

## English 180

Welcome to Western's Writing Program. This handout, along with your instructor's syllabus, has been prepared to help you understand what you'll be doing in your 180 class. You should read both carefully, ask questions about any points you don't understand, and keep both for future reference.

### Course Goals and Objectives

English 180 is the first in a series of required writing courses in the educational program at Western Illinois University. Writing is fundamental in academic life, for in the process of writing, a person can discover and clarify information, ideas, judgments, different ways of understanding, and even at times passions and convictions that matter most to him or her. In writing, a person also effectively communicates the information, ideas, judgments, ways of understanding, or convictions to others.

The effective communication of thought is the hallmark of a university education, and in one way or another, it is the goal of most courses in the curriculum. English 180 is intended to help students develop strategies for effective writing and clear thinking so that they may more readily achieve the goals of their own course of study at the university.

In learning to write effectively, students in English 180 will

- make writing choices within the rhetorical context of academic writing with attention to the particular audience, subject matter, and purpose of writing;
- carefully read short texts that include discourse on significant human and intellectual issues;
- use strategies for discovering and connecting insights from reading and their experiences, for example:
  - small and large group discussions,
  - invention techniques (questions, cubing, and so on),
  - note-taking,
  - summary,
  - library research;
- write to respond to the concepts and arguments provided in the texts they read, for example:
  - description,
  - explanation,
  - summary;
- give adequate time and attention to each stage in the writing process, that is:
  - inventing,
  - drafting,
  - discussing drafts with others for a sense of audience and clarity,
  - revising and redrafting for coherence and completeness,
  - editing for correctness of expression and presentation,
  - reflecting on the methods by which they have developed their thinking;
- write essays that apply the knowledge gained from reading these texts to their own experiences and that test such knowledge against their own perceptions, for example:
  - comparison,
  - analysis,
  - evaluation;
- organize their ideas effectively by developing a working knowledge of the logical structure underlying English syntax at the sentence level and beyond;
- develop methods for editing their own writing to conform to the accepted standard for print publication (spelling, punctuation, word usage, etc.);
- use computer word processing for drafting, revising, and editing their writing.

### Placement

You took a writing placement test as part of the WesternBound program. If you were placed in English 100 as a result of that test, you **must** pass 100 before you are eligible for English 180.

### University Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free service offered by the English Department and the Provost's Office First-Year Experience Program to all WIU students and faculty. Writing Centers are located in Simpkins Hall 341 and inside the North Quad Computer Center in Wetzel Hall. Tutors are available to help with any aspect of the writing process. You may visit the Writing Centers during their hours (see the website). Or you may call the Simpkins Center (298-2815) or the Wetzel Center (298-3477) to arrange an appointment. The Writing Center homepage is <http://www.wiu.edu/uwc/>.

## **Grades**

In English 180 you can earn a grade of A, B, C, U, or F. If you receive a U or an F in 180, you must repeat the course in order to fulfill the Communication Skills requirement. Instructors determine the grading scales used to assign grades. The Western Writing Program has established the following guidelines for U and F grades:

### U Grades

If you are not performing satisfactory work but are making a good faith effort to pass a course, you can earn a U (unsatisfactory) grade. You will earn no grade points or credits for a grade of U. However, the U grade is not a penalizing grade because it is not calculated in grade point average (GPA).

We consider a good faith effort to include all of the following:

- attending and participating in class
- completing and submitting all components of major papers (bibliographies, drafts, and other materials required by instructors), and
- completing assigned reading and other homework in a timely fashion

If you meet requirements but are still not writing at a C or better level at the end of the term, you should receive a U grade for the course. The U grade reinforces our belief that writing is a process which requires considerable time and effort. We believe students who attempt to do the work but fail to meet our standards should not be penalized, but should be permitted to retake the course and continue to improve their writing abilities.

### F Grades

If you are not making a good faith effort, you should earn an F (failing) grade. You will earn no grade points or credits for a grade of F.

Because the F grade is a penalizing grade which negatively affects GPA, it is reserved for students whose effort is unsatisfactory for one or more reasons:

- poor attendance and participation
- failure to complete and submit all components of major papers (bibliographies, drafts, and other materials required by instructors), or
- academic dishonesty

If you choose not to complete course assignments and/or disregard course requirements, you should receive an F grade for the course.

An I (incomplete) grade may be given only when you fail to complete course requirements due to documented circumstances beyond your control. The mere failure to complete an assignment does not justify the recording of an incomplete, unless illness or other emergency is the cause.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Dishonesty of any kind with respect to examinations, course assignments, alteration of records, or illegal possession of examinations is considered cheating. It is your responsibility not only to abstain from cheating but also to avoid making it possible for others to cheat. Any student who knowingly helps another student to cheat is as guilty of cheating as the student he or she assists. The submission of the work of someone else as one's own constitutes plagiarism. Academic honesty requires that ideas or materials taken from another source for use in a course paper or project be fully acknowledged. (See Student Academic Integrity Policy in the University Policy Manual, <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>)

## **Final Examinations**

The final examination is considered one of a course's scheduled meeting periods. A course in which a final is not given must still meet during this time. The final exam schedule for all courses is printed in the course schedule book and on-line at <http://www.wiu.edu/registrar/exams.php>.

## **Attendance**

The Department of English and Journalism supports the right of individual faculty members to penalize you for attendance problems, provided the policy and penalties are described in the course syllabus.