Suggestions for Building on First-Year Writing Preparation

--adapted in part from the Council of Writing Program Administrators' 1999 Outcomes Statement

RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE

By the end of the first-year writing experience, students should be able to identify and respond to different audiences and different rhetorical situations. They have practiced using the conventions of format and structure specific to several rhetorical situations and genres.

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- The main features of writing in their fields
- The main uses of writing in their fields
- The expectations of readers in their fields

CRITICAL THINKING, READING, AND WRITING

By the end of the first-year writing experience, students should be able to use writing for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating. They should understand writing as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate sources. Students should be able to integrate their own ideas with those of others.

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- The uses of writing as a critical thinking tool
- The interactions among critical thinking, critical reading, and critical writing

PROCESSES

By the end of the first-year writing experience, students should understand writing as a multi-staged, recursive process. They have practiced strategies for generating, researching, drafting, revising, and editing. Students have practiced critiquing their own work and that of others, and are aware of the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- To build final results in stages
- To review work-in-process in collaborative peer groups for purposes other than editing
- To apply the technologies commonly used to research and communicate in their fields

KNOWLEDGE OF CONVENTIONS

By the end of the first-year writing experience, students should have knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraph to tone and mechanics. They have been introduced to and have practiced appropriate means of documenting their work.

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- Conventions of usage, specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation in their fields
- Strategies through which better control of conventions can be achieved