

APPENDIX C: OCU ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COMPOSITION OUTCOMES STATEMENT

OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COMPOSITION PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The English Department works toward the following goals and objectives in all composition courses—ENGL 1113, 1113I, 1113H, 1213, 1213I, 1213H. In both Composition I and II (ENGL 1113 and 1213), we have five primary goals:

Students should develop and improve their abilities in the following five goals:

1. Rhetorical Knowledge
2. Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing
3. Processes
4. Knowledge of Conventions
5. Composing in Electronic Environments

International and honors courses address the same objectives as the traditional, domestic courses. Though the goals are the same, they are emphasized developmentally, meaning composing strategies practiced in Composition I will provide the foundation for composing done in Composition II. In sum then, Composition I and II, together, emphasize the reading of academic, literary, and/or professional texts as well as writing/composing in them.

RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE

By the end of first year composition, students should:

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

- Write in several genres and/or forms such as narratives, reflections, summaries, arguments, syntheses, critiques, objective reports, essays, and/or essay-exams
- Understand academic writing as specific and situated discourse

CRITICAL THINKING, READING, AND WRITING

By the end of first year composition, students should:

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
- Engage in thinking that requires movement from general to specific (deduction) and from the specific to the general (induction)
- Use problem-solving heuristics and then transfer those heuristics to other situations
- Develop basic research skills
- Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Critique foundational assumptions and bring controversial assumptions to light
- Read as a writer with an eye to borrowing strategies, techniques, and forms from other writers
- Interpret literary texts, such as non-fiction, short stories, poems, songs, and/or films with a specific focus or theoretical frame
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Develop ideas using concrete details and specific examples to support ideas, illustrate points, and make writing interesting, compelling, and persuasive
- Understand the relationships among language, knowledge, and power
- Learn that composition is, among other things, a path to knowledge, self-discovery and communicating with others
- In international sections, increase English vocabulary conventions
- Learn to identify implied points or consequences of ideas

PROCESSES

By the end of first year composition, students should:

- Use invention techniques such as talking to peers, free writing, questioning, clustering, journaling, and conducting research

- Be aware that it takes several drafts to complete a successful text and learn to improve successive drafts, using rubrics, revision checklists or other specified criteria
- Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes, that writing is not simply the product of learning but is part of the process of constructing meaning and knowledge
- Understand the values and challenges of collaboration and develop skill in working collaboratively within the academic community
- Learn to critique their own and others' works, present their own works to others, and learn to guide revision discussion so that they can gain from other readers and thereby improve their own texts
- Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with the responsibility of doing their part
- Evaluate their own writing with some detachment, taking a step away from their own writing to read it critically
- Use a variety of technologies, media and/or genres to address a range of audiences
- Learn time management skills

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

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

KNOWLEDGE OF CONVENTIONS

By the end of first year composition, students should:

- Express thoughts clearly in effectively organized sentences and paragraphs
- Write with language that is specific, concrete, and honest, free of clichés, prefabricated language, and wasted words

- Learn to use common formats for different kinds of compositions, such as reports, reviews, memoranda, proposals, letters, brochures, etc.
- Develop strategies for effective introductions and conclusions
- Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Write logically with clear organization between ideas and paragraphs
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work using professional format/style
- Understand the rationale for documentation in researched writing and how to recognize and avoid plagiarism
- Improve editing skills, becoming more adept in identifying and correcting errors in standard English grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and spelling

COMPOSING IN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENTS

As has become clear over the last 20 years, writing in the twenty-first century involves using digital technologies for several purposes, from drafting to peer reviewing to editing. Therefore, although the *kinds* of composition processes and texts expected from students vary across programs and institutions, there are nonetheless common expectations.

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- Use electronic technologies for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, or sharing compositions
- Collect, locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases, other official databases (e.g., federal government databases), and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Understand and employ the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the possibilities or options available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts
- Learn to disseminate compositions in both print and electronic forms in their fields