



The SWW COMPOSITION PROGRAM AT SUNY NEW PALTZ: An Overview

This booklet contains information about the SWW Composition Program at SUNY New Paltz. This unique academic support system has been developed through the collaborative efforts of the English Department, the Writing Center and the Educational Opportunity Program. The central goal of the program is to accelerate basic writers' progress in a challenging environment where highly structured support services are fully integrated into the curriculum. It eliminates the need for non-credit developmental writing courses by providing intensive academic support within the context of designated sections of credit-bearing composition courses.

General Information about SUNY New Paltz and First-Year Students

SUNY New Paltz is the only residential public university in the mid-Hudson region. The school offers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences which serve as a core for professional programs in the fine and performing arts, education, health care, business, and engineering.

Students:

Total enrollment for Fall 2004 was 7,603 with 6,191 undergraduates and 1,412 graduates.

Regular Admissions (2006):

Mean Combined SAT: 1160 (old score)

EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) Admissions Guidelines (40-60% of students enrolled in SWW courses are EOP students):

A freshman applicant may be deemed academically eligible to apply for EOP at SUNY New Paltz if the student meets **any one** of the following requirements:

- the applicant has a combined SAT score below 1050; or
- the applicant's high school average is below 85 (Students with above an 85 average often qualify if their SAT score is below 1050); or
- the applicant's high school or program of study is a non-college preparatory, general or vocational in nature.

A note on selectivity:

- At minimum, EOP applicants at SUNY New Paltz should have attended at least a 75 cumulative high school average.
- Meeting the EOP Academic Eligibility Criteria does not guarantee acceptance to the college. Applicants are carefully evaluated on the basis of their transcripts and supplemental application materials.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SWW PROGRAM AT NEW PALTZ

1. What does SWW stand for?

“Supplemental Writing Workshop”

2. What is a “Supplemental Writing Workshop?”

Each week, SWW students attend extra workshop hour (s) in addition to regular class time. Most sections of SWW Composition meet for ONE extra hour a week. ESL (English as a Second Language) SWW Composition I classes meet for TWO extra hours a week.

3. What criteria are used to place students in SWW sections of Freshman Composition?

Students are placed in an SWW section because their summer placement exams were scored below a level 4 on the SUNY New Paltz Composition Program’s Placement Scale. (See scale on pp.4 and 5)

4. Can a student be placed out of the SWW Program when s/he comes to campus in the fall?

If a student takes the diagnostic writing exam during the first week of class and scores at a level 4 or above, the instructor will allow that student to exit the SWW Program.

5. Would a student ever choose to be in a SWW section?

Some students who perform well on the diagnostic essay do, in fact, choose to remain in SWW sections. Their reasons vary, but most often they stay because SWW classes offer a nurturing environment for students to work on refining their writing. Keep in mind, however, that SWW classes are limited to 15 students and that the primary purpose of the program is to assist students in need of extra help.

6. Are the course objectives for SWW Composition sections the same as the course objectives for non-SWW Composition sections?

Yes. SWW Composition courses award the same academic credit and share the same objectives as non-SWW Composition courses.

7. What happens during the Supplemental Writing Workshop?

Instructors may use it as a time for students to brainstorm, draft, and revise essays. It may be used as an additional time for instruction or extended testing. The workshop is tailored to meet the needs of the class.

8. Do students also have to attend tutoring sessions in addition to the Supplemental Writing Workshop?

Yes. As with the Supplemental Writing Workshop, tutoring is an integral part of the course. All SWW Composition students must meet with a tutor one hour a week in addition to attending class and workshop. Tutoring takes place in the Tutoring Center. Usually, each SWW section is assigned one tutor who will arrange to meet with students individually or in pairs.



EVALUATION SCALE FOR WRITING SKILLS AND PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Level:	5 (Honors)	4 (Exit Level Comp I)	3 (Entrance Level Comp I)	2 (SWW)	1 (SWW)
MEANING/CONTENT: the extent to which the response exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task or text:					
Thesis:	Exhibits a thesis that is highly insightful, original, and cogently stated. Key terms are defined in depth.	Exhibits a thesis that is insightful and clearly stated. Key terms are defined.	States thesis. Defines some key terms.	States vague thesis. Does not define terms.	Presents no thesis. Does not define terms.
Analysis:	Reveals both in-depth analysis and independent thinking; makes insightful and original connections.	Reveals in-depth analysis; makes insightful connections.	Conveys a thorough understanding of topic and makes clear connections.	Conveys a basic understanding of topic; makes a few connections.	Provides an inaccurate understanding of topic with unclear connections.
DEVELOPMENT: the extent to which ideas are elaborated using specific and relevant evidence:					
Ideas:	Develops ideas expertly; engages fully with a specific audience and demonstrates an unusual ability to interest a reader through use of wide-ranging/specific/substantive details.	Develops ideas clearly and fully, making effective use of a wide-range of relevant/specific details.	Develops ideas clearly; uses relevant/specific details.	Develops ideas briefly; uses some detail.	Presents incomplete or undeveloped ideas.
Paragraph Development:	Clearly develops paragraphs directly related to thesis and possibly experimental in scope; each paragraph extends the main idea.	Clearly develops paragraphs directly related to thesis; paragraphs contribute to the thesis/main idea.	Most paragraphs relate to the thesis.	Some paragraphs relate to the thesis.	Few or no paragraphs relate to the thesis.
ORGANIZATION: the extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence:					
Organization:	Maintains a clear, appropriate, logical coherent essay structure including exceptional command of essay format.	Maintains clear, appropriate focus; exhibits a logical, coherent structure through appropriate transitions.	Maintains a clear, appropriate focus; exhibits a logical sequence of ideas through appropriate transitions.	Establishes but does not maintain appropriate focus; inconsistencies in sequence of ideas/transitions.	Lacks an appropriate focus, but suggests some organization.
Introduction:	Creates an engaging focus on topic.	Clearly focuses on topic; conveys a powerful message to the reader.	Focuses on topic in the introduction.	Lacks a focus on topic/purpose in introduction.	Contains no focus on topic in introduction.
Conclusion:	Provides further thinking and implications (e.g., suggests further research, recommends policy implications of an issue, or extends key ideas).	Extends, connects, and comments on key ideas.	Summarizes key ideas.	Somewhat restates main idea.	Contains an incomplete conclusion or conclusion is missing.
Overall Organization:	Exceeds requirements of assignment.	Consistently meets requirements.	Meets requirements.	Meets some requirements.	Meets few/no requirements.



Level:	5 (Honors)	4 (Exit Level Comp I)	3 (Entrance Level Comp I)	2 (SWW)	1 (SWW)
LANGUAGE USE: the extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through an effective use of words, sentence structure, and sentence variety:					
Description:	Demonstrates a level of professional excellence in style.	Creates vivid "pictures" through concrete language, rich sensory detail, and use of literary devices.	Creates "pictures" through concrete language, sensory detail, and literary devices.	Uses concrete language, sensory detail, and literary devices.	Uses little concrete language, sensory detail, or literary devices.
Word Choice:	Demonstrates a level of professional excellence in word choice.	Uses sophisticated, precise vocabulary.	Uses effective word choices.	Uses some effective word choices.	Uses few effective word choices.
Sentence Variety:	Demonstrates a level of professional excellence in the complexity of language.	Uses well-varied sentence structure throughout.	Exhibits good sentence structure/ variety.	Uses occasional sentence variety.	Uses little sentence variety.
Voice/Sense of Audience:	Demonstrates a level of professional excellence in sense of voice and audience.	Has a unique voice and strong awareness of voice and audience.	Exhibits evident awareness of voice/audience.	Exhibits some awareness of voice/audience.	Exhibits a rudimentary sense of audience.
CONVENTIONS: the extent to which the response exhibits conventional spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, grammar, and usage:					
Grammar/ Punctuation:	Achieves excellence in grammar basics.	Exhibits correct grammar in smooth, fluid sentences; error-free punctuation.	Exhibits mostly correct grammar; punctuation errors do not interfere with communication.	Exhibits errors in grammar that occasionally interfere with communication.	Exhibits errors that are awkward and interfere with communication.
Spelling and Usage:	Exhibits error-free prose.	Exhibits correct spelling; error-free prose.	Exhibits mostly correct spelling and usage.	Frequently misspells and misuses words.	Excessively misspells and misuses words.
Presentation:	Achieves all-around excellence in presentation; MLA format.	Displays a neat and professional presentation; MLA format; attention to detail; unique title.	Demonstrates a neat and easy-to-read presentation; MLA format; appropriate title.	Exhibits average presentation; incomplete format; average title.	Pays little/no attention to presentation; no format; poor/no title.



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Composition I — Supplemental Writing Workshop

An intensive composition course that includes a **required** one-hour, non-credit workshop and **required** one-hour of tutorial assistance. ESL sections of SWW include two one-hour non-credit workshops and a required one-hour of tutorial assistance.

Objectives:

The objectives of the SWW sections are the same as those for Composition I.

Objectives of Composition I:

Students will do the following:

- Develop their abilities to write in different rhetorical situations (i.e., for different purposes, for different occasions, and for different audiences).
- Develop their abilities to write effectively in a variety of modes – especially those needed for writing in other college courses (i.e., description, narration, exposition, and argument).
- Develop their abilities to write focused, well-developed, well-organized, and clear paragraphs and essays.
- Develop the thinking necessary in other college courses (i.e., observe, explain, summarize, compare, infer, synthesize, analyze, interpret, and evaluate information).
- Develop their composing processes (i.e., gathering, shaping, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading).
- Develop their abilities to write correctly, grammatically, and coherently.
- Critique their own writing, as well as that of others, effectively.
- Develop computer literacy skills (use software and hardware; i.e., Blackboard, successfully; locate appropriate on-line sources).
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of library skills (i.e., have a basic understanding of the physical layout of the library, library terms, information formats and publication types, and citation formats; develop a basic approach to research; demonstrate proficiency in using Dynix and basic periodical databases).
- Evaluate information and integrate sources in expository and argumentative essays. Use information ethically and legally (i.e., avoid plagiarism).
- Develop oral presentation skills (i.e., present expressive, informative, or argumentative speeches).
- Critique the oral discourse of members of the class.

Requirements:

Satisfactory attendance and class participation (including attendance at the workshop and tutorial sessions).

Completion of satisfactory compositions:

- Four take-home essays of approximately 750 words*
- Assigned revisions of compositions
- Satisfactory completion of assigned quizzes grammar exercise, informal writing, reader response journal
- Competence in selected traits of writing as demonstrated on the final in-class essay
- Mid-term in class essay exam.
- Passing Grade on Final Portfolio

Note: Course components are those of Composition I

*** One essay must be an argument essay using two outside sources.**



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Composition II —Supplemental Writing Workshop

An intensive composition course that includes a required one-hour, non-credit workshop and a required one hour of tutorial assistance.

Composition II continues the development of writing skills begun in Composition I. The course reviews as necessary basic principles of grammar, sentence structure and style, and continues the emphasis on writing cogent, coherent prose. The course focuses, however, more intensively on the development of critical thinking and reasoning abilities, stressing the skills needed to interpret, to evaluate, and to synthesize information. Other emphases of the course are discussion and critical interpretation of literary works.

Special attention is paid to research techniques, methods of argumentation, and critical reading skills. There are also required oral presentation and library skills components in Composition II.

Objectives of Composition II:

Students will do the following:

- Develop their abilities to write in different rhetorical situations (i.e., for different purposes, for different occasions, and for different audiences).
- Develop their abilities to write well-developed, well-organized, and clear paragraphs and essays.
- Develop their abilities to write in various rhetorical modes (i.e., description, narration, exposition, particularly analysis and argumentation).
- Develop their composing processes (i.e., gathering, shaping, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading).
- Develop their abilities to write correctly, grammatically, and coherently.
- Read and critique their own writing, as well as that of others, effectively.
- Develop the abilities to reason, to think critically (i.e., to analyze, to infer, to synthesize, to interpret, and to evaluate information) and to argue effectively (i.e., to develop a position, reasons and evidence).
- Analyze and evaluate arguments (premise, deductive and inductive reasoning, forms of appeals, logical fallacies, and forms of evidence).
- Analyze literary works.
- Develop methods of conducting research (i.e., develop a research topic and search strategy; use general or specialized databases; use internet search engines; construct a bibliography; locate, retrieve, and evaluate information sources; organize, synthesize, and evaluate information).
- Evaluate sources of information using criteria such as currency, authority, objectivity, accuracy, specificity, and relevance.
- Use information ethically and legally—avoiding plagiarism.
- Develop oral presentation skills (i.e., present expressive, informative or persuasive speeches).
- Critique the oral and written discourse of members of the class.

Requirements for Composition II:

At least three essays of approximately 750 words

An in-class midterm essay

A research paper of approximately 1,250 words which demonstrates both research and documentation skills

Participation in the library workshop and library exercise

Oral Presentation

Class Participation and Reader Response Journals