

Ohio Wesleyan University

GUIDE TO ENGLISH 105 COLLEGE WRITING SEMINAR

REQUIRED IN ALL SECTIONS OF ENGLISH 105

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The College Writing Seminars are designed to enhance and improve the writing abilities of students in the first year at Ohio Wesleyan University. The sections of the course may vary in content, teaching methods, and course materials. However, all instructors share a commitment to helping students become confident and competent college writers. All sections of ENG 105 therefore share the following common goals and requirements.

COURSE GOALS

Students who complete ENG 105 with a C- or better will have learned:

1. To think critically about both reading and writing, and to reflect that thinking in what they write.
2. To practice a writing process that works for them, and to adapt that process to a variety of writing tasks, particularly analysis.
3. To analyze rhetorical contexts (audience, purpose, and occasion) of writing and reading assignments, and to extend that analysis to their own writing and reading.
4. To evaluate and integrate information and ideas from a variety of sources through paraphrase, summary, and quotation; to synthesize researched information in a substantial piece of writing; and to provide appropriate documentation, using a standard citation format.
5. To use library skills appropriate to their 105 assignments.
6. To communicate clearly in writing by rethinking, restructuring, rewriting, and editing.
7. To assess their own writing strengths and weaknesses in order to improve their skills and abilities.

REQUIREMENTS

Writing. Students will write a minimum of 4,000 words of formal writing assignments, including at least one documented essay (1,500 words), developed through invention, planning, drafting, gathering responses, revising, and editing. Students may also be asked to complete other kinds of writing (e.g., journals, response papers, in-class essays, annotated bibliographies) in addition to formal writing assignments.

Reading. Students will read and analyze their own and their classmates' writing, as well as works by professional writers.

Attendance. The success of the College Writing Seminar depends on the sense of community created by student participation and involvement in each class meeting. Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. While attendance requirements may vary with each instructor, all instructors agree that in-class participation is crucial to student success in the course.

Library Component. Students will be expected to become acquainted with and use productively the on-line and print resources of Beeghly Library; instruction includes attending sessions with a Beeghly public services librarian in a wired classroom.

Conferences. Students will meet with their instructor at least two times during the semester to discuss their writing.

Final Activity. Students will complete either a final examination or another writing activity that brings the course to completion (as determined by the instructor).

Minimum Grade. Only students who earn a C- or better in ENG 105 will pass the course (see "Grading Policy" on page 7).

OTHER COMMON FEATURES

Handbook. All ENG 105 sections require students to purchase *The Little Seagull Handbook* (2014). Parts of the book may be incorporated into ENG 105 assignments. You will also use this book as a reference tool for writing and revision papers in ENG 105 and other Ohio Wesleyan courses. The handbook will be useful throughout your college career as a guide to the writing process, grammatical rules, writing conventions, and documentation styles.

Common Experience. Students in ENG 105 share the experience of attending at least one lecture and other campus events. In the fall semester, for instance, all sections of ENG 105 may attend a reading by a prominent visiting writer. In the spring semester, ENG 105 students also attend talks by visiting speakers.

Grading Criteria. Writing done in ENG 105 will be judged by common criteria established by English Department faculty. Those criteria are outlined on pages 5-6 (“Judging Writing in ENG 105”).

PLAGIARISM AND OTHER ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Your authority as a writer depends in large part on the reader's sense of your integrity. Readers must trust that you will be accurate and honest. Therefore it is essential that you do your own work and that you acknowledge any help that you receive in gathering information and developing your ideas.

The Ohio Wesleyan Catalog lists various kinds of academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and abusing academic resources. Plagiarism may be the most difficult for a student to discern, since it sometimes may seem to result from carelessness rather than intentional dishonesty. Any time you represent "words, ideas, figures, or materials from other sources as [your] own" (*OWU Catalog*), you are plagiarizing, or falsely claiming ownership of them.

Plagiarism will be addressed in ENG 105, and you will learn how to acknowledge your sources and thus avoid inadvertent plagiarism. *The Little Seagull Handbook* also includes tips on avoiding plagiarism (see "Integrating Sources, Avoiding Plagiarism" on pages 97-108). You may discuss your writing projects with others, and you may obtain advice about revising or correcting your work. However, all writing and rewriting must be unquestionably your own, and you should always acknowledge any help you have received.

The penalty for a first violation can range from a zero for the assignment to a failing grade in the course, along with a letter to the Academic Dean, to be kept on file until graduation. For a full discussion of the Ohio Wesleyan policies regarding academic dishonesty, consult the "Academic Honesty Policy" (a handout distributed to all ENG 105 sections), as well as the catalog and your Student Handbook (available on-line at <http://www.owu.edu/pdfs/20082009StudentHandbook.pdf>).

JUDGING WRITING IN ENG 105

A satisfactory paper has the following characteristics:

- The purpose or point of the whole piece and of most paragraphs is discernible.
- Ideas are developed with some detail.
- The organization and expression do not interfere with the reader's ability to follow the piece.
- Errors, if they do occur, are not so frequent that they distract the reader or interfere with the readability of the piece.

To be effective, writing must be clear, thoughtful, and authoritative. To be outstanding, it must additionally be inventive, imaginative, and venturesome.

Instructors will judge writing completed in ENG 105 by asking these questions:

Content. How interesting is the writing? How well are thoughts developed? Is the focus clear? How substantial are the ideas? How relevant?

Organization. Is a structure discernible and easily followed? Is the controlling point/purpose presented clearly and developed fully? Does the writing cohere as a whole, within and between paragraphs, and within and among sentences? Is unity achieved throughout?

Style. How accurate, economical, and rich is the expression? How effective are the sentences? Do sentences move in rhythms and patterns appropriate to subject and voice? Is the wording concise, and does the language convey meaning accurately?

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics. Does the writing follow standard conventions of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization? Do the format and preparation of the manuscript follow standard guidelines?

Revision. Has the writing been reworked (when appropriate) after careful reflection, and in response to the instructor's or peers' comments? Have revision strategies been applied productively?

GRADING POLICY IN ENG 105

General. Students who complete ENG 105 with a C- or better will pass the course. Final grades of D or F do not constitute passing marks; students who receive a D or an F will be required to retake the course.

Unsatisfactory. If your writing is deemed unsatisfactory, your instructor will give you one of the following grades:

Letter grade/U.

When your writing difficulties may be remedied by working with a tutor in the Writing Resource Center for the following semester, your instructor will give you a passing grade with a U (for example, C-/U). Once the WRC staff decides your work is satisfactory, they will remove the U.

D or F.

1. You will receive a D or an F when your instructor believes that your writing is not yet at the college level. While you may do all the work for the course and come to every class, your instructor may judge that you should continue working on your writing in another section of ENG 105 the next semester. The D or the F will be replaced by the grade earned when you pass ENG 105.
2. When you do not complete all the writing for the course or when you miss too many classes, even if you write superior papers, you will fail the course and be expected to repeat it in the following semester.

EXEMPTION FROM ENG 105

All incoming students take ENG 105 unless they are exempted on the basis of test scores, or in rare instances, at the discretion of the Director of the First-Year Writing Program.

The following scores exempt you from ENG 105:

1. A score of 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Examination in English Literature and Composition.
2. A score of 710 or higher on the verbal portion of the SAT.
3. A score of 710 or higher on the English Achievement Test of the College Entrance Examination Board.
4. A score of 30 or higher on the ACT sub-test in English.

Any special exemption made by the Director of Freshman Writing will be based on very high scores on one or more of the above tests and outstanding writing done for OWU courses in the student's first semester, including a documented paper. Advanced transfer students will also be considered for exemption after presenting to the Director outstanding papers written recently at another institution.

In the event special exemption is granted, the Director of the First-Year Writing Program will notify the Registrar to note the exemption on the student's record. If you have questions about the exemption policy, contact the English Department Office (Sturges 205, 740-368-3590).

Those who exempt Freshman Writing are encouraged to enroll in a writing intensive course ("R" course) during their first semester at Ohio Wesleyan.

THE LAUREATE AWARD FOR EXPOSITORY WRITING IN ENG 105

Purpose. To identify and congratulate the outstanding writers in ENG 105 as evidenced by a short essay (750-word minimum) written for a class assignment.

Award. A book and a certificate, suitably inscribed. A total of no more than five awards for fall and spring semesters will be given. The writers of the winning essays will be recognized at the departmental awards ceremony in April.

Submission. Essays from both fall and spring ENG 105 sections may be submitted at any time up to the deadline (March).

Judging.

1. The judges will be the student members of the English Board. In the event of a tie, a faculty member who has no students among the finalists will make the final decision.
2. Entries will be judged by the same criteria described in “Judging Writing in ENG 105.”
3. The judges will categorize the essays (reflective, analytic, evaluative) and, to the extent allowed by the quantity and quality of the essays in each category, make awards in several categories.
4. The judges will inform the Director of First-Year Writing of their decisions.

Oversight. The Director of the First-Year Writing Program will be responsible for:

1. Periodically publicizing the awards through the English staff.
2. Convening the judges.
3. Seeing that all entrants are notified of the winners and that all entries are returned.

Procedures for Submissions:

1. Entries may be submitted either by the instructor or by the individual student.
 - a. Instructor: Each instructor may select one or two papers from each section he or she teaches. The instructor should write “submitted by instructor” on the outside of the small identification envelope (see 4 below).
 - b. Student: The student must obtain a statement from the instructor certifying that the paper was written for ENG 105. This certification must be placed in the small identification envelope (see 4 below).
2. The student must prepare the paper for submission. The entry must be typed, double-spaced, and free of all markings by the instructor. It must have a title. The student’s name should not appear anywhere on the paper. **Any paper not meeting these criteria will be disqualified automatically.**
3. The paper should be placed in a large (9 x 12) envelope, and the envelope sealed.
4. On a 3 x 5 card, the student should write his or her name, campus address, and phone number. The card (along with the instructor certification if needed) should be placed in a small envelope (the identification envelope). On the outside of the identification envelope the student should write the title of the paper and ENG 105 (not the section letter). This envelope should be sealed and stapled to the large envelope containing the paper.
5. The completed entry should be turned in to the English Department Office (Sturges 205) by the deadline.

BEYOND FRESHMAN WRITING

You will continue to improve your writing as you complete the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement (three writing-intensive, or “R”, courses) in your sophomore, junior, and senior years (see the catalog).

The English Department frequently offers its literature courses as “R” courses. The English Department also offers a number of writing courses for students who wish to develop their writing skills beyond the introductory level.

WRITING COURSES

ENG260 -- Writing Essays

A course on the process of writing and revising non-fiction essays, concentrating primarily on improving organizational skills, developing style, and accommodating readers. Students will write different kinds of non-fiction essays and will read and analyze essays by professional writers.

ENG265 -- Elements of Style and Rhetoric

A course in non-fiction writing suitable for majors in all fields. The course focuses on learning to manipulate voice and rhetorical stance by considering the variables of speaker, subject, audience, purpose. Students should expect to do some writing either in class or at home for every class meeting. These short experiments will focus on a range of modes, from parody to propaganda, and from self-expression to communication, as well as on a range of voices, from informal to formal.

ENG310 -- Writing for the Workplace

In this course, students learn to write the kinds of letters, memoranda, and reports most common in the workplace. They sharpen their writing style and their revising and editing skills. They learn to appeal to business and professional audiences while seeking to achieve specific purposes. Because employers expect the use of Edited American English (Standard English) and professional-quality page layout, this course teaches and enforces high standards of style, mechanics, and graphic design. Since oral communication skills are vital in the workplace, this course requires students to make both formal and informal oral presentations.

ENG314 -- Writing Fiction

This workshop is for those who wish to study narrative technique and to express themselves in short fiction. Students study fiction and a fiction handbook, and write technical exercises, critical analyses, and one or two revised and complete short stories to be discussed by the workshop. Prerequisite: ENG 260, or 265, or consent of the instructor.

ENG316 -- Writing Poetry

The workshop consists of lecture and discussion, study of the work of established poets, and group discussion of student work. Students write exercises in verse technique and critical analyses of poetry, and complete a group of revised and polished original poems. F.

ENG318 -- Playwriting

In this workshop in script development the student is guided by readings of plays and a drama handbook, written exercises, and revisions to complete a one-act play. Prerequisite: 265 or consent of the instructor. Also listed as THEA 369.

ENG319 -- Screenwriting

Designed to introduce the student to screenplay form and technique, this workshop moves from readings through written exercises to a completed dramatic script of about thirty minutes in length. Prerequisite: 260, 265 or consent of the instructor.

THE WRITING RESOURCE CENTER

Students taking ENG 105 will work closely with their English instructor; however, they may also go to the Writing Resource Center for assistance in developing their writing skills, either with or without the recommendation of their instructor.

You may stop by or call the Writing Center to set up an appointment of fifty minutes or less to talk about your questions or any problems you encounter in your writing. During your appointment, your tutor can help you to understand the writing process, generate ideas about your assignment, or offer other constructive suggestions. If you simply want to cover the rules of punctuation or correct citation practice, you can do just that!

Call for an appointment with a Writing Center professional at ext. 3925, or stop by Rm. 316 in the R.W. Corns Building (inside the Sagan Academic Resource Center).