English 100 or English 100Plus?

At Eastern, a key component of our mission is an emphasis on writing. The University Writing Program consists of specific courses and assessment activities especially designed to develop and evaluate your writing. The first component of this writing program is fulfilled by one of two first-year writing courses: English 100 or English 100Plus.

Expectations for First-Year Writing

The goal in first-year writing classes at Eastern is to provide you with a solid set of writing strategies that can serve you throughout college and beyond. 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 strengths and weaknesses as a writer to be a lifelong learner of writing, able to solve the variety of new writing situations that may arise in your life.

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 (ENG 100P) 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 rhetorical 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, 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 tutors at the Writing Center for additional help or feedback.
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 Eastern.

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.
Some students are already 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.

**Students who are required to write a placement essay may prefer to come to campus to complete the essay.**

After reading the essays, we report your course placement (as recommended by the readers of your essay) to the Advising Center, who will help you register for your courses. When you arrive to register for classes, if the placement in the Advising 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 immediately so that you can appeal the placement decision. Then you can appeal the decision by contacting Dr. Rita Malenczyk, Director of the University Writing Program, at 860-465-4573.

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**Writing at Eastern After the First Year**

Taking the right first-year writing course is not just about passing 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 writing well 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@eastern.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.