

Liberal Studies Program

Learning Outcomes and Writing Expectations

FIRST-YEAR WRITING

Approved by the Liberal Studies Council, Spring 2008

Learning Outcomes:

Taken together, the courses in the First-Year Writing Program at DePaul University seek to develop student competencies in five general categories: rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading and writing; writing processes; and knowledge of conventions. Individual faculty will naturally incorporate these competencies into their courses in different ways, but all faculty in the program should be prepared to demonstrate that their courses include attention to these matters.

Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of FYW, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Define and focus on a purpose or purposes
- Interpret and respond to different audiences
- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Apply conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation
- Apply appropriate tone, diction, and level of formality
- Demonstrate how genres shape reading and writing
- Write in several genres

Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing

By the end of FYW, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Employ writing and reading for inquiry, thinking, and communicating
- Respond and evaluate texts in multiple genres and media

- Demonstrate that a writing assignment is a series of tasks that includes finding, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Interpret and explain the relationships among language, knowledge, and power

Processes

By the end of FYW, students should to demonstrate that they can:

- Recognize and articulate the value of using multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text
- Exhibit flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Demonstrate understanding that writing is an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
- Explain the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Critique their own and others' works
- Apply a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences.

Knowledge of Conventions

By the end of FYW, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Demonstrate competency in using common formats for different kinds of texts.
- Apply a variety of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics.
- Correctly document their work.
- Correctly apply in their writing such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Composing in Electronic Environments

As has become clear over the last twenty years, writing in the 21st century involves the use of digital technologies for several purposes, from drafting to peer reviewing to editing. Therefore, although the *kinds* of composing processes and texts expected from students vary across programs and institutions, there are nonetheless common expectations.

By the end of FYW, students should be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising,

- editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases; other official databases (e.g., federal government databases); and informal electronic networks and internet sources
 - Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts
 - Articulate, for multiple audiences, meaning-making capabilities of textual, graphic, auditory, and video modes
 - Compose in multiple modes with intended rhetorical effects and articulate the steps taken to achieve those effects
 - Contextualize meaning-making capabilities of multimodality for academic, professional, and community audiences

Writing Expectations:

Each section of WRD 103 is expected to meet the following minimum requirements for student work:

1. **Amount of Writing:** students will write at least four finished papers, each of which will be approximately 750 to 1000 words long.
2. **Drafting and Revising:** students will submit preliminary drafts of at least two of their papers for the instructor's review and comment, so that some weight in the final grade is given to the student's skill in developing and revising his or her writing.
3. **Basic Standards:** students will not receive a grade of C- or better if their finished work repeatedly fails to conform to certain basic standards (see Part V: Grading).

Each section of WRD 104 is expected to meet the following minimum expectations for student work:

1. **Amount of Writing:** students will write at least twelve to fifteen pages of finished material for the course, including at least one formal documented research paper at least six pages (1500 words) long.
2. **Summarizing and Paraphrasing:** students will learn and practice strategies of summarizing and paraphrasing other texts as part of or in the context of preparing the research paper.
3. **Library Resources:** students will complete an exercise in using the

resources and technology of the library.

4. Drafting and Revising: students will submit preliminary drafts of at least part of their work for the instructor's review and comment, so that some weight in the final grade is given to the student's skill in developing and revising his or her writing.
5. Basic Standards: students will not receive a grade of C- or better if their finished work repeatedly fails to conform to certain basic standards (see Part V: Grading).