

The Writing Workshop: An Overview for Students

(7/09)

What is this?

This document offers students who may be interested in the Writing Workshop an overview of the purpose, structure and goals of the course. It includes a description of the Writing Workshop and of what you will accomplish in this class. Starting on page five, you will find a sample syllabus. If you have additional questions about the Workshop, please feel free to contact SNL's Writing Coordinator, Michelle Navarre Cleary, at mnavarr9@depaul.edu or 312-362-7301.

What is the Writing Workshop?

The Writing Workshop is a four-credit class in which no more than ten students receive intensive, individualized and expert guidance on how to become more confident, efficient and effective writers. Students at any point in their studies at SNL can take the Workshop to improve their writing and their mastery of the writing process. Students have taken the Workshop to prepare for Academic Writing for Adults, as additional support when enrolled in a writing-intensive course, to finish an incomplete, and to work on Independent Learning Pursuits (ILPs) and Advanced Projects (APs). In collaboration with their instructor, each student develops and implements a plan to improve his or her writing. You can see how this plan is structured on pages five through thirteen. Students can earn the H-3-J competence in this course. They are also encouraged to use the Workshop to work on papers for competence in other courses or through the ILP process.

Policies and Principles Guiding the Writing Workshop:

- Because of the individualized work, the Writing Workshop is capped at 10 students.
- This is a four-credit course. Four credit hours are roughly equivalent to 30 contact hours. Depending upon the mix of students in a Workshop, the instructor may find it most efficient to meet with the students primarily as a class, in small groups or individually after the first class.
- This is a Pass/Fail class.
- Students earn the H-3-J competence for this course.

- The Workshop helps students become more confident, efficient and effective in their writing process.
- The Workshop is project-based, meaning students work on papers or other writing projects. If the student does not have a writing project from another class on which to work, he or she should start an ILP.
- The Workshop is individualized as students design their own writing plan with the advice of their instructors and students work on writing projects of importance to them.
- Grammar exercises can supplement, but should not replace, work on writing projects.
- Students learn how to revise their work through a drafting process.
- Students learn how to recognize and correct their most common or grievous errors of organization, focus, development, mechanics and grammar.
- Students leave the Workshop with a writing support system in place.
- The default focus of the Workshop is on academic writing. A student may come to the Workshop with the goal of working on some other prose genre as long as this goal is clearly defined at the outset. However, this is not a creative writing class.

H-3-J Competence and Criteria:

Can manage one's ongoing development as a writer using principles and tools of assessment and feedback. □ □

1. Can assess his or her own writing and address areas of weakness
2. Uses revision to produce significantly improved final drafts
3. Demonstrates improvement in writing as documented in a writing portfolio.
4. Presents a plan for continuous, ongoing improvement of writing.

Initial Classes

The instructor and student will use their first one or two meetings to assess the student's writing and develop a plan for the Workshop. To facilitate this assessment, students are encouraged to bring to the first class examples of their best, most challenging and weakest recent writing efforts. If a student has been given a Writing Workshop Referral from a teacher, mentor or advisor, the student should also bring the referral to class.

Writing Workshop Sample Syllabus:

School for New Learning
De Paul University
Writing Workshop
Syllabus

Faculty: Name and contact information

Location: Course location

Course Description: The Writing Workshop will help students be more confident, efficient and effective writers. Each student will work with the instructor to design an individual plan for improving the student's writing and mastery of the writing process. This is a four-credit hour course for which students earn the H-3-J competence. If it fits in their plan for improvement, students may use the Workshop to work on papers for competence in other courses or through the ILP process.

Competence and Detailed Criteria for Assessment: Upon successfully completing the Writing Workshop, the student will be able to do the following:

H-3-J Can manage one's ongoing development as a writer using principles and tools of assessment and feedback. □ □

1. Can assess his or her own writing and address areas of weakness
 - Student can give a realistic and detailed assessment of his or her own writing.
 - Student can identify specific strengths in his or her writing and writing process and knows how to leverage these strengths.
 - Student can identify specific weaknesses in his or her writing and writing process and has strategies for addressing these weaknesses.

2. Uses revision to produce significantly improved final drafts
 - While student may not be able to write fluent first drafts, student knows how to use the revision process to improve the organization, focus, mechanics and effectiveness of his or her writing.
 - Final drafts are college level where minimally competent college level writing is defined as having the following components:
 - A clear thesis, central point or dominant impression;
 - Consistent organization and logical development, although it may exhibit occasional organizational or argumentative weaknesses;
 - Provision of evidence with examples and/or supportive details that relate to the essay's overall point, although all claims may not be fully supported;
 - A general understanding of the reading's central subject and point (when the assignment includes a reading/readings);
 - Vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structures that are generally accurate – grammar and punctuation errors, though present, do not disrupt reading or inhibit clarity;
 - ESL features, if present, add voice and do not inhibit reading – ESL-related problems with idioms or articles are minor;

- Words, facts and ideas from sources are cited, although there may be mistakes in the formatting of the citations.
3. Demonstrates improvement in writing as documented in a writing portfolio. The writing portfolio will include the following:
- Initial examples of the student’s writing from before or at the start of the Workshop.
 - The student and teacher designed “Writing Workshop Plan.” The plan should include clear, demonstrable goals.
 - Evidence the student has accomplished the goals set out in his or her “Writing Workshop Plan” as well as the criteria listed here.
 - The student’s plan for continuous writing improvement (see the next criteria).
 - A final essay in which students cite the evidence in their portfolio to argue that they have met the Writing Workshop criteria and their “Writing Workshop Plan” goals and in which they reflect upon their learning in this Workshop.
4. Presents a plan for continuous, ongoing improvement of writing. Since writing is a life-long learning process, the student should leave this Workshop with a concrete plan for his or her ongoing development as a writer. This plan should include the following:
- Ideas about how to leverage strengths and address weaknesses;
 - An explanation of where and how the student intends to seek out ongoing help with his or her writing;
 - Goals for future writing accomplishments.
- To develop this plan the student should have tried out the following resources by the completion of this Workshop: The DePaul Writing Center, a few online writing guides, and a writing handbook.

Learning Experience: Students, in consultation with their instructor, design an individualized “Writing Workshop Plan” that may include any of the following: workshops, class discussions, journaling, lectures, small group work, conferences, at home and in class assignments, critical reading, online exercises, learning from others through peer editing, and lots and lots of writing. Students should expect to write and to rewrite extensively in this Workshop.

Recommended Text: Hacker, Diane. *A Writer’s Reference*, 6th edition with 2009 MLA updates, Bedford/St. Martin’s, Boston, 2006.

Evidence the Student Will Submit

At the end of the Writing Workshop, the student will submit his or her Writing Workshop portfolio documenting the student’s successful accomplishment of the Writing Workshop

competence, criteria and the goals the student set for him or herself in the “Writing Workshop Plan.” Whenever possible, portfolios should be electronic.

Instructors will send a copy of each student’s portfolio to the Writing Coordinator at the end of the quarter. These portfolios will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Writing Workshop. They can be anonymous. They will not be returned.

Portfolio Checklist

1. A Table of Contents
2. Your “Student Self Assessment”
3. Your “Grammar Checkup”
4. Your “Student Goals”
5. Your “Writing Samples
6. Your “Instructor Assessment”
7. Your “Writing Workshop Plan”
8. Examples of Your Work in Writing Workshop
9. Your Final Self Assessment
10. Portfolio Submission Essay

Criteria for Assessment: The Writing Workshop is a Pass/Fail course. However, you have the option of taking the course for a letter grade. . If you wish to take the course for a letter grade, you must inform your instructor in writing by the end of the second week of class. Once you commit to taking the course for a letter grade, you cannot switch back to Pass/Fail. Some students think they need to take the class for a letter grade for employer reimbursement purposes. In most cases, this is not true. SNL offers students this letter for tuition reimbursement of pass/fail courses:

http://snl.depaul.edu/WebMedia/StudentResources/pass_explanatory_letter.pdf To be sure, you should check with your Human Resources department.

In order to successfully complete this experience, students must:

- attend and participate in scheduled class, group and individual sessions;
- submit assignments on time;
- meet the competence criteria listed above, including submission of the Writing Workshop portfolio.

Class Schedule: To be determined after first meeting for each student and documented in their “Writing Workshop Plan.”

Writing Help: For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>.

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution.

Please refer to DePaul Academic Integrity website (<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>) for further details. The [Resources page](#) of this website is very helpful. It includes definitions of academic integrity violations, examples of what does and does not constitute plagiarism, and guidance on how to cite sources, footnote, quote, paraphrase, summarize. If you are confused about plagiarism or unsure about citation, this site is a great place to start.

SNL Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory in SNL courses. Students and faculty are expected to arrive on time, and to participate in every scheduled class session. Specific course policies can be listed in the course syllabus, and acceptance of the syllabus indicates agreement to policies outlined in that document.

Missing class makes assessment a difficult process, and all students who miss any class work are subject to grade reduction by the faculty. Students who miss more than 10% of any given course are subject to failure.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for

graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact either of us privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact us as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class). If you are a DePaul student, make sure that you have contacted the:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in SAC 220, or
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290 Student Center 307

The Writing Workshop and this Overview were created by Michelle Navarre Cleary, SNL's Writing Coordinator. Please send corrections or suggestions to mnavarr9@depaul.edu. © 2009 Michelle Navarre Cleary.