

## USI Directed Self-Placement

### **What Are my Options for Placement in First-Year Composition?**

The University of Southern Indiana University Core Curriculum requires completion of ENG 101, Rhetoric and Composition I, and ENG 201, Rhetoric and Composition II. These two courses are commonly referred to as the “first-year composition sequence” because students are encouraged to complete these fundamental classes early in their college careers, to help them develop as academic writers.

USI students may enter their first-year composition sequence at one of these three points:

**ENG 101. Rhetoric and Composition I: Literacy and the Self (3)** A course in the critical arts of reading, writing, reflection, and discussion with an introduction to rhetoric and informal logic.

**ENG 100. Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition (3)** A portfolio-based, preparatory course in reading, writing, reflection, and discussion, emphasizing rhetorical analysis and strategies for focusing, developing, and organizing writing. Special attention also is given to strategies for revising and editing writing.

**GENS 098. Strategies for Writers (0)** This three-hour, non-credit course will provide opportunities to learn and practice strategies for responding to college writing assignments. Students will practice strategies for focusing, organizing, developing, and revising their work, with special attention to learning editing strategies for standard grammar, usage, and expression. The grammar emphasis in this course will occur in response to student work, which will include journals and teacher assigned writing.

ENG 101 contributes three credits towards the nine credits required for University Core Curriculum Goal A1 for Composition/Speech. ENG 100 course credits apply as electives toward graduation, but students must still complete ENG 101 to satisfy their UCC requirement.

GENS 098 is a non-credit course, meaning credit in the class will not apply to a degree.

### **How Do I Select the Best Course for Me?**

The Rhetoric and Composition Program at USI believes that communication, critical thinking and creativity are essential skills for all college students to develop, and the first-year composition sequence is designed to provide you with a foundation in each of these areas. In order to succeed in these fundamental courses, it is important for each student to begin the sequence with the course that best fits her/his needs.

Students are automatically enrolled in ENG 101 if they meet two of these three criteria:

- High school rank: 51% or above
- ACT/SAT Verbal: 450 or above
- ACT/SAT Writing: 450 or above

### *Writing Placement*

Students who do not meet these criteria compose a Writing Placement Essay. This essay is completed during a 45-minute period at USI and is scored by instructors from the USI English Department. Based on the placement essay score, students are enrolled in either ENG 101, ENG 100, or GENS 098.

### *Directed Self-Placement*

Some students who meet the criteria for placement in ENG 101 may feel that they would be better served by either ENG 100 or GENS 098. In this case, you are encouraged to confer with your academic advisor, who can help you decide what course would be most appropriate.

In some instances, instructors of ENG 101, ENG 100 or GENS 098 may feel that a student has been improperly placed based on the in-class diagnostic writing essay all first-year composition instructors are encouraged to conduct during the first week of classes. If your instructor believes you would be better served by entering the first-year composition sequence at a different point, she or he may speak with you about placement options. It is then your choice to remain in your current course or to enroll in the course your instructor recommends.

Sometimes, students are reluctant to enroll in ENG 100 or GENS 098 because these courses do not contribute to the University Core Curriculum Goal A1 for Composition/Speech. Nevertheless, the most important factor in designing a program of study should be long-term academic success. Entering the first-year composition sequence at the appropriate point will help to ensure that you get off to the right start in developing those crucial skills of communication, critical thinking and creativity, which will benefit you well beyond the composition classroom.

### **Whom Do I Contact with Questions about Placement?**

Dr. Patrick Shaw, Director of Composition

- Office Phone: 812-461-5258
- Office Location: Orr Center 3074D
- Email: [pshaw@usi.edu](mailto:pshaw@usi.edu)

Ms. Jaclyn Wells, Assistant Director of Composition

- Office Phone: 812-464-1747
- Office Location: Orr Center 3007
- Email: [jwells@usi.edu](mailto:jwells@usi.edu)