

ENG099 | Foundations of Writing

Course Texts

There is no required text for this course.

Course Description

This course examines the fundamental process, theories, and methods that enhance a student's overall writing ability. It introduces various strategies for writing within multiple disciplines and professions.

This course examines basic principles of effective, college-level writing through drafting and revising sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Topics to improve sentence structure and clarity include grammar, punctuation, and word choice. In addition to learning proper research techniques, students explore various writing genres including narration, cause and effect, compare and contrast, definition, and argumentation.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Appreciate the skill of writing as a form of critical thinking
2. Describe the steps in the writing process
3. Define "draft" and identify key differences between writing a first and final draft
4. Revise paragraphs and essays to be clear and concise
5. Edit sentences to improve clarity and eliminate errors
6. Use appropriate and vivid word choices to express ideas
7. Develop and explain the differences between a topic sentence and a thesis statement
8. Develop sensory details and write a descriptive narrative paragraph
9. Create a relationship between causes and effects; write a cause and effect paragraph
10. Develop a strong definition paragraph through contrast, explanation, and other techniques
11. Write a comparison and contrast essay using subject-by-subject or point-by-point methods
12. Compose an original argument essay that acknowledges and appeals to the audience's viewpoint
13. Identify and describe the main factors for developing a good résumé and cover letter
14. Respond to essay exam prompts clearly and concisely
15. Explain the research process and conduct research to explore a specific topic

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take Foundations of Writing.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and academic misconduct. Failure to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy can result in a failure and/or zero on the attempted assignment/examination, a removal from the course, disqualification to enroll in future courses, and/or revocation of an academic transcript.

Course Completion Policy

In order for a course to be considered complete, **all required coursework must be attempted, submitted, and graded.** Required coursework consists of graded assignments. Any Academic Integrity Policy violations may prevent a course from being considered complete.

Assessment Types

StraighterLine courses may include any combination of the assessment types described below. Review the descriptions to learn about each type, then review the Course Evaluation Criteria to understand how your learning will be measured in this course.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks test your mastery of course concepts. You have 3 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Note: Cumulative Benchmarks (final exams) only allow 1 attempt.

Capstones

Capstones are project-based assessments that help you apply concepts to real-world scenarios. You have 2 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are quick knowledge checks on important course concepts. All are open-book, and most have 1-3 attempts.

AI Use-Case Policies

StraighterLine Capstone assessments operate under one of three AI Use-Case Policies. These designations are selected intentionally to support learners in developing digital literacy, ethical reasoning, and authentic communication skills. Each model requires students to engage meaningfully with the course outcomes while adhering to academic standards.

Independent Work Requirement: Capstones with this designation must be completed independently without using AI tools. The goal is for learners to showcase their own understanding and skills without AI assistance. Students are expected to generate and submit original work developed solely through their own reasoning and effort.

AI-Assisted Planning Option: Capstones with this designation may allow AI tools to support brainstorming and assessment planning. If allowed, students will be asked to document any AI assistance by noting how it informed their work. Documentation must be included within the assignment or in a designated reflection field. Examples include describing how an AI tool helped organize an outline, generate ideas, or surface sources for further exploration.

AI-Integration Requirement: Capstones with this designation require AI tools as part of the learning process. Students will be asked to reflect upon their AI interactions and AI contributions to the assessment. Reflections must include which tools were used, how they were used, and what insights students gained from the process. This promotes transparency, ethical use, and metacognitive skill-building.

Course Evaluation Criteria

Your score provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. A passing percentage is 70% or higher.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Assessment	Points
Checkpoint 1: Plagiarism	15
Checkpoint 2: Grammar	20
Checkpoint 3: Word Use	20
Checkpoint 4: Writing the Sentence	30
Checkpoint 5: Writing the Paragraph	30
Checkpoint 6: Writing to Be Read	20
Checkpoint 7: The Writing Process	15
Checkpoint 8: Point and Specific Evidence	15
Checkpoint 9: Description and Narration	10
Capstone 1: The Descriptive Narrative Paragraph	60
Checkpoint 10: Definition	25
Capstone 2: The Definition Paragraph	60
Checkpoint 11: Cause and Effect	25
Capstone 3: Cause and Effect Paragraph	60
Checkpoint 12: Essay Development	30
Checkpoint 13: Compare and Contrast	15
Capstone 4: Comparison/Contrast Essay	100
Checkpoint 14: Exams	20
Capstone 5: Essay Exam	100
Checkpoint 15: Résumés and Cover Letters	20
Capstone 6: Résumé and Cover Letter	60
Checkpoint 16: Research	30
Capstone 7: I-Search Essay	100
Checkpoint 17: Argument	20

Assessment	Points
Capstone 6: Argument Essay	100
Total	1000

Course Roadmap

This roadmap provides an overview of the checkpoints and lessons covered in this course.

Checkpoint 1: Plagiarism

- Academic Honesty and Integrity Lesson

Checkpoint 2: Grammar

- Grammar
- Parts of Speech, Punctuation, and Sentence Resource Manual
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Grammar

Checkpoint 3: Word Use

- Word Use
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Word Use

Checkpoint 4: Writing the Sentence

- Writing the Sentence
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Sentence Types

Checkpoint 5: Writing the Paragraph

- Writing the Paragraph
- Paragraph Structure
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Audience, Tone, and Purpose
- Practice Exercise: Persuasive Paragraph and Structure

Checkpoint 6: Writing to Be Read

- Write to be Read: Introduction to Writing
- Journal Exercise

Checkpoint 7: The Writing Process

- The Writing Process

- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Revising for Organization
- Practice Exercise: Revising for Support
- Practice Exercise: Revising for Unity

Checkpoint 8: Point and Specific Evidence

- Point and Specific Evidence
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Thesis, Details, and Introduction/Conclusion

Checkpoint 9: Description and Narration

- Description and Narration
- Descriptive Narrative Paragraph
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Descriptive Paragraph
- Practice Exercise: Descriptive Narrative Writing

Checkpoint 10: Definition

- Definition
- Definition Sample
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Definition Paragraph

Checkpoint 11: Cause and Effect

- Cause and Effect
- Cause and Effect Paragraph
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Florida: Bed and Breakfast for the Birds
- Practice Exercise: Florida: The Snowbird Haven
- Practice Exercise: Cause and Effect Paragraph

Checkpoint 12: Essay Development

- Essay Development
- Essay Structure
- Journal Exercise
- Practical Exercise: Pronouns
- Practice Exercise: Transitions
- Practice Exercise: Essay Development

Checkpoint 13: Compare and Contrast

- Comparison and Contrast
- Writing a Compare/Contrast Essay
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Comparison and Contrast Essay
- Practice Exercise: Comparison and Contrast Paragraph

Checkpoint 14: Exams

- Exams
- Essay Exam (Process)
- RAT Short Answer and Essay Exams
- Journal Exercises

Checkpoint 15: Résumés and Cover Letters

- Resumes and Cover Letters
- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Journal Exercise

Checkpoint 16: Research

- Research
- I-Search
- Journal Exercise

Checkpoint 17: Argument

- Argumentation
- Argument Essay
- Journal Exercise
- Practice Exercise: Argument Strategies
- Practice Exercise: Argumentative Essay

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