

Student Learning Outcomes

Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Focus on a purpose
- Respond to the needs of different audiences
- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation
- Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality
- Understand how genres shape reading and writing
- Write in several genres

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- The main features of writing in their fields
- The main uses of writing in their fields
- The expectations of readers in their fields

Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
- Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Understand the relationships among language, knowledge, and power

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- The uses of writing as a critical thinking method
- The interactions among critical thinking, critical reading, and writing
- The relationships among language, knowledge, and power in their fields

Processes

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text

Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
Learn to critique their own and others' works
Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with the responsibility of doing their part
Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

To build final results in stages
To review work-in-progress in collaborative peer groups for purposes other than editing
To save extensive editing for later parts of the writing process
To apply the technologies commonly used to research and communicate within their fields

Knowledge of Conventions

By the end of first year composition, students should

Learn common formats for different kinds of texts
Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

The conventions of usage, specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation in their fields
Strategies through which better control of conventions can be achieved

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 first-year composition, students should:

- 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

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- How to engage in the electronic research and composing processes common in their fields

- How to disseminate texts in both print and electronic forms in their fields