

**Proposal to Replace ENGL 101 and 102 with ENGL 105**  
**Submitted by the Department of English and Comparative Literature**

**BACKGROUND**

The best way to understand the proposed course for first-year writing instruction at UNCCH is to recognize that learning to write is a life-long process. There are concrete skills that writers can develop, but rarely is there a point at which we can say, “This student has got it; there is no need for further instruction.” Writing is not a discrete set of tasks that students can memorize. It is not a one-time performance that can be accomplished and then set aside. Instead, writing is an ongoing activity, and writing abilities continue to develop through new situations and continued practice.

We also know that incoming first-year students have little or no experience with college writing. College writing differs from writing in high school, which generally reports on existing information. College writers instead are asked to enter into authentic rhetorical situations that emerge in fields like the natural sciences, the social sciences, the arts, or the humanities. College writing is linked directly with the creation and sharing of knowledge expected of members of a university community. Our goal is not simply to help students to recognize these college writing situations. Rather, we seek to help student to participate in these situations by making new knowledge. Doing so requires activities that are not generally experienced in high school, such as conducting advanced library research, writing about quantitative and qualitative data, and framing research questions effectively.

Further, at Carolina, students are required to engage these situations in unique and challenging ways. Students at Chapel Hill are expected to participate in an already strong and quickly developing culture of undergraduate research. Similarly, students are expected to view their intellectual work not as individual achievements but as public contributions, directly linked with communities on campus, across the state, and beyond. Students are asked to engage these groups through their learning activities and to present research and perform intellectual work publicly. Writing that focuses on college-level scholarship and public communication goes hand-in-hand with these research, service, and outreach components of our mission.

A writing class brings incoming students together. With peers and guided by an instructor, students conduct university research and produce creative products. They compare modes of scholarship across disciplines. They work with texts, finding connections, analyzing, synthesizing, and thinking about how information is used, cited, and shared through writing. Students learn to work collaboratively, as first-year writing courses are structured around group activities and peer feedback. The class offers a space in which students not only take in, but also extend, knowledge, a space where they can develop and then make their ideas public.

## THE PROBLEM

Many students are currently exempting both ENGL 101 (three credits) and ENGL 102 (three credits). Students receive credits for these courses but do not receive any instruction in or opportunity for college-level writing, research, or public communication. Further, the methods for determining exemption, including relying on standardized measures, cannot account for the components of college writing crucial to fulfilling Carolina's mission—namely, the ability to engage intellectually with college disciplinary communities and to participate publicly in the creation and sharing of knowledge. Finally, current practices fail to account fully for the life-long nature of writing development, assuming instead that many students arrive at college with a skill set that equates to having finished learning to write.

## PROPOSAL

We propose, therefore, that all students at Carolina receive instruction that helps them to enter into college writing situations. This introduction to college writing will be accomplished specifically by revising existing first-year writing requirements. The two existing three-credit courses, ENGL 101 and ENGL 102, will be replaced by a four-credit, English composition and rhetoric course, ENGL 105 (or its Writing in the Disciplines or WID variation ENGL 105i). This course will be required of all first-year students (with no exemptions). Transfer students must also take this course unless they have received transfer credit for a comparable course from another institution. Students will not be allowed to receive placement (PL) or by-examination (BE) credit for this course.

### **Reasons for Requiring a One-Semester, Four-Credit Hour Course**

- To align writing instruction at UNCCH with best practices at peer institutions. Peer institutions (e.g., the University of Michigan, Stanford University, the University of Southern California, The Pennsylvania State University, the University of Washington, the University of Rochester, and North Carolina State University) all have moved to this format of one required writing course with no exemptions. These requirements are often four-credit or even five-credit courses. Some universities (like Stanford) require all students to take three writing courses, one each during the first year, second year, and senior year. UNCCH would follow a similar model with one first-year required writing course, followed by an upper-division communication intensive (CI) course, required to fulfill a student's General Education requirements.
- To support the initiatives of the Office of Undergraduate Research and the culture of undergraduate research at Carolina. In this course we envision engaging students in a range of undergraduate research projects in all disciplines. This extra credit hour will support extensive research or creative projects and enable students to share their work publicly by presenting at undergraduate research conferences, publishing in undergraduate research venues, offering public

performances, or similar activities.

- To provide greater opportunities for students to complete large-scale composing projects, especially those that may use new media and other technologies.
- To enable students to participate in service and outreach efforts associated with writing courses.
- To prepare students to engage in research and writing required by faculty teaching upper-division disciplinary content courses.

### **Course Description**

ENGL 105 English Composition and Rhetoric (four credit hours): this college-level course focuses on written and oral argumentation, composition, research, information literacy, and rhetorical analysis. The course introduces students to the specific disciplinary contexts for written work and oral presentations required in college courses.

ENGL 105i English Composition and Rhetoric (Interdisciplinary) (four credit hours): this college-level course focuses on written and oral argumentation, composition, research, information literacy, and rhetorical analysis. The course introduces students to one specific disciplinary context for written work and oral presentations required in college courses: natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, law, business, and medicine.

### **Learning Goals for ENGL 105**

The ENGL 105 curriculum will be designed to help students to

1. Shape written and oral arguments of varying complexity according to purpose, audience, topic, and genre.
2. Develop oral delivery skills suitable to a topic, purpose, audience, and genre, and to adapt delivery to audience responses.
3. Identify the similarities and differences among various purposes and audiences for written and oral communication.
4. Understand that different contexts require different rhetorical approaches.
5. Incorporate source material in written and oral presentations according to the conventions, methodologies, and values of particular disciplinary discourse communities. This includes learning how to distinguish between scholarly and non-scholarly sources, to determine what counts as evidence, to use electronic resources critically, to avoid plagiarizing, and to use standard citation and reference formats.
6. Use graphic and audiovisual materials as part of oral and written presentations.
7. Revise written work and oral presentations based upon feedback from students and instructors.
8. Become self-sufficient proofreaders and editors, mastering conventional

- spelling, punctuation, and grammar in the context of academic work.
9. Learn to cooperate as members of a team and to work responsibly on collaborative projects.
  10. Read and listen critically; that is, to discern main ideas, to identify and evaluate supporting details, to recognize explicit relationships among ideas, to interpret contextual clues, to connect texts with each other, and to pose and to respond to questions and comments concisely.
  11. Synthesize and evaluate written and oral messages by drawing logical inferences and conclusions, by assessing the acceptability of evidence and the validity of arguments, and by detecting biases, both in the student's own perception of evidence and in arguments put forward by others.

### **Configuring the Fourth Credit Hour**

Classes will be scheduled according to the two standard configurations: a MWF, 50 minute or a TR, 75 minute schedule per week. The additional credit hour (or 750 minutes of instruction over the semester, 50 minutes per week) will be scheduled by the instructor in different formats to fulfill the research and outreach goals of the course. To enlarge the scope of the semester and provide more time for completing special projects, ENGL 105 and 105i will be modified to hold scheduled final exams. The final examination period will be used for student presentations, performances, or other activities involving evaluation, response, or feedback that count as instruction.

In order to fulfill the additional credit hour for this course, students will produce an original research or outreach project. All research and outreach projects should

- Involve students in not less than fifteen hours of additional course activities associated with research and outreach that take place outside of scheduled meetings.
- Result in the creation of at least twenty pages of written work in a form or genre appropriate for the situation.

Research projects may take one of four forms:

1. A service learning assignment culminating in a research project or original work (such as a report, presentation, or other document prepared for an organization or community entity).
2. An independent research project leading to publication in (or submission to) an undergraduate research journal or a presentation at an undergraduate conference (such as UNC's Celebration of Undergraduate Research).
3. An original multimedia project (such as a documentary or website) with a research component.
4. A project undertaken in collaboration with a research center, institute, or similar

campus unit at UNCCCH (such as the Ackland Art Museum, Morehead Planetarium, Campus Health Services, the Southern Historical Collection, etc.).

Instructors can choose to focus on one of these types of projects, or some combination thereof.

### **Students Who Are Underprepared to Take ENGL 105 (or ENGL 105i)**

We will continue to offer ENGL 100: Basic Writing (three credit hours) for those students whose academic records indicate they would benefit from additional literacy instruction. The curriculum for ENGL 100 would be revised to address the need to bridge students to ENGL 105. We will continue to offer summer and fall sections of ENGL 100. Students would be expected to enroll in ENGL 105 following the successful completion of ENGL 100 and to maintain continuous enrollment beginning in the first semester until the ENGL 105 requirement is completed.

### **First-Year Honors Students**

Honors students are also subject to the one-course composition requirement, though a number of opportunities will be available to help honors students fulfill the requirement. During the past year, while the Honors Program was undergoing a curricular revision, we experimented with an arrangement whereby Honors students who needed ENGL 102 (the previous requirement) were enrolled in ENGL 102i or WID courses. The Honors Program and students reported high satisfaction with this arrangement. Therefore, we propose that honors students take ENGL 105i in a disciplinary area that matches their major interests.