

Writing Workshop

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Course Information

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.

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 College Writing, 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. 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.

Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net>.

Hint: type DePaul for name of the school.

[Click here for help buying your books](#)

Required Text

Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, Sixth Edition with 2009 MLA Updated, from Bedford/St. Martin's, ISBN number 0-312-59332-5

Course Competences

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.

Course Structure

Class Schedule

To be determined after initial assessments for each student and documented in their "Writing Workshop Plan."

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.

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.

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Assessment

Grading

This is a Pass/Fail class. 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.

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.

Evidence the Students 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

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Policies

Academic Integrity

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 your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the

instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLS at 773-325-1677.

Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

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.

Pass/Fail Grades

The Writing Workshop is a Pass/Fail course. Required courses in the Lifelong Learning area must be taken Pass or Fail (Exception: L6 and L7 can be either letter graded or Pass/Fail). Other SNL courses can be taken for letter grades or Pass/Fail. You must declare to the instructor which grading type you seek by the second week of class. Once made, this decision cannot be changed.

Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve "interactions" —interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as "research" with "human subjects" and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning's Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.

2. You assess and ensure that no "harm"—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
 - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an "informed consent" document. For information on creating an "informed consent document" see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

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Course Expectations

Time Management and Attendance

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the

course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

Online Classes

Students who are motivated, disciplined, and organized tend to do well in online classes. If these traits do not describe you, find strategies for helping you keep on task and manage your time. For example, set up a calendar for the class, bribe yourself with rewards for assignments completed or ask a friend to give you a pep talk once a week.

When communicating in online classes, it is important to remember that your readers do not have the benefit of your facial expression and tone. For these reasons, misunderstandings are more common in online communication than in face to face discussions.

To prevent misunderstanding, read over what you write carefully, use punctuation and emoticons if necessary. If you read something that bothers you, do not reply immediately. Consider other possible interpretations and ask the writer for clarification.

Final Note

Participating in SNL courses can be an enriching, rewarding experience, and a chance to share ideas in a safe environment.

Some difficulties at the beginning of an online course are quite normal; solving them is part of every distance learning experience.

Enjoy the journey into lifelong learning!

Credits

This course was designed and produced by [Insert Author's name here] (the Author) and staff of SNL Online at DePaul University.

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