Composition Program Handbook

2019-2020

State University of New York
NEW PALTZ

The Composition Program Handbook

2019-2020

Dedicated to our colleague Dr. Pauline Uchmanowicz, former Composition Program Coordinator & Creative Writing Director, for her inspired teaching and mentorship of countless students.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

NEW PALTZ

Department of English

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

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Special thanks to Larry Carr, retired Lecturer, for his service to our first-year students!

Composition Program Handbook
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SUNY NEW PALTZ DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH TOP 10 COMPOSITION POLICY LIST

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 Writing & Rhetoric (ENG 170) or its course equivalent Advanced Writing & Rhetoric (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 Writing & Rhetoric or the Advanced version of this course (via our placement rubric, transfer course or AP credit, for example) 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 Advanced Writing & Rhetoric are interested in literature and writing.

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

1. Composition I and Writing & Rhetoric are taken in a two-semester sequence upon matriculation to complete the university's Composition 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 without proof of medical/extenuating circumstances.
4. Attending the library session is mandatory to comply with the Information Literacy requirment. If a student is absent from the library session, they must make arrangements to make up the session.
5. Any student with a disability should register with the Disability Resource Center to determine eligibility; then, they should notify instructors immediately by providing DRC documentation for proper arrangements can be made as per 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. A seventh unexcused absence is grounds for a failing grade.
7. A student must prepare and submit a passing portfolio at the end of our courses. 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 courses. If a student fails Composition I or Writing & Rhetoric because their 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 means that the student must immediately enroll in a section of Writing & Rhetoric Supplemental Writing Workshop (SWW). If a student elects NOT to enroll in an SWW section of Writing & Rhetoric, 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 Advanced Writing & Rhetoric 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.

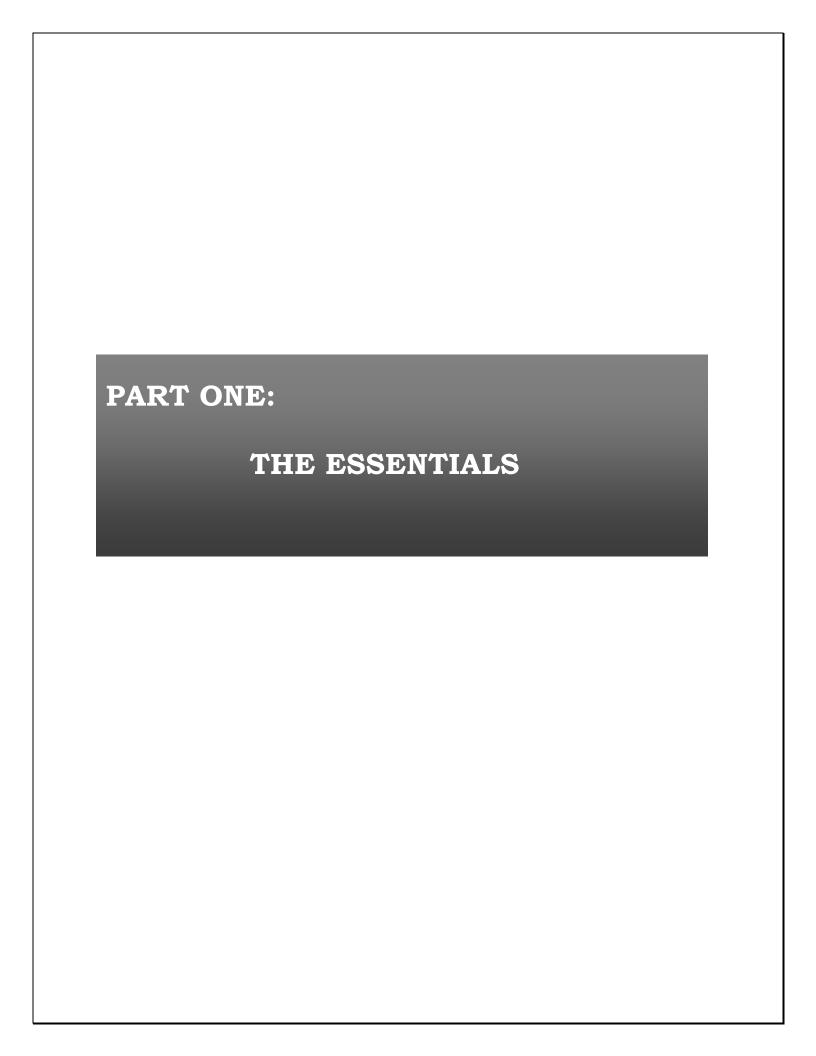# SUNY NEW PALTZ COMPOSITION PROGRAM TRANSFER & ACCREDITION POLICIES

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 credit. Transfer Advising must receive the official transcript within the first week of the semester that the student matriculates for the student to register for Writing & Rhetoric.
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.

Writing & Rhetoric:

7. Writing & Rhetoric emphasizes academic argument, rhetoric, and research and is not redundant with Composition I. Unless a student has completed the Composition I and Writing & Rhetoric sequence from an accredited college, only under exceptional circumstances may exemption be granted from Writing & Rhetoric.
8. If a student has successfully received exemption for the Composition I requirement and has not successfully passed a Writing & Rhetoric course (either Writing & Rhetoric is not offered at the prior institution of study or the student has not passed a course comparable to SUNY New Paltz's Writing & Rhetoric), **the student must complete Writing & Rhetoric within the first year of study.** An exemption for Composition I does not indicate an exemption for Writing & Rhetoric.
9. If a transfer student has completed a similar course elsewhere that meets Writing & Rhetoric 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 Writing & Rhetoric 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.**

PART ONE:

THE ESSENTIALS

Composition Program Curricular Objectives

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).

Composition Program Overview

COMPOSITION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Composition Program consists of Composition I, Writing & Rhetoric (formerly titled Composition II), as well as SWW and ESL/SWW versions of these courses. We offer Advanced Writing & Rhetoric (formerly titled Composition II) for students interested in English and writing, as well as Intermediate Composition, a Writing Intensive course designed for transfer students.

Students are required to complete two composition courses (Comp I and Writing & Rhetoric): 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 Advanced Writing & Rhetoric , if possible.

Students must take their Composition courses in a two-step sequence: first, Composition I; second, Writing & Rhetoric. 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. Writing & Rhetoric 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 current topic framed as a Wicked Question. Both Composition I and Writing & Rhetoric include critical analysis of largely non-fiction 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 Writing & Rhetoric 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 Writing & Rhetoric SWW courses count as regular first-year Composition courses.

Composition I and Writing & Rhetoric ESL/SWW courses are designed for students whose primary language is other than English. Composition I and Writing & Rhetoric 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 Writing & Rhetoric. 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. Restrictions: Undergraduate; Students cannot elect the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade option for this course

ENG170 WRITING & RHETORIC (4)
Training in rhetorical situation analysis and argument writing. Focus on research, critical analysis, and academic genres. Oral presentation and library components. Papers assigned to develop collection and integration of materials, evidence-based analysis, and argument invention. Prerequisites: English Placement Level 4 or ENG160 Minimum Grade of D-

ENG206 ADVANCED WRITING & RHETORIC (4)
Training in rhetorical situation analysis and argument writing. Designed for intellectually curious and industrious students with demonstrated writing proficiency. Focus on research, critical analysis, and academic genres. Oral presentation and library components. Meets basic communication requirement. Prerequisites: ENG205 Minimum Grade of B or English Placement Level 5

ENG207 INTERMEDIATE COMPOSITION (4)
A Writing Intensive course 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 Writing & Rhetoric equivalent-course designed for transfer students with some writing experience.)

SUNY Basic Communication and Information Management Learning Outcomes

The following General Education Learning Outcomes are a foundation of our Writing & Rhetoric and Advanced Writing & Rhetoric courses, in addition to the Student Learning Outcomes specific to each course.

- Students will produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts.

- Students will research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details.

- Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse.

- Students will evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria.

- Students will perform the basic operations of personal computer use.

- Students will understand and use basic research techniques.

- Students will locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

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/midterm   5%
- Quizzes and informal writing exercises   10%
- Reader-response journal or Blackboard posts   10%
- Oral component   5%
- Class participation and attendance   5%
- Participation in library skills workshop   5%
- In-class timed essay/final   P/F
- Portfolio   P/F

Course Exiting Requirements
In order to fulfill the university 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. Faculty portfolio reading partners (instructors are paired or work in groups) will review borderline cases (a minimum of 5 portfolios per section) to determine placement into ENG 170/Writing & Rhetoric.

Portfolios are considered passing if they are deemed a level 4 on the placement and proficiency scale (see "Placement and Proficiency Standards" rubric). Portfolios that do not contain the required work (see below) are not reviewed. 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. The student will repeat the course the following semester, and the final grade will be based on the work done in the repeated course.

The Portfolio

The final course portfolio will be created digitally on Hawksites and will consist of the following:

- Two revised papers, one of which demonstrates argumentative writing, introductory research, and basic proficiency in MLA documentation methods.
- Drafts of the two final papers included in the portfolio to show improvement through revision and editing
- 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

Writing & Rhetoric

Writing & Rhetoric 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 Writing & Rhetoric.

Writing & Rhetoric Wicked Problems/Questions
Designed as a first-year seminar, each section of Writing & Rhetoric is organized around a topic selected by individual instructors, phrased as a Wicked Problem or Question. This approach shifts the course toward considerations of design, multimodal writing, and practical innovation.

Definition
As per the [Wicked Problems: Problems Worth Solving](#) website, a wicked problem is

> a social or cultural problem that is difficult or impossible to solve for as many as four reasons: incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, the large economic burden, and the interconnected nature of these problems with other problems. Poverty is linked with education, nutrition with poverty, the economy with nutrition, and so on.

No single person or discipline can address one of these problems (and we are working with students going into many disciplines), and much of the work toward solutions depends on communication processes, persuasive language, and thoughtful research (all of which are concerns for Composition). For example: For example, "What Should We Eat?"

Examples and Resources
Any of the [UN Sustainable Development Goals are options, and can be found here.](#)

One free resource for learning more, can be found here: [(wicked problems text - free online).](#)

Writing & Rhetoric Course Objectives
By semester's end, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify and analyze two or more rhetorical situations, including constraints, audience needs, genre options, speaker roles, and other context.
2. Develop a writing process that takes researched materials and ongoing conversations into account early and integrates those with original ideas and arguments.
3. Craft sustained, logically-organized, stylistic, and grammatical sentences, paragraphs and essays—leading to significant writing in academic and professional genres.
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. Develop knowledge in at least one researched topic and use that knowledge to develop an evidence-based case to answer a research question of the student's making.
6. Deliver a source-based oral presentation with preparatory materials and visuals.
7. Critique the content and delivery of at least one oral presentation.

8. Create a multimodal text, usefully combining words with sound, images, or other media.
9. Select the best available information and use it ethically and legally, including practicing appropriate summary, quotation, and paraphrase.
10. Transfer learned writing strategies to the writing for another course or context.
11. Develop at least three strategies for taking an idea deeper and in new directions (stasis theory, freewriting, analogies, associative thinking, exploratory research, others).

Writing & Rhetoric Writing Requirements and Suggested Grade Distribution

- Two major projects with research, 1500-1800 words (examples are below) 40%
  -Researched argument
  -Revision portfolio with revision of previous work from class,
  attention to design, and a reflective letter
- Four minor papers, 400-800 words (which work toward the major papers) 30%
  These can include rhetorical analysis, narrative, description,
  literature review, extended definition, issue exploration, etc.
- Annotated Bibliography   5%
- Oral Presentation   10%
- Classroom citizenship and communication   5%
  (includes class preparation and participation:
  verbal, online posts, in-class writings)
- Proposals/Outlines/Writing Homework   10%
- Final Exam   High Pass/Pass/Fail
- Portfolio (required for all students; may be graded   P/F
  As one of the two large course projects or as pass/fail)

Assignments & The Portfolio

The assignment structure for ENG170 includes 2 larger papers with two shorter papers/assignments created to build up to each larger project in steps to encourage a focus on writing process—that's *2 large* and *4 small* in total. The digital portfolio (on Hawksites) can be one of the two main projects in the course. Here are some assignment examples: a multi-genre assignment (with several genres shown in the portfolio); a traditional research paper (with materials like an annotated bibliography, proposal, executive summary, and research question/problem definition as a few ideas for shorter materials as part of the portfolio); a multimedia project, grant proposal, etc.

The ENG170 course portfolio will be created digitally on Hawksites and will consist of the following:

- At least one piece of **extended prose** (5-page equivalent minimum)
- Significant **research element** (4-source minimum), but the sources may be integrated in whatever ways fit the specific project
- **Multiple types, modes, or genres of writing** (an annotated bibliography and a research paper count as different genres)
- An **argument element** with some form of credible, researched evidence
- Evidence of **revision and drafting** (a revision statement written by the student; clear, cohesive connections
- A **self-reflection** on the student's growth as a writer, concept of writing, and future applications of writing skills learned in the course

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
Writing & Rhetoric SWW and ESL/SWW

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

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

Advanced Writing & Rhetoric

Advanced Writing & Rhetoric 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 Advanced Writing & Rhetoric.

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

Advanced Writing & Rhetoric Course Objectives
By semester's end, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify and analyze varied rhetorical situations, including the elements of constraints, audience needs, genre options, speaker roles, media options, and other contextual factors.
2. Understand and use rhetorical analysis as a means of interpreting texts, including {but not limited to) literary texts.
3. Develop a writing process that takes researched materials and ongoing conversations into account early and integrates those with original ideas and arguments.
4. Craft sustained, logically-organized, stylistic, and grammatical sentences, paragraphs and essays-leading to significant writing following the conventions of academic and professional genres.
5. 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.
6. Deliver a source-based oral presentation with preparatory materials and visuals and critique the content and delivery of at least one oral presentation.
7. Select the best available information and use it ethically an d legally, including practicing appropriate summary, quotation, and paraphrase.
8. Develop knowledge in at least one researched topic and synthesize information from multiple sources on that topic to develop an evidence-based case to answer a research question of the student's making.
9. Understand style as a rhetorical decision based on the int errelationshi ps of readers, writers, and texts in specific contexts.
10. Develop multiple strategies for taking an idea deeper and in new directions. (stasis theory, freewriting, analogies, associative thinking, exploratory research, others).
11. Transfer learned writing strategies to the writing for another course or context.

Advanced Writing & Rhetoric 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   20%
- An in-class final exam   10%
- Class participation and attendance   10%

PROGRAM POLICIES: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, ASSIGNMENTS, AND ATTENDANCE

*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 Writing & Rhetoric.

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 Program courses; these are required first-year writing courses. If extenuating medical, personal, or family concerns arise, students should speak to their instructors confidentially about possible exceptions.

PART TWO:

WRITING AND REVISING EFFECTIVELY

EFFECTIVE WRITING: PROCESS AND CHARACTERISTICS

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 WRITING & RHETORIC . 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 and the portfolios in our courses.

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING OR EVALUATING AN ESSAY

Purpose and Focus

- The purpose of the essay is clear.
- The essay's thesis is stated clearly or implied and provides a clear direction for the essay.
- The essay is unified by its purpose and thesis.
- All topics are subordinate to the thesis; i.e., there are no irrelevant topics.
- The content of the essay fits the purpose.
- The writing reflects a sense of a rhetorical situation, i.e., purpose, audience, and occasion.

Organization

- The essay has a clear beginning, middle, and end, including carefully developed introductory and closing paragraphs.
- The essay has carefully developed body paragraphs.
- The sentences within each paragraph fit together in a clear, logical sequence; i.e., the paragraphs are cohesive.
- There are transitions between sentences within a paragraph, as well as between paragraphs.

Development

- The writing contains sufficient details and examples to support the main ideas.
- The details and examples are specific.
- The details and examples fit the purpose, audience, and occasion.

Sentence Sense, Style, and Spelling

- The writing is grammatically correct.
- Word choice is accurate, exact, and clear.
- Spelling is correct.
- The style fits the purpose, rhetorical situation, and thesis.

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 (or singular, non-binary they) 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.)

PREPARING A FINAL COPY OF YOUR ESSAY IN MLA STYLE

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.

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

Educational Opportunity Program

[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

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 for Student Success are made online, here.](#)

Haggerty English Language Pathway Program

The Haggerty English Language Pathway Program (HELPP) 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 Writing & Rhetoric 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 accommodatio

Psychological Counseling Center
Academic Success Program

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.
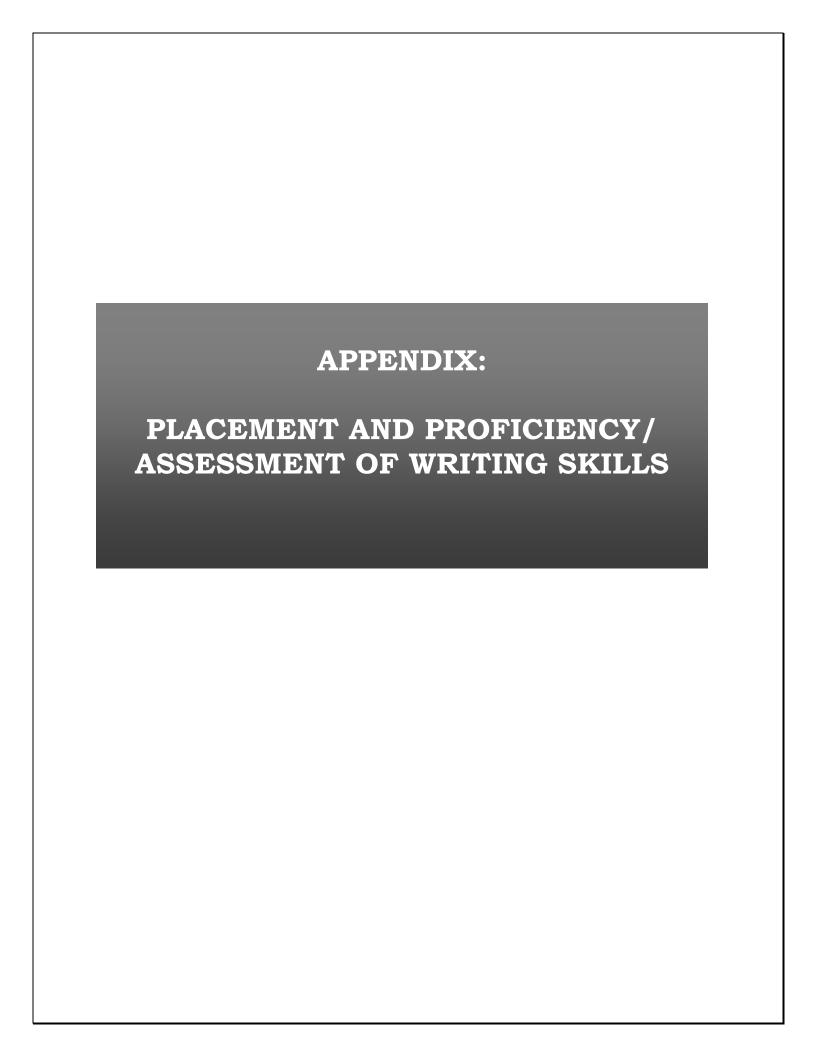
Peer Support:
At times, students in distress initially feel more comfortable talking to a trained student rather than a mental health professional. OASIS (stress, roommate concerns, depression, and most other mental health concerns) and HAVEN (sexual assault and relationship violence) are the two peer 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/ ASSESSMENT OF WRITING SKILLS

PLACEMENT AND PROFICIENCY: 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 (available upon request)
A Placement and Proficiency Rubric was designed in 2009 and updated recently by the Composition Program to determine student placement into Composition courses. Diagnostic writing samples (short essay) are administered to students in all Composition during the first week of each semester for evaluation of writing proficiency and to confirm course placement.

SUNY New Paltz Writing Proficiency Rubric
We have included the SUNY New Paltz rubric for the assessment of student writing 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 Advanced Writing & Rhetoric, which fulfills the Composition requirement.

The rubric that follows (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 exceeds or advanced 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.

Composition Program Writing Proficiency Rubric

This brief rubric has been modified from the Association of American Colleges and Universities. For more information, visit the AACU website.

| | Exceeds (consider advanced course ENG206) 5 | Meets (continue to Writing & Rhetoric ENG170) 4 | | Approaches (continue to SWW or ESL section) 2 | Does not meet (repeat course) 1 |
			3		
Context of & Purpose for Writing *Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and circumstances of the writing task(s).*	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	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).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates little attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).	Demonstrates almost no attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Genre & Disciplinary Conventions *Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).*	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	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.	Does not use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.

Control of Syntax & Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.	Uses language that regularly impedes meaning because of errors in usage.
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.	Does not use appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in many parts of the work.
Sources & Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.	Demonstrates almost no attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Ability to Revise & Improve Texts	Implements a wide variety of changes at multiple levels that significantly improve the functioning of the text as a response to a particular task or situation.	Implements multiple changes beyond the sentence level that improve the functioning of the text as a response to a particular task or situation.	Implements multiple changes at least at the sentence level that improve the functioning of the text as a response to a task or situation.	Approaches= Implements very few changes at any level that have minimal impact on the functioning of the text as a response to a task or situation.	Does not make changes or the changes impede the functioning and understanding of the text.