At Eastern, a key component of our mission is an emphasis on communication skills. The University Writing Program consists of specific courses and assessment activities especially designed to develop and evaluate your writing skill. The first component of this writing program is fulfilled by one of two first-year writing courses—English 100 or English 100Plus. Your first task within the program is to choose which course is right for you and support that choice in a written essay.

Expectations for First-Year Writing

The goal in first-year writing classes at ECSU is to provide you with a solid set of writing skills and strategies that can serve you throughout college and in the world of work. While it is not possible to make all first-year students into perfect writers for all situations, we hope that you will leave the course with enough awareness of the nature of successful writing and of your own skills and weaknesses as a writer to be a lifelong learner of writing, able to solve the variety of new writing problems that may arise in your future.

Some students arrive at Eastern much closer to this kind of self-sufficiency than others. Your high school curriculum may have heavily emphasized writing as a tool for learning, or you may simply have a strong love for books and language that has given you an edge in the world of writing. It may be, however, that you were not required to do much writing in high school, or you may find reading more of a struggle than a pleasure. Given the differences in students' preparation for college-level writing, Eastern's English department has developed two different first-year courses, both of which are designed to prepare you for a lifetime of writing.

In ENG 100 or ENG 100Plus you can expect to write at least four or five formal assignments. Some may be shorter (2-4 pages); others will definitely be longer (as long as 12 pages). The assignments will ask you to read about and respond to different ideas and issues, to address your ideas to different audiences, to shape and develop your ideas according to the expectations of different readers or different situations, and to use information from sources to illustrate and support your ideas in intelligent and ethical ways.

100 or 100P: What's the Difference?

You may be asking yourself, "If the goals of these two courses are the same, and the kind of work I would do in each class is similar, where is the choice? What is the difference between ENG 100 and ENG 100P?" The difference lies not in the expectations of each course, but in the amount of instructional support and classroom time provided to help you meet those expectations.

English 100 is a three-credit course; therefore, it meets three hours a week. During a typical class, you may be introduced to and provided practice in various writing strategies, the expectations for assignments might be explained, you might discuss relevant reading, or you and your classmates might engage in other activities designed to help you better understand different genres and writing situations. We hope that students in English 100 will get a great deal of support from their instructor both in class and during office hours or scheduled conferences. If you enroll in English 100, you may also see writing center tutors outside of class for additional help.
English 100P is a five-credit course, and therefore meets five hours a week. The two extra hours are referred to as "lab." Lab time may be used for a variety of purposes including drafting and revising your writing, working with other students on peer response, and consulting with tutors or your instructor. In the lab, the instructor focuses activities on those areas in which students seem to need the most support, from comma usage to research to organizing and developing ideas. Therefore, during lab, you might participate in small-group and individual activities that will support you as you tackle the more challenging college-level writing projects that are required for successful completion of the first-year writing requirement. Additionally, each section of 100P is assigned two trained peer writing tutors who will work with you and your instructor during lab sessions and who are also available to you outside of class for additional help and guidance.

The First-Year Writing Portfolio Requirement

Successful completion of either ENG 100 or ENG 100P entails submitting an end-of-course portfolio. As a graded component of your first-year writing course, you will be required to compile and turn in a portfolio of written work. Your portfolio might be randomly selected to be evaluated by our expert portfolio readers in assessing the quality of first-year writing instruction at ECSU.

Portfolio assessment is beneficial because it

- provides clear objectives and evaluative criteria for all first-year writing courses;
- helps assure that you receive a comparable level and quality of instruction in first-year writing as your peers in other sections.

Whether you enroll in ENG 100 and ENG 100P, your portfolio will be evaluated against the same criteria, and it should contain written work which shows your abilities in the following areas:

- **Rhetorical Situation/Genre**
  Showing awareness of and adapting writing to various rhetorical situations and genres (both academic and non-academic); showing awareness of the values, needs, and expectations of various audiences (both academic and non-academic). Using language (diction, register, etc.) appropriately in various rhetorical situations/genres and presenting finished writing relatively free of errors that inhibit communication and credibility

- **Research and Synthesis of Sources**
  Incorporating information gained from research in ways that show: an ability to find and use research/sources appropriate to various situations/genres; an attempt to integrate outside sources by analyzing, refuting, and/or responding to them; an ability to accurately represent others’ ideas with appropriate attribution; a facility with a standard form of academic citation (in-text and bibliography)

- **Critical Analysis**
  Articulating critical and analytical insights into the experiences, issues, ideas, texts, and/or situations being written about; attempting to engage in the conversations between and among a range of viewpoints on an issue; articulating a clear position on an issue or issues and attempting to provide rational and persuasive reasoning to support that position

- **Self-Assessment/Reflection**
  Providing analytical and reflective elements that contextualize the various pieces in the portfolio for the reader and that show the writer’s ability to think objectively and critically about his/her own writing (processes and texts) in ways that make more independent writing and revision possible in the future

Submission of a writing portfolio for evaluation is a requirement for a passing grade in ENG 100 or ENG 100P.
Given the high expectations of the end-of-term portfolio, you should think carefully about which class is right for you. Some students are prepared to meet the goals of our first-year writing portfolio in a standard, three hour per week course, while others need the more intensive support and practice offered by the lab component of the five hour per week course. In either case, you must submit a portfolio for evaluation, and your portfolio will be judged against the same criteria.

**Should I Take English 100?**

If most of the characteristics in the following box seem to describe you and your experience, you would probably be most suited to ENG 100.

**English 100 is probably best for me if:**

- I read newspapers and magazines regularly.
- In the past year, I read books for my own enjoyment.
- In high school, I completed several writing assignments per year.
- I feel fairly comfortable in planning and organizing an essay—knowing where to begin, how to paragraph, how to conclude, and so forth.
- I use computers to help me to draft and revise my writing, and I am comfortable using tools like spell check to help me edit my writing.
- I haven’t had problems with grammar and punctuation (commas, apostrophes, etc) that have interfered with the quality of my work or my ability to complete my assignments successfully.
- I consistently receive positive feedback and grades on my writing from my teachers.
- I consider myself a good reader and writer.

Generally speaking, you should be able to succeed in English 100 if you have done quite a bit of reading and have written successfully in a variety of forms, including narrative, descriptive, critical, and persuasive writing. In ENG 100, you will be expected to independently read, summarize, and think critically about published material—from books, magazines, and newspapers—in preparation for class discussions; therefore your reading skills and experience are important. You will also need to manage your time well in order to draft and revise essays outside of class, making use of peer and instructor feedback received in class and/or in conferences. Although you won’t have time with writing tutors in class, you will still have access to writing tutors outside of class in ECSU’s Writing Center.
Should I Take English 100Plus?

If few or none of the above characteristics accurately describe you and your experience, then you may want to consider taking ENG 100Plus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English 100Plus is probably best for me if:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Generally I don't read unless I have to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• In high school, I did not do much writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I am often confused or uncertain about how to organize my ideas—where to begin, how to paragraph, how to conclude, and so forth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I type or retype my papers on a computer, but don't really revise my work or use tools like spell check to help me edit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I’ve had consistent problems with grammar and punctuation—commas, apostrophes, and so forth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I don’t think of myself as a strong writer.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

English 100P is probably the better course for you if you didn’t have the opportunity to do much writing in high school, or if you had difficulty completing the writing tasks you were assigned. If is a better choice if you don’t feel confident writing independently and rely heavily on your teachers’ guidance.

In 100P, you will have more time in class to work with the instructor, writing tutors, and your peers to develop your ideas, figure out the demands of an assignment, shape complex ideas so that they make sense to your reader, and brush up on or acquire new skills in areas such as prewriting and planning, research, revision, grammar, and editing.

Explaining and Validating Your Choice

Whichever course you choose, we ask you to write an essay explaining that choice. You may either submit your essay online or write it in person on a designated on-campus testing date.

Writing the essay serves two purposes:

1. It encourages you to think carefully about this decision.
2. It allows expert instructors to evaluate your decision in light of the writing skill displayed in your essay. If a reader senses a profound mismatch between the course you’ve chosen and your writing ability as shown in your essay, we may change your placement (though you can appeal that decision).

Since this essay probably will determine which course you will end up taking, we want it to show you at the best of your ability. If you submit the essay online, you can take your time in composing, revising, and editing it before pasting in your final draft. If you come to campus to write, you will have to complete your essay in a thirty-minute time period; however, you may prepare by going over the descriptions of the courses and the checklists above and carefully considering your decision. You will not be able to bring any paper with you into the classroom, but you will be given a clean copy of this brochure (to which you may freely refer) and paper on which to write your essay.

After reading the essays, we report your course placement (as recommended by the readers of your essay) to the Academic Advisement Center, who will help you register for your courses. When you arrive to register for classes, if the placement in the Advisement Center's records does not match the placement you requested, you have two options:

• You may simply accept the placement readers' advice and enroll in the course indicated in the placement record; or
You may choose not to register for a writing course in the fall semester so that you can appeal the placement decision. Then, during the first two weeks of the fall semester you can appeal the decision by contacting Dr. Rita Malenczyk, Director of the University Writing Program, at 465-4573.

**Writing at Eastern After the First-Year**

Choosing the right first-year writing course is not just about making sure you will pass that course. It is also about building a solid foundation for your continuing involvement in writing at Eastern. You will be writing in most of your classes, and chances are that skill in writing will be essential to success in your major courses and in your career whether you are studying History, Business, Biology, Sports Management, or any of the other majors offered at Eastern. You will also have to fulfill the remaining elements of the University Writing Program. These include two writing requirements to be completed in your chosen major: one at the sophomore/junior-level and one at the junior/senior level. Your academic advisor will be able to provide you with information about these other writing requirements. You can also contact the Director of the University Writing Program, Dr. Rita Malenczyk, if you have questions.

**Still Unsure?**

If you are still unsure about which writing course to take, you should feel free to contact Dr. Rita Malenczyk, Director of the University Writing Program at (860) 465-4573 or via email at malenczykr@easternct.edu with your questions or concerns. Also, a representative of the writing program will be available at the on-campus testing sessions to explain the options once again, answer your questions, and explain our goals and expectations for your essay.