LL260 WRITING FOR COMPETENCE
Syllabus
Summer 2017
School for New Learning, DePaul University

Faculty: Peter Forster 773-388-9315 forsterpeter@hotmail.com
Office hours Mondays 3:00pm-5:00pm. Please make an appointment.

Location: Loop (Check Campus Connect for Room)

Competence: L-4

Credit hours: 4

Course Description:

"A writer is a person for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people."
– Thomas Mann

Writing is so hard because it requires the clear communication of well thought-out ideas. Spelling and grammar are the easy part. This class will help you master the hard as well as the easy parts of writing.

The skills you learn in this class are widely applicable and will help you improve your business and other writing. However, we will focus particular attention on writing to excel in SNL's writing-intensive curriculum.

You will learn strategies for combining experience with analysis and reflection in writing, managing the writing process, working effectively with sources, and writing persuasively. You will also practice using writing as a tool for exploring as well as communicating your ideas. Particular emphasis will be given to the process of revision as you learn to write to demonstrate competence, develop your ideas, refine your writing, and give feedback to others.

The course assumes a basic understanding of English grammar. It carries four tuition credit hours. Note that SNL does not accept transfer courses for the L4 competence; however, students who feel their writing is particularly strong and can provide examples should consider taking the L4 Proficiency Exam to satisfy the L4 Competence.

Course Learning Goals/Course Competence:

L-4: Can write to demonstrate academic and professional competencies.

1. Applies knowledge of academic writing conventions to demonstrate prior and new learning
2. Analyzes, evaluates and synthesizes experiences and concepts in writing

3. Demonstrates control over grammar, syntax, and punctuation

4. Understands writing as an iterative process and applies a variety of strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading

5. Creates a plan for ongoing improvement of writing for academic, work, and personal communication including addressing problems and leveraging strengths

**Course Resources:**

To buy your books, go to [http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/depaul.htm](http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/depaul.htm).

**Required:**

   - Supplementing this textbook is an extensive website, *Diana Hacker's A Writer’s Reference* ([http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref7e/](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref7e/)). This website includes links to various sources and exercises. Students can tailor their work to address individual needs in grammar, composition, and documentation. Take a few minutes to look around the site and see what is available. If you decide or your instructor requires you to do some of the exercises available on this site, be sure to register and provide your instructor's e-mail address. Upon completing any exercises, e-mail your instructor as he or she will not necessarily get a notification when you complete your work.
3. Assigned selections from *Writing Guide for SNL Students* at [https://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing/](https://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing/)

*Additional readings available on e-reserve from the DePaul library through Ares Course Reserves.* [http://library.depaul.edu/services/Pages/Course-Reserves-Services.aspx](http://library.depaul.edu/services/Pages/Course-Reserves-Services.aspx) (select Writing for Competence)

**Recommended:**

1. If English is not your native language and you struggle with English as a Second Language (ESL) issues like article and pronoun usage, you may want to also purchase the ESL Supplement for *A Writer’s Reference*, ISBN 0312-45233-0 ($7.50).
2. A college dictionary
3. If you would like to read more about the craft of writing, the following are both readable and full of useful tips:

**How the Competence will be Demonstrated in this Course:**

Students demonstrate the Competence by participating in classroom exercises and assignments, drafting and revising essays, uploading drafts onto Digication, producing a final portfolio with a writing learning plan, and completing supplemental exercises as necessary.

In addition to the 3 hours and 15 minutes of classroom time, you should expect to spend 10 - 12 hours a week on homework for this class.

**Assessment:**

**Course Grading Policies, Practices, and Assessment Criteria:**

In order to successfully complete this pass/fail course, students must:

1. Submit all drafts in a timely manner
2. Receive passing grades on the two final drafts as per the [SNL Paper Rubric](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html)
3. Participate meaningfully on the discussion board and in peer revision;
4. Successfully complete the Portfolio
5. Meet the criteria for the L4 competence as listed above

Distribution of Assessment:

- Final Argumentative Research Paper* = 25%
- Final Comparison/Contrast Essay * = 25%
- Final Personal Narrative* = 20%
- In-class participation = 10%
- Portfolio including introduction, goals, self-assessment, essay drafts, self-evaluations, and Final Portfolio Essay = 20%

Final drafts will be evaluated using the Grading Rubric for Papers at the School for New Learning ([http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html)).

*Students must complete and submit all drafts of essays to get credit for final drafts.*
Throughout the quarter, you will build a digital portfolio that includes your drafts, self-evaluations, and Final Portfolio Essay. The self-evaluations and portfolio essay address the fourth competence criterion and must include specific strategies for addressing your most common writing problems, equally concrete ideas for how to make the most of your strengths as a writer, and a clear plan for mastering the writing genres related to your focus area. The Portfolio helps you to look forward to set an agenda for your ongoing development as a writer and demonstrates what you have learned and reflects upon what you have accomplished in this class. The Portfolio as a whole should demonstrate that you have met or exceeded the criteria for the L4 competence.

Digication ([http://depaul.digication.com](http://depaul.digication.com))

Digication help page ([http://depaul.digication.com/ghelp](http://depaul.digication.com/ghelp))

Log in with your Campus Connect credentials.

**Your Portfolio Essay:**

Your portfolio essay gives you the chance to demonstrate and reflect upon what you have learned about writing and yourself as a writer over the quarter. It is your final persuasive writing-to-competence exercise in which you make the argument that you have achieved the L4 competence.

In your portfolio essay, you should cite specific evidence from your drafts in this course (feel free to quote yourself and show before/after examples), from our textbooks, and from feedback you received from your peers and instructor. Use this evidence to support your claims that you have achieved each of the competence criteria.

In addition to reflecting on what you have done in this course, you should also include at least one paragraph in which you describe what you plan to do in the future by discussing the following:

- Your ideas for how you can leverage your strengths as a writer and improve your weaknesses.
- The grammar and/or writing problems you most frequently face and strategies you have developed for recognizing and addressing these problems.
- Your plan for mastering the writing tasks associated with your focus area or major.

**Two things you want to work on next and your plan for doing so. Your Digital Writing Portfolio:**

After you have written your Portfolio Essay (or perhaps while you are in the middle of writing it), you should revisit your digital writing portfolio in Digication, add any additional content (drafts, feedback, evaluations, etc.) that shows your progress as a writer during the course, update your introduction page and goals, and integrate your final portfolio essay so that it tells the story of your portfolio for your instructor and any
future readers at SNL or beyond. You may also find that you want to update this portfolio with your writing, projects, self-evaluations, and reflections from other courses and experiences as you move forward at SNL. This is perfectly acceptable and encouraged. You will have access to Digication and will "own" this portfolio and any others you create from this point forward.

The idea here is to think of the portfolio not as a drawer into which you shove your completed work, but as a museum in which each work includes an explanation of what it is and what it shows about your developing ideas about writing and yourself as a writer. Your L4 Portfolio will be a representation not only of what you have done in this class but also what you have taken from this experience. So in essence, the portfolio is as much about what you have done as it is about the way you have changed as a writer, thinker, and student. The audience for your L4 Portfolio is primarily your instructor, your classmates, and you, but other students have continued to add to their portfolio beyond this course and have shared it with employers, family, and friends to demonstrate their competence as writers and communicators.

- Review section C3e in A Writer’s Reference to learn more about portfolios and see an example of a reflective essay/letter for a portfolio.

**Learning Experience:**

In this course the following teaching and learning techniques are used: workshops, class discussions, D2L discussion boards, lectures, small group work, conferences, at home and in class assignments, critical reading, online exercise resources, learning from others through peer editing, and lots of writing.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Students missing more than two classes are unlikely to meet the requirements for a passing grade. A great deal of the work and learning of the course take place in class. Therefore, it is necessary that you come to class, be prepared and participate. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. All work must be submitted on time, whether you are in class or not.

**Evidence Students will Submit:**

1. Personal narrative (2 drafts; 3 pages)
2. Comparison/Contrast paper (2 drafts; 4 pages)
3. Research paper (3 drafts; 5 pages)
4. Final Portfolio
5. Participation in all class activities

In each of these assignments, students must demonstrate their ability to use standard English grammar and spelling, and organize their work according to topic and assignment demands.
Criteria for assessment:

This is a Pass/Fail class. However, you have the option of taking the course for a letter grade. If you wish to take the course for a letter grade, you must inform your instructor in writing by the end of the second week of class. Once you commit to taking the course for a letter grade, you cannot switch back to Pass/Fail.

In order to pass, students must

1. Attend class and participate in class activities, exercises and discussions; more than 2 absences will result in a failing grade
2. Submit homework on time; late homework will immediately jeopardize your grade
3. Meet the standards of the L-4 Competence, described above

SNL Grading Policy for Lifelong Learning Courses

In certain SNL courses in the Lifelong Learning Area of the BA curriculum, instructors regularly use the pass/fail grading system. However, SNL also offers students the opportunity in several of these courses to select a "Grading" option where grades A through C- represent passing performance. The faculty member and the individual student together decide which system will best promote the student's learning in that particular course. With no exceptions, a student must obtain permission from the instructor to use the grade option by the beginning of the third week of the quarter. After the third week of the quarter the assessment style agreed upon, whether pass/fail or grading, cannot be changed. The instructor is required to provide the student the specific assessment criteria by which a grade will be determined prior to the student officially selecting this option. Grading criteria shall appear in the syllabus along with pass/fail assessment criteria.

Lifelong learning courses that already employ a grading system such as Quantitative Reasoning and Collaborative Learning will continue to use this system. The Lifelong learning courses Foundations, and Summit Seminar will continue to employ the pass/fail system exclusively. This policy applies to the other lifelong learning competencies and courses, including Critical Thinking, Research Seminar, and Externship. The pass/fail policy and procedure of the university found in the student handbook should be followed where a student wishes to seek this option for a graded course.

Class outline:

Week 1

Free writing
Introduction to course; assignment and syllabus review
Discussion of Personal Narrative
Homework: Hacker, sections B and G

WRITE 1ST DRAFT OF PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Week 2

Free writing
Paragraph development
Introduction to the Portfolio

Please check out the site about portfolios at SNL, which was built using DePaul’s portfolio development platform, Digication, here: https://depaul.digication.com. You will find information about portfolio theory and practice, DePaul resources and support for using Digication, portfolios in SNL writing courses, and portfolios in other SNL courses such as Foundations.

Peer editing—BRING 3 COPIES OF PERSONAL NARRATIVE 1ST DRAFT

Homework: Graf, 1-14, 17-47
Hacker, sections S, C1-C4

WRITE FINAL DRAFT OF PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Week 3

PERSONAL NARRATIVE DUE
Designing the ePortfolio: small group discussions, presentations and decisions
Free writing
Comparing and contrasting two articles:

Rush Limbaugh, “Oh, the Futility! Establishment GOP Draws All the Wrong Lessons from Election Results.” The Rush Limbaugh Show, November 08, 2012.
http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/daily/2012/11/08/oh_the_futility_establishment_gop_draws_all_the_wrong_lessons_from_election_results

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/11/19/121119fa_fact_lizza

Building arguments: paraphrasing, summarizing, citing, quoting
Organizing and developing

Homework: Graf 51-73, 115-122
Hacker, sections C5 and C6
WRITE 1ST DRAFT OF COMPARISON/CONTRAST ESSAY

Week 4

Peer Editing—BRING 3 COPIES OF COMPARISON/CONTRAST 1ST DRAFT
ePorfilio updates: small group discussions and presentations
Free writing
Data collection
Beginning the research paper: topics and arguments

Homework: Graf 88-97

WRITE FINAL DRAFT OF COMPARISON/CONTRAST ESSAY

Week 5

NO CLASS—INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Homework: Graf, 101-114, 123-132
Hacker, section R

SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT OF COMPARISON/CONTRAST ESSAY

Week 6

ePortfolio updates
Free writing
Developing the outline
Review of Graf and Hacker

Homework: WRITE 1ST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER

Week 7

Free writing
Peer editing—BRING 3 COPIES OF RESEARCH PAPER 1ST DRAFT

Homework: Hacker, sections P, W and M

WRITE 2ND DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER

Week 8

Free writing
Critical reading of sources
Deepening the argument from introduction to conclusion

Homework: Hacker, section T

WRITE 2ND DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER

Week 9

ePortfolio check-ins
Free writing
Peer editing—BRING 3 COPIES OF RESEARCH PAPER 2ND DRAFT
Building the bibliography
Review: grammar, organization, citations/quotations, etc.

Homework: WRITE FINAL DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER

Week 10

RESEARCH PAPER DUE
ePORTFOLIO DUE
Discussion of research papers and ePortfolios

Incomplete grades:

These are for special circumstances.

Please be aware that receiving an Incomplete does not expunge your class attendance record. It is against SNL policy for a student to attend class meetings of the course for which she has received an Incomplete during a previous quarter. See link below.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy: The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.
If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). See link below.

Undergraduate and graduate students will have up to two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

Plagiarism:

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy:

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students’ own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university’s academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html for further details.

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one’s own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased form any other
person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

A Special Note on Plagiarism for Writing for Competence students:

In college, knowing why, when and how to cite sources is vital. By using sources appropriately, you participate in the scholarly community as you relate your ideas and experiences to those of others. When citations are lacking or incorrect, you weaken your paper by failing to clearly make those connections. You also leave yourself open to charges of plagiarism, which can have serious academic consequences.

Part of the work of this class is to make sure that you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, so be sure to ask if you have any questions about it. We will discuss how to cite sources and avoid plagiarism in the course. However, you can get a head start by looking at the sites indicated under “Help with Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism” (http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/Writing%20Help.html).
See additional information pertaining to the grade designations for undergraduate grades. See Pass/Fail Grading Options.

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Incomplete Policy
- Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
- Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability
- Protection of Human Research Participants

**Course Resources**

- University Center for Writing-based Learning
- SNL Writing Guide
- Dean of Students Office