

ENGL 1102—Capstone Assignment

The Composition Committee oversees the annual assessment of first-year writing classes. Each year, CC reviews materials that demonstrate students' levels of success in meeting student learning outcomes. The intent of assessment is not to review instructors' grades or to second guess why a particular grade was assigned. Instead, one of the major goals is to determine how well our students are learning and what we can do to improve our courses as a whole.

As part of the department's ongoing assessment process, this capstone assignment will allow for more consistency in materials that are reviewed annually. This assignment should be one of the final two assignments in ENGL 1102 and be given near the end of the semester at a time when students would be able to demonstrate proficiency in the Objective 1 student learning outcomes. The specific subject and writing prompt will be determined by individual instructors, but the assignment must meet the following guidelines.

Purpose

The assignment will provide an opportunity for students to write an essay that demonstrates the students' rhetorical awareness, consideration of audience, and effective use of evidence. The writing produced is likely to require argumentation / persuasion, but this focus is not required.

Required Elements

To increase the validity of this overall assessment, we are asking that you design one assignment for your 1102 class that asks students

- 1) To write between 1,200-2,000 words of finished, edited prose. Each instructor may set the specific length at any point in this range.
- 2) To demonstrate evidence-based reasoning which addresses readers' assumptions.
- 3) To conduct research. Students will need to demonstrate that they can select appropriate sources, integrate quotations and ideas from sources, represent sources accurately, respond to the ideas of their sources, cite sources accurately, and provide accurate documentation following an accepted style guide. Sources should demonstrate multiple and diverse perspectives appropriate to context.
- 4) To construct a guiding thesis that will make the subject and purpose of the text clear and that will establish a compelling direction for the writing.
- 5) To demonstrate comprehension of key terms and concepts in rhetoric and writing through a separate written reflection. The reflection should address the rhetorical choices the student made in writing the essay, and it should use key rhetorical terms and concepts (such as, audience, rhetorical situation, rhetorical appeals, purpose, subject, context, etc.). To ameliorate concerns that students will spend too much time on the essay and not enough on the reflection (or vice versa), faculty may opt to have students complete the reflection in class the day essays are due.

Additional Requirements

- 1) When submitting student essays to the writing assessment committee, the assignment description must be included with the set of essays.
- 2) For any assignment that is open-ended, allowing students to select their own genres, subjects, audiences, and/or contexts, a brief note written by the student should be included with each essay that explains how the choice of genre was shaped by the choice of audience, subject, and context.
- 3) We ask that unmarked copies of the papers with the students' names and the instructor identification removed be submitted electronically to the Director of Composition.