

ENGL 300

Foundation Composition

Introduction to the Writing Workshops

Overview

“Continuing education” is a term that applies to everyone, and we congratulate you on your choice to continue your career as a student of composition. This course is designed to approach writing in a few different ways:

- Writing is communication.
- Writing is process.
- Writing is product.
- Writing is composing with words.
- Writing is a tool.

With everything that you write, you are either creating truth or reinventing it! As a writer, you are joining ranks with centuries of writers and students who precede you; you are also leaving a record of yourself for others to follow. We urge you to consider your writing the physical evidence of your thought and labor.

Think of your writing as organic. Everything recorded on paper or screen is subject to change and revision. At times this change may be whimsical and experimental, focusing on intrinsic elements like voice or even subject; at times it may be more objective, including the need for copyediting. This course will push you to get *inside* your writing, both process and product, and think of both stages not as concrete and final but rather as malleable and adaptable.

About the Workshops

To that end, this course has been designed with you and your individual needs in mind. Based on the information you provided in the short-answer and essay sections of the

Preliminary Assessment, we have assigned you six workshops adapted from the main textbook for this course, *Being a Writer (BAW)*.

For each workshop, you will submit three assignments for grading. These three assignments are entitled

- Writing for Thinking
- Writing for Communication
- Writing for Reflection.

We have added readings and activities to the text's instructions to reinforce these three main stages of writing. Your instructor may also assign certain sections of *SF Writer* as necessary to help you strengthen any skills in which you are weak.

Each of the six workshops requires three submissions for a total of eighteen assignments. You'll need to submit all eighteen assignments and the final assessment to successfully complete this course.

About the Assignments

Writing for Thinking includes the many steps involved in the writing process. These are often activities completed on your own, yielding compositions that may be rough but that often contain the foundation of a promising product.

Writing for Communication is the "Main Assignment" section in each workshop of *Being a Writer*. It is a culmination of the skills and thoughts emphasized during the initial process activities you completed in Writing for Thinking. This is where you will be asked to draft and revise your work as necessary to create a polished text. (Refer to *SF Writer* for questions concerning mechanics, punctuation, and grammar.)

Writing for Reflection allows you to give voice to your writing process and the decisions you made to create the Main Assignment in Writing for Communication. This is the platform upon which you will articulate the thoughts you had while completing that assignment. Writing for Reflection allows you to engage in self-analysis and learn how to become a better writer.

You may wonder why we're emphasizing these three stages of writing. The answer is easy: Writing occurs in each stage, and each stage contributes to a finished piece. Thinking and reflecting are necessary to write for communication. Some of the exercises included may seem simple at first glance; for example, you may be asked to reflect on the choices you made or document your process as you draft. We believe that every step in the writing process deserves consideration; likewise, understanding the writing process will help you see the practicality of its steps. Writers of all kinds benefit from taking the time to think through their process.

You will be asked to freewrite in many of the activities. Freewriting is a tactic often used to brainstorm ideas or separate your jumbled ideas into coherent thoughts. When you freewrite, don't worry about whether your writing is any good or even whether it makes sense. Don't worry about spelling or grammar. Keep writing and see what comes. Trust yourself and your words.

Submitting the Assignments

After each workshop in this notebook, you will find three submission sheets corresponding to the three assignments. Be sure to attach the matching submission sheet to each assignment before mailing them to Self-paced Courses.

Please complete each workshop in this order:

1. **Complete the Writing for Thinking activities and submit two copies.** We will keep one copy and return the other to you with feedback. **Do not** continue with the next two assignments until you receive the feedback on Writing for Thinking.
2. **Complete Writing for Communication using the feedback you received on your Writing for Thinking assignment.** Follow all directions on drafting and revising. Keep a copy of all your drafts and revisions to submit for this assignment.

3. **Complete Writing for Reflection.** This is usually a composition describing the process you went through to create the Writing for Communication assignment.
4. **Submit Writing for Communication and Writing for Reflection at the same time.** For Writing for Communication, submit a copy of all your drafts and revisions in addition to the final version. For Writing for Reflection, submit only the final version. The final versions of both assignments will be assessed for grammar and mechanics. *Please make sure that the final texts are virtually error-free.*
5. **Begin the next workshop.**

**Virtually
Error-free
Writing**

Readers expect writers to respect their communication by editing and proofreading with care. This respect will help you succeed in all academic, professional, and civic writing situations. Your English 300 instructor will expect all *Writing for Communication* pieces to be virtually error-free. The following list includes some of the most essential errors from which to free your writing.

- lack of agreement between subject and verb
- lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent
- vague pronoun reference
- unnecessary shift in pronoun
- unnecessary shift in verb tense
- wrong or missing verb ending
- wrong tense or verb form
- wrong word
- wrong or missing preposition
- sentence fragment
- fused sentence
- misplaced or dangling modifier
- missing comma(s) with a nonrestrictive element
- unnecessary comma(s) with a restrictive element
- comma splice
- missing or misplaced possessive apostrophe
- *its / it's* confusion

Read and use the information and strategies in *SF Writer* for proofreading (pages 49-50) and spelling (pages 535-543).

Grading

In total, the workshops count 90 percent of your final grade: Each of the six workshops will count 15 percent (broken down into 5 percent per submission). Additional skill-building exercises that your instructor assigns from *SF Writer* may be included in calculating your final grade. Your instructor will decide whether to allow revision after the initial grading of each workshop.

The final writing assessment counts for the remaining 10 percent of your grade.

Final Assessment

You must pass the final assessment, which is the equivalent of a final exam, in order to receive credit for the course. Once you have completed the six workshops, your instructor will ask the Friday Center to mail you the final assessment.

Process Journal

BAW often refers to a “process journal,” which is a place for you to keep a written record of what you are learning about your writing process and the successes and or difficulties you are having. We refer to this as “process writing” throughout this course and ask you to use it as a tool that will enable you to more easily reflect on your writing and work through the difficulties of different stages.