and required tutoring.

Supplemental Writing Workshop
Composition II SWW and ESL/SWW

Composition II SWW and ESL/SWW Course Objectives
The aims and objectives of Composition II SWW and ESL/SWW are the same as those for Composition II. Additionally, satisfactory attendance and class participation during all required contact hours (including attendance at the workshop and tutorial sessions) is mandatory.

Composition II SWW and ESL/SWW Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution
The writing requirements and suggested grade distribution of Composition II SWW, ESL and ESL/SWW are the same as those for Composition II.
General Honors English II

General Honors English II sharpens students’ abilities to write grammatical and coherent sentences and to develop ideas more fully and in an organized fashion. General Honors English courses develop students’ abilities to write essays based upon selected readings and class discussions. Special attention is paid to research techniques (including MLA documentation), methods of argumentation, and critical reading skills. Additionally, students sharpen their abilities to conduct literary analysis and interpretation. Students completing the course are capable of producing expository, analytic, argument, and critical essays, as well as papers reflecting a variety of approaches to thinking. There are oral presentation and library skills components in General Honors English II.

Aims
- To acquaint students with selected texts of classic and modern literature.
- To emphasize the development of effective communication skills.

General Honors English II Course Objectives
- To recognize selected texts of classic and modern literature.
- To read, analyze, and interpret classic and modern literature effectively.
- To increase the ability to write well-developed, well-organized, clear essays.
- To increase the ability to write correctly, grammatically, and coherently.
- To develop the abilities to reason, to think critically (i.e., to analyze, to infer, to synthesize, to interpret, and to evaluate information).
- To develop the ability to argue effectively (i.e., to develop a position, reasons, warrants, and evidence).
- To analyze and evaluate arguments (i.e., premise, deductive and inductive reasoning, forms of appeal, logical fallacies, and forms of evidence).
- To develop methods of conducting research (i.e., develop a research topic and search strategy, use general or specialized databases, use Internet search engines; locate, retrieve, and evaluate information sources; construct a bibliography; and organize and synthesize information).
- To evaluate sources of information using criteria such as currency, authority, objectivity, accuracy, specificity, and relevance.
- To use information ethically and legally, avoiding plagiarism.
- To develop oral presentation skills (i.e., present expressive, informative, or persuasive speeches).
- To critique the oral and written discourse of members of the class.

General Honors English Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution
- A minimum of four take-home essays of approximately 750-1,000 words each 40%
- Reader-response journal/Discussion Board Responses 20%
- A documented research essay of approximately 1,250 words (Honors II) 20%
- An in-class final exam 10%
- Class participation and attendance 10%
*Statement on Academic Integrity*

“Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their academic work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offences, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action” (*Faculty Handbook*, p. 33).

**Plagiarism is the unacknowledged (intentional or unintentional) use of summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, language, statistics, or ideas from articles or other information sources including the Internet.** A student must cite according to the Modern Language Association (MLA) format outlined in an updated handbook (2009 or later).

Faculty members must report in writing cases of cheating, plagiarism, or forgery to their department chair and their academic dean. Students are expected to understand the principles of ethical references and exhibit citation skills by the end of each composition course.

**Three ways of correctly using information obtained in research are paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting** (summarized from *Simon and Schuster Handbook*, by Troyka & Hesse):

1. **Paraphrasing:** a paraphrase makes a detailed restatement of someone else’s words; it is usually at least as long as the original. In the process you have to use your own words, not those of the source of your information; you cannot simply change a word or two in a sentence and leave the rest of it the same.

2. **Summarizing:** a summary recounts the principal information in a passage the writer wishes to include. The main difference between it and a paraphrase is that it is much shorter: it reduces, condenses, and/or abbreviates the ideas in the source used.

3. **Quoting:** a quotation is the exact words of an author and is always set off either by quotation marks or, in the case of long passages, by indentation from the left side of the margin.

*Note:* Even though no quotation marks are used in the case of paraphrases and summaries, you must document the source of your information when summarizing and paraphrasing. **Document your source whether you paraphrase, summarize, or quote!**

Do not forget to list each of your sources in the proper MLA format on your Works Cited page at the end of each paper.

*Assignment Policy*

Students must complete every major assignment (e.g., main essays/assignments, library session, presentations) on the syllabus in order to successfully complete Composition I and Composition II.
*Attendance Policy*

Students are expected to attend every class and should notify instructors of potential absences in advance whenever possible to better prepare for the next class and make alternate arrangements for turning in work. Missing more than two class meetings will reduce the grade in a composition course by 1/3 of a letter grade per absence through six absences as follows:

- 3 absences = 1/3 grade deduction (A to A-), for instance
- 4 absences = 2/3 grade deduction (A to B+)
- 5 absences = 1 full grade deduction (A to B)
- 6 absences = 1 1/3 grade deduction (A to B-)
- 7 or more absences will result in a failing grade for the semester.

The two “free” absences provide room for circumstances like illness, inclement weather, family duties, and so forth. Please plan accordingly. Absences for reasons mandated by SUNY to count as excused will not count against the total number. Every three tardy arrivals equal one full absence. Tardy is defined as arriving after the instructor has begun class.

If there is a long-term situation, we will address it on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Composition Program. It is the student’s responsibility to provide any necessary supporting medical documentation or other evidence of extenuating circumstances.

*Course Withdrawals*

There are typically no withdrawals from Composition; it is a required first-year writing course. If extenuating medical, personal, or family concerns arise, students should speak to their instructors confidentially about options.
PART TWO:
WRITING AND REVISING EFFECTIVELY
The Composing Process

One of the objectives of the Composition Program is to have students engage in a process of composing. Writing requires more than the act of turning in the final draft; it involves processes of critical thinking, creating, editing, and revising.

The Composition Program recognizes that the composing process varies from writer to writer, from writing situation to writing situation. There are as many processes (outlining, brainstorming, mapping, drafting) as there are students and writing situations (a laboratory report, a research paper, and a personal essay). A unilateral process may not, therefore, be described or prescribed. However, several distinct phases of the process may be isolated and encouraged: Gathering, Shaping, Drafting, Revising, Editing, Proofreading, Reflecting.

Stage One: Gathering

The first stage of the writing process, gathering, takes place before writers begin their first drafts. During this stage, writers generate ideas about subject matter; consider the appropriate form with which to deliver their subject; and review their rhetorical situation, i.e., their purpose, occasion, and audience. Strategies for gathering include brainstorming, taking notes, listing, drawing on past readings and experiences, talking with others, clustering, mapping, asking the journalist’s questions (i.e., who, what, when, where, why, and how), and using modes of development to discover subject matter and approach.

Stage Two: Shaping

During the second stage, shaping, writers plan their writings. They narrow or focus their subject matter, further define form, clarify their rhetorical situation, begin to develop their thesis, and determine how to organize and develop supporting statements. At this point, some writers map ideas or create informal or formal outlines.

Stage Three: Drafting

The third stage of the writing process is drafting. Some writers compose at top speed, discovering ideas and organizing topics and specifics as they draft. Other writers work from an outline as they develop their writings. At this point writers consider not only focus, approach, purpose, thesis and supporting points, but also development and organization. Writers may reshape their thesis, alter points, delete information, add supporting information, and sharpen and change wording. Some writers proceed paragraph by paragraph and revise and edit as they draft. Other writers work through successive drafts, refining as they go.

Stage Four: Revising

During the fourth stage, revision, writers consider their relationships with their audiences and ask themselves if they have conceptualized, organized, and developed points with their audiences in mind, asking themselves if their drafts achieve their purposes. Revision often necessitates the reconceptualization and clarification of ideas—the re-thinking of the piece.

Stage Five: Editing

During the fifth stage of the writing process, editing, writers sharpen presentation and clarity of ideas. Writers may, for example, change word choice (usage and diction) and sentence structure for clarity, emphasis, and variety.
**Stage Six: Proofreading**

Proofreading is the final stage of the writing process when writers check their final drafts for typographical or spelling errors. They also check the manuscript form to make sure that it fits the requirements of the assignment.

The English Department has developed a set of criteria by which student writing will be evaluated in Composition I and II. These are the qualities that the Department believes student writing should exhibit. Students should work to develop these qualities in their writing throughout each semester.

1. Your writing should have a central focus or purpose.
   - The purpose of your writing should be clear.
   - The writing should be unified by its central purpose or focus. The thesis of the writing should be clearly stated or implied and should provide a specific direction for the essay.
   - Your writing should reflect an awareness of rhetorical situation, i.e., purpose, audience, and occasion.

2. Your writing should be logically organized.
   - Your writing should have a clear beginning, middle, and end.
   - If your writing is an essay, it should include introductory, middle, and concluding paragraphs.
   - If your writing is a paragraph, it should have appropriate paragraph structure.
   - Sentences within a paragraph should be cohesive; i.e., sentences within a paragraph should fit together in a clear, logical sequence.

3. Your writing should be developed.
   - Your writing should have sufficient supporting information, i.e., assertions, details, examples, and illustrations.
   - This supporting information should be specific, to the point, and relevant to the writing’s rhetorical situation.

4. Your writing should demonstrate a command of diction, vocabulary, sentence sense, punctuation, and spelling. You should use appropriate language for your purpose and rhetorical situation.
   - Your vocabulary should be well-suited to the context.
   - Your word choice should be accurate, exact, and clear.
   - Your style should fit the rhetorical situation.
   - Your sentences should reflect a command of syntax within the range of standard written English.
   - Your sentence structure should be correct, i.e., no run-on sentences or fragments.
   - Your writing should be grammatically correct, i.e., appropriate subject-verb agreement, tense, usage, pronoun agreement, case, and reference.
   - Your sentences should be punctuated correctly, i.e., correct usage of commas, semi-colons, colons, apostrophes, parenthesis, and periods.
   - Your spelling should be accurate and correct.

Please consult with your instructor and/or refer to the appropriate pages in your handbook for writers if you have any questions regarding language usage or writing mechanics.
Stage Seven: Reflecting
Reflecting is an essential part of the writing process and involves considering the emotional and intellectual content, as well as deliberate authorial choices you make in response to various rhetorical situations and audiences. Reflecting may occur throughout and at the end of various points in the process, including after developing a thesis or a first draft, or after completing a final work and considering possible methods of revision to improve upon it. This meta-cognitive process will help you gain an awareness of strengths and things to continue to work on as you practice skills and objectives for each assignment. It will also help you apply your writing skills from one assignment to other activities and contexts. The reflection stage is essential in the revision process and for solidifying learning from writing exercises. A reflection is often required in the form of a letter for some of the main assignments in composition courses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHECKLIST FOR REVISING OR EVALUATING AN ESSAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose and Focus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The purpose of the essay is clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The essay’s thesis is stated clearly or implied and provides a clear direction for the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The essay is unified by its purpose and thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All topics are subordinate to the thesis; i.e., there are no irrelevant topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The content of the essay fits the purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The writing reflects a sense of a rhetorical situation, i.e., purpose, audience, and occasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The essay has a clear beginning, middle, and end, including carefully developed introductory and closing paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The essay has carefully developed body paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The sentences within each paragraph fit together in a clear, logical sequence; i.e., the paragraphs are cohesive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are transitions between sentences within a paragraph, as well as between paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The writing contains sufficient details and examples to support the main ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The details and examples are specific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The details and examples fit the purpose, audience, and occasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Sense, Style, and Spelling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The writing is grammatically correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Word choice is accurate, exact, and clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spelling is correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The style fits the purpose, rhetorical situation, and thesis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOP 10 MOST TROUBLESOME GRAMMAR ERRORS

Like poor spelling and misused punctuation, bad grammar interferes with comprehension and gives the reader a negative impression of the writer’s capabilities. The following errors are usually considered the most serious, and students should make a concentrated effort to eliminate these fundamental mistakes from their writing. The following examples are from the handbook, *Writing: A Manual for the Digital Age*, Second Edition, by Blakesley and Hoogeveen. Some examples are excerpted from *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*, Ninth Edition, by Troyka and Hesse. The chapters listed below reference where to find detailed explanations of these errors in *Writing: A Manual for the Digital Age*.

1. **FRAGMENTS** are incomplete sentences. Often, a sentence that is a fragment is missing the verb or main action word.

   **Error:** The stolen bicycle.
   
   **Correction:** The stolen bicycle reappeared.
   
   (Chapter 31.)

2. **COMMA SPLICES** result from joining two complete sentences with a comma rather than using a period or a semi-colon.

   **Error:** No one would be more surprised than Mary Shelley at the idea most immediately evoked by the name *Frankenstein*, she intended her novel as a meditation on creativity, not creepy monsters.
   
   **Correction:** No one would be more surprised than Mary Shelley at the idea most immediately evoked by the name *Frankenstein*. She intended her novel as a meditation on creativity, not creepy monsters.
   
   (Chapter 32.)

3. **FUSED SENTENCES**, commonly called **RUN-ON SENTENCES**, result when two complete sentences are put together as if they were one, with no punctuation between sentences.

   **Error:** Galileo recanted his confirmation that the Earth revolves around the Sun in return the Pope commuted his sentence to house arrest.
   
   **Correction:** Galileo recanted his confirmation that the Earth revolves around the Sun in return, the Pope commuted his sentence to house arrest.
   
   (Chapter 32.)

4. **AGREEMENT**: Errors in agreement result when the subject and verb of a sentence do not agree in number (singular or plural) or person (first, second, and third).

   **Error:** The vase of flowers are on the desk. (VASE is singular; ARE is plural.)
   
   **Correction:** The vase of flowers is on the desk.
   
   (Chapter 35.)

5. **VERB FORM**: Errors in verb form occur when the verb form or tense is incorrect.
Error: This week I seen her Thursday, but she usually visits on Friday.
Correction: This week I saw her Thursday, but she usually visits on Friday.
(Chapter 34.)

6. PRONOUN ERRORS result when either the wrong pronoun case (subjective or objective) is used or the pronoun’s antecedent is not clear.

Error: Me and John found an old sword in the rotting shed that was just as his grandfather had left it.
Correction: John and I found an old sword in the rotting shed; the weapon was just as his grandfather had left it.

Error: Charlotte brought Anne to the seashore to recuperate, but there she died. (Who died? Anne or Charlotte?)
Correction: Charlotte brought Anne to the seashore to recuperate, but there Anne died.
(Chapter 33.)

7. MIXED/FAULTY CONSTRUCTIONS occur when parts of a sentence do not relate coherently.

Error: Driving past the school, the vandalism was apparent.
(This means that the vandalism was doing the driving)
Correction: Driving past the school, we saw the vandalism.

Error: Because the great cattle drives lasted only a few decades, the mythology of the cowboy remains one of the most compelling in American life.
Correction: Even though the great cattle drives lasted only a few decades, the mythology of the cowboy remains one of the most compelling in American life.
(Chapter 26.)

8. SHIFTS: An unnecessary shift in person, number, or tense results in confusion and awkwardness.

Error: If a person works hard, you can accomplish a great deal.
("a person" is in the third person, while "you" is in the second person)
Correction: If a person works hard, he or she can accomplish a great deal.
(Chapters 33, 35.)

9. PARALLELISM: Errors in parallelism result when the parts of the sentence are not grammatically balanced.

Error: Whether drunk or when he was sober, he liked to pick a fight.
Correction: Whether drunk or sober, he liked to pick a fight.
(Chapter 25.)

Error: Roger is interested in studying philosophy as in working.
Correction: Roger is as interested in studying philosophy as he is in working.

10. ADJECTIVES/ADVERBS: Sometimes adjectives are confused with adverbs, or an incorrect comparative or superlative is used.

Error: This is a real poor paper, but I have seen some that are worser.
Correction: This is a really poor paper, but I’ve seen some that are worse.
(Chapters 30d, 30e; 36.)
While it is true that our Composition Program stresses the writing process, there comes a time when your essay must be handed in for a grade. Preparation of your essay’s final copy is very important.

The Composition Program requires students to follow the MLA style guidelines for formatting all papers. You should refer to *The Little Seagull* writing handbook, 3rd edition (required in all Composition courses) for an example of how an essay is properly formatted, and for instructions about following 8th edition MLA format. In addition, you may visit Purdue Online Writing Lab’s website here.

The Modern Language Association (MLA) sets the conventions in English that we follow; the rules are neither arbitrary nor self-made. Unless otherwise stated abide by the following for every assignment you turn in:

- Use a high-quality printer and a standard, easily readable typeface, such as Times Roman, 12-point font.
- Use only white, 8½-by-11-inch paper of good quality.
- Except for page numbers, leave margins of one inch at the top and bottom and on both sides of the text.
- Indent the first word of a paragraph one-half inch (or five spaces) from the left margin.
- Indent set-off quotations one inch (or ten spaces) from the left margin.
- Double-space pages throughout, including quotations, notes, and the list of works cited.
- Do not create a title page. Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the first page and flush with the left margin, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course number and section, and the date on separate lines, double-spacing between the lines.
- Double-space also between the lines of the title, and double-space between the title and the first line of the text.
- Do not underline your title, put it in quotation marks, or type it in all capital letters.
- Number all pages consecutively throughout the paper, including the Works Cited page, in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.
- Type your last name before the page number, as a precaution in case of misplaced pages.
- Proofread and correct your paper carefully before submitting it. You may make brief corrections on the page; write them neatly and legibly in ink directly above the lines involved, using carets to indicate where they go. Retype the page if corrections on any page are numerous or substantial.
- When documenting outside sources, create parenthetical in-text citations and a corresponding Works Cited page.
- **Be sure to keep a copy of your paper drafts, graded versions, and final revision.**
PART THREE:

SUPPORT SERVICES
The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) exists to provide support services to students who are educationally and financially disadvantaged. The services include tutoring, personal counseling, academic advisement, financial assistance, and career development. In order to assist students with the development of their writing skills, EOP has established the Writer’s Workshop, which is required of all EOP first-year students. Sections of this workshop are held twice per week and are conducted by professional writing tutors, many of whom are Composition instructors in the English Department. The Writer’s Workshop is designed to provide a specific time and place for small groups of students to receive assistance in any phase of the writing process, whether it be prewriting strategies, grammar review, dialogue to foster ideas, indications for revisions, hints on library research, or writing as a study tool. While students are permitted to bring writing assignments that are in progress to the workshop, great care is taken to hold students responsible for correcting their own errors and writing their own revisions.

The referral and attendance of EOP students are closely monitored by academic support coordinators, the EOP counselors, and the professional tutors. Composition instructors are asked to report on student progress via the EOP mid-term evaluations and other correspondence forms to provide information for the tutorial process.

The Center for Student Success (CSS) promotes student learning, academic engagement, and timely degree completion through the coordination of peer-based tutoring, writing assistance, and holistic academic success programs. Through collaborative efforts with faculty, academic departments and student services, the CSS provides an inclusive, student-oriented learning environment which stimulates academic engagement and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and the personal attributes in support of lifelong learning.

Writers’ Studio-The Center’s integrated writing support service, the Writers’ Studio, is committed to helping SUNY New Paltz students develop effective writing skills in support of academic, professional, and personal development. Through strengths-based, goal-directed sessions, students will work collaboratively with a peer writing consultant on academic writing projects from across the curriculum. The Writers’ Studio will provide guidance, practice, and encouragement at any stage of the writing process to foster student independence and self-efficacy for college and career.

Students working on their writing projects from any course can make a 30 minute appointment with a peer writing consultant. Peer writing consultants are SUNY New Paltz students who have been recommended by faculty, and demonstrate interest and ability in writing, strong academic records, and excellent interpersonal communication skills. Peer writing consultants participate each semester in mandatory training and reflection as part of their development as academic mentors and facilitators. The Center’s tutor training curriculum promotes a philosophy of education that supports a learner-centered environment and encourages students to become active and independent scholars. Students will work collaboratively with the peer writing consultants to develop one or two goals for their session, discuss their writing, and engage in dialogue about their experiences with drafting, revising, and research.

All appointments at the Center are made online, here.
The Haggerty English Language Pathway Program (HELP) provides instruction contributing to the development of English language proficiency required by students to succeed in college courses and chosen areas of study in an English-speaking society. The Intensive English and Pathways Program also facilitates the effective participation of non-native speakers in their professions and daily lives.

Non-native English speakers who are admitted to the College are tested on arrival to assess their English proficiency. Students who successfully complete ESL Writing for Academic Purposes will take the AP Final Exam and submit a course portfolio in order to demonstrate proficiency in composition skills required to enroll in Composition I. The English Department has designated certain sections of Composition I and Composition II as ESL/SWW sections. These sections have the same objectives and requirements as all other sections, but are taught by instructors trained and experienced in working with ESL students.

Support Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center provides support services to all students with disabilities. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) under Section 504, students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments. Students are responsible for self-identifying to the DRC staff who will provide each instructor of the accommodations assigned to each student.

SUNY New Paltz supports students with disabilities by providing accessible facilities and academic adjustments. The DRC provides services that include but are not limited to the following:
- Alternate testing location
- Extended time on exams
- Test readers and/or scribes
- Enlarged font on exams or handouts
- Audio recording in classrooms
- Electronic documents or textbooks
- Use of computer for tests or note-taking
- Note-taking services
- Captioning or interpreter services
- Other reasonable accommodation
The Counseling Center is located in the Student Health and Counseling Building located between Gage and Esopus Hall, across from the pond. The Center supports students in various areas including but not limited to the following:

- Writer’s Block
- Time Management and Procrastination
- Balancing College, Home, and Work
- Test Anxiety
- Stress, Distress, and Coping
- Psychological Hardiness

Additional workshops presented by the Counseling Center include Anxiety Management, Social Skills and Body Image. Individual psychotherapy is available on a short-term basis for students. **To schedule an appointment or inquire about a program call 257-2920, consult the Counseling Center’s website.** Staffing of the Center is by doctoral counseling and clinical psychologists, a social worker, and supervised MA Counseling trainees.

**We provide scheduled appointments and brief emergency appointments daily.**

**Workshops and Drop-in Services**

Psychological Counseling Center staff offer drop-in services for informal individual and group consultation at several times and locations each semester. No reservations are required to attend these services - simply drop in! **Let’s Talk** is an individual, drop-in service that provides brief confidential consultation, support, and resources to students.

**After Hours Support:**

When mental health emergencies occur after-hours and on the weekends, contact the PCC “Emergency Contact for Student Consult” (ECSC) by calling the University Police Department (UPD) at 845-257-2222 and requesting assistance. UPD will contact the PCC “Emergency Contact” who will call you directly.

**Peer Support:**

At times, students in distress initially feel more comfortable talking to a trained student rather than a mental health professional. OASIS (stress, roommate concerns, depression, and most other mental health concerns) and HAVEN (sexual assault and relationship violence) are the two peer support services on campus in **Deyo Hall**, supervised by the Psychological Counseling Center (PCC).

*The following peer services for support accept walk-in and phone appointments.*

Oasis (845) 257-4945

Haven (845) 257-4930
APPENDIX:

PLACEMENT AND PROFICIENCY TESTING SYSTEM
FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF WRITING SKILLS
This section will introduce students, parents, and teachers to the evaluation scale for proficiency in Composition used by the English Department of the State University of New York at New Paltz.

**SUNY New Paltz Placement and Proficiency Rubric**
A Placement and Proficiency Rubric was designed in 2009 and updated recently by the Composition Program to determine student placement into Composition courses. Diagnostic essay tests are administered to students in all Composition and Honors English classes during the first week of each semester for evaluation of writing proficiency. We have included the Placement and Proficiency Rubric, a sample diagnostic essay, student essays, and commentaries on the essays. Each sample essay received the same score from seven readers—members of the English Department committee for placement and proficiency testing—and, therefore, may be viewed as representative. Students are encouraged to review the essays here in preparation for compiling final exit portfolios for Composition I.

**SUNY New Paltz Assessment Rubric**
We have included the SUNY New Paltz Assessment Rubric as a reference. Some students are required to enroll in specially designated sections of Composition entitled Composition I Supplemental Writing Workshop (SWW). Students who place into SWW classes must take these sections, which include regular class sessions, a required one-hour non-credit supplemental writing workshop, and required tutoring to help students succeed. We offer a similar model with two workshop hours added to the main course for students who are multiple language learners (ESL). The writing proficiency levels of students placed into these sections are below entrance level to Composition I; however, through supplemental writing workshops and tutorial assistance, students should gain the skills needed to reach a level of minimal exit proficiency from Composition I. Other placement levels include those with minimal readiness for Composition I, and those with minimal exit proficiency from Composition I. Some students may earn direct placement into the Honors English, which is equivalent to Composition and fulfills this requirement.

The rubrics in this handbook (along with other detailed versions for instructor reference) help our faculty assess strengths and weaknesses in student writing. At SWW and ESL levels, writing may have significant strengths in content as well as weaknesses in grammar; at an honors level, despite considerable strength, there is still room for improvement beyond correctness and clarity. Such excellent writers strive for originality in ideas and voice, outstanding scholarship, maturity of style, unusual intellectual initiative, and an ability to engage the reader’s interest.

Another purpose of this section is to give both students and parents a clear sense of the criteria for judgments concerning placement and proficiency, and, in so doing, to provide students with definitive goals to work toward in their Composition courses.
SUNY NEW PALTZ DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COMPOSITION PROGRAM PLACEMENT RUBRIC

Please use this reference list regarding placement into Composition I and II or General Honors English II courses. Students must meet three out of four (or two out of three when applicable) placement criteria listed below for placement into ENG 206, ENG 180, ENG 160, ENG 160 SWW, or ENG 160 ESL/SWW. Note the additional criteria for first-semester and transfer students into Honors English II.

All students who matriculate at SUNY New Paltz must complete Composition I and Composition II (or General Honors English II, an equivalent to Composition II) in order to complete the General Education III (GEIII) requirement for Composition. The Offices of Academic Advising and the Composition Program have developed the following rubric for Composition and General Honors English course placement. All students write a diagnostic sample on the first day of class to ensure accurate placement into the proper type of Composition or General Honors English course (See the Composition Program Handbook for course descriptions). The Office of Transfer Admissions grants transfer credit; the Composition Program office cannot award credit. Students who place into Composition II or Honors II with AP credit must provide the offices of Academic Advising with proof of scores by the end of the first week of classes.

GENERAL HONORS ENGLISH II (ENG 206)
First-semester and transfer students placed into General Honors English II have taken a Composition I course (and earned “exceeds” on the final-exit portfolio and an “A” in Composition I at SUNY New Paltz); earned Composition I credit through the AP (score of 3, 4 or 5) or College Composition CLEP exam (score of 70 or higher) before matriculating at SUNY New Paltz (see “Top Ten” Transfer and Accreditation List); or received transfer credit for Composition I for an equivalent course at another university or in a composition in the high schools program (as per an articulation agreement). Transfer students must have 660 Reading and Writing SAT score/29 ACT English and (if applicable) a grade of “A” in Composition I. Students eligible for General Honors English II are interested in writing and literature. Students eligible for General Honors English II may elect to take Composition II.

COMPOSITION II (ENG 180)
Students placed into Composition II have either successfully completed a Composition I course at SUNY New Paltz; taken a Composition I equivalent course through an approved college-in-the-high-school program; earned Composition I credit through the AP (score of 3 or higher) or the College Composition CLEP exam (score of 70 or higher) before matriculating at SUNY New Paltz (see “Top Ten” Transfer and Accreditation List); received transfer credit for Composition I for an equivalent course at another university (as per an articulation agreement); or have met at least three of the four high school and testing standards listed below (or 2 out of 3 if they have no SAT essay).

1) SAT Essay “Writing” sub-score: 7-8
2) minimum Reading and Writing SAT score: 660 or ACT English 29+
3) “A” overall average in high school English
4) 85-100% average on NYS Regents exam in English (for in-state students)

COMPOSITION I (ENG 160)
1) SAT Essay “Writing” sub-score: 4-6
2) Reading and Writing SAT score: 500-650 or ACT English 19-27
3) “B/C” (or above) overall average in high school English
4) 75-100% average on NYS Regents exam in English (for in-state students)

SUPPLEMENTAL WRITING WORKSHOP COMPOSITION I (ENG 160 SWW)
1) SAT Essay “Writing” sub-score: 2-3
2) Reading and Writing SAT score: 400-490 or ACT English 18 or less
3) “B/C” (or below) overall average in high school English
4) 65-85% average on NYS Regents exam in English (for in-state students)

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE/SUPPLEMENTAL WRITING WORKSHOP
COMPOSITION I (ENG 160 ESL/SWW)
1) SAT Essay “Writing” sub-score: 2-3
2) Reading and Writing SAT score: 400-490 or ACT English 18 or less
3) “B/C” (or below) overall average in high school English
4) 65-85% average on NYS Regents exam in English (for in-state students)
And/or by advisement based on oral and written English language proficiency for self-identified students

IF YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM:
Matthew Newcomb, Coordinator, Composition Program (newcombm@newpaltz.edu) OR
Joann K. Deiudicibus, Composition Program (deiudicj@newpaltz.edu)
845.257.2727
### Composition Program Abbreviated Writing Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context of and Purpose for Writing</th>
<th>Exceeds (consider Honors)</th>
<th>Meets (continue to Composition II)</th>
<th>Approaches (SWW or ESL)</th>
<th>Does not meet (repeat class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).</td>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience’s perceptions and assumptions).</td>
<td>Demonstrates little attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).</td>
<td>Demonstrates almost no attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Development</td>
<td>Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer’s understanding, and shaping the whole work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</td>
<td>Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices</td>
<td>Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices</td>
<td>Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation</td>
<td>Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exceeds (consider Honors) 4</th>
<th>Meets (continue to Composition II) 3</th>
<th>Approaches (SWW or ESL) 1</th>
<th>Does not meet (repeat class) 0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources and Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates almost no attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.</td>
<td>Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.</td>
<td>Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.</td>
<td>Uses language that regularly impedes meaning because of errors in usage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This brief rubric has been modified from the Association of American Colleges and Universities. For more information, visit the AACU website.
GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT
Frequently Asked Questions about General Education Assessment

About GE: [Click here for an overview of General Education](#) requirements and their significance to student learning.

Why do faculty assess student work?
Assessment of student learning in general education (GE) courses is required in order for us to determine whether or not our students have mastered the content and skills of a liberal education as defined by our faculty. Although some GE assessments are mandated by the SUNY Board of Trustees, the primary reason why we do it is because it provides criterion-referenced data that informs our curriculum and instructional decisions. The GE Board encourages you to structure assessments in your GE courses so that you obtain information about student learning that will be useful to you in improving teaching, learning, and the curriculum.

What exactly does our campus need to do?
Our campus has developed a Campus-Based Assessment (CBA) plan and a Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment (SCBA) plan and they were approved by the General Education Assessment Review (GEAR), a SUNY-wide group (see below). Annually, we submit a GE Summary Report to GEAR in which we discuss improvements we have made as a result of the previous assessment of GE, major findings of the current round of assessments, and actions to be taken in addressing these assessment findings. While we are no longer (as of spring 2007) required to report data to GEAR on the percentage of students “exceeding,” “meeting,” “approaching,” or “not meeting” each of the Board of Trustees GE objectives, GEAR requires that we keep these data on our campus. (The data that we keep is a summary of the overall percentages for all students assessed.)

The above is directly quoted from the GE Board’s FAQ document. Some information was removed for the sake of brevity. For more information about GE course assessment, [click here](#). Contact the Composition Program for our Basic Communication: Written and Oral, as well as Information Management rubrics. We’ll be shifting to a new program model with GEIV in 2019.