

English and Communication Entry Competencies

Entry-Level Competencies for First Course in Freshman Composition

The following are the *writing, thinking and expressive* skills identified and recommended by our group of community college and four-year English instructors and professors as well as high school teachers of English. The competencies constitute a body of what we consider the minimal level of knowledge and skills students *should have acquired to certify* that they are ready for entry-level college work in English.

- 1) Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking for reading, writing, and speaking purposes.
 - a) Participate in active reading and discussion of texts.
 - b) Incorporate ideas and information from readings into own writing.
 - c) Identify purpose, main idea, and supporting evidence.
 - d) Distinguish between fact and opinion.
 - e) Distinguish between general and specific information.
 - f) Summarize and paraphrase information.
 - g) Communicate effectively in groups by listening, reflecting, and responding appropriately.
- 2) Understand and use a writing process.
 - a) Have flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading.
 - b) Understand writing as an open, flexible process that permits a writer to use later invention and rethinking to revise work.
- 3) Compose sound sentences.
 - a) Use a variety of sentence structures correctly (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex).
 - b) Produce sentences free of major sentence-level errors (fragments, comma splices, fused-sentences).
 - c) Communicate with few errors in grammar, usage and mechanics.
- 4) Compose sound paragraphs.
 - a) Write focused topic sentences.
 - b) Use descriptive details, examples, and facts to develop the paragraph's main idea.
 - c) Use effective patterns of organization (e.g., chronological, emphatic, spatial, etc.) and development (e.g., comparison/contrast, narration, definition, etc.).
 - d) Use transitional devices within paragraphs to achieve coherence and focus.
- 5) Produce sound discourse.
 - a) Use basic essay structure, including an introduction, body, and conclusion.
 - b) Construct thesis statements.
 - c) Organize ideas logically.

- d) Develop an essay's main idea with adequate and specific supporting detail.
 - e) Use transitional devices within essays to achieve coherence, flow, and focus.
 - f) Maintain appropriate tone and vocabulary for target audience.
- 6) Be familiar with elementary research procedures.
- a) Acknowledge source material and be able to distinguish it from their own ideas.
 - b) Locate and retrieve relevant information using traditional and contemporary technologies.
 - c) Evaluate reliability of information and sources.
 - d) Record relevant information.
 - e) Document sources of information, using recognized documentation format.