

January 6, 2011

1. Redesigned versions of WAC 101, ENG 101, ENG 102, and ENG 105 will be available by fall 2011. We can decide later whether/when to offer redesigned sections of the other FYC courses—WAC 107, ENG 107, ENG 108.
2. For fall 2011, each redesigned course section of FYC will be capped at 150 students. The plan is to increase the enrollment caps in future semesters.
3. Each redesigned section will be staffed with one instructor of record. As noted below, the supporting cast will include peer tutors, supplemental instruction leaders, and writing community members. (Will an ASU Online Course Manager have a role?)
4. As is the case now, students in FYC courses will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills in five areas: (1) rhetorical knowledge; (2) critical reading, writing, and thinking; (3) composing processes; (4) conventions of writing; and (5) composing in digital environments. These five learning outcomes were developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (<http://www.wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>) and have been adopted by many writing programs in the US and abroad. Some FYC textbooks such as the *McGraw-Hill Guide: Writing for College, Writing for Life* are specifically designed to address these outcomes.
5. To demonstrate knowledge and skills in these five areas, students will construct portfolios in which they argue, “In light of the learning outcomes for FYC, here is what I have learned, and here is evidence that I have learned what I claim.” The portfolios will include multiple writing projects as well as analyses of those projects. Like many other writing teachers at ASU and across the country, I use such portfolios in all courses that I teach, and I am convinced that they are the most effective way to thoroughly measure students’ learning.
6. Each portfolio will be evaluated by the instructor of record and one other faculty member. If the two disagree in their evaluations and cannot reach agreement, a third faculty member will be asked to evaluate the portfolio.
7. When a student has demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills in the five areas, the student will be awarded credit for the course. Although some students may take fifteen or more weeks to demonstrate competence, some students may be able to do that in a few weeks if they have had substantial writing experience in high school and/or outside of school. For example, last summer I conducted a writing workshop for gifted high school students. Some of them showed me several hundred pages of very competent writing that they had produced before the workshop.
8. Students will have flexible options for writing topics and genres and media—as is already the case in many sections of First-Year Composition.

9. The instructional setting will be a variation on the math lab model used at the University of Alabama. It will be called “The Writers’ Studio.”
10. For campus-based students, The Writers’ Studio will occupy physical space. For students in ASU Online programs, it will be virtual.
11. In the physical Writers’ Studio on each campus, teachers/tutors/supplemental instruction leaders will be available in the Studio at specified times for individual consultation and group discussion. For ASU Online students, these consultations and group discussions will usually be asynchronous.
12. Instruction will occur in multiple forms—textbooks, the online instruction that textbook authors have developed to supplement the print or online textbook, podcasts and short videos that ASU’s writing teachers have produced, face-to-face lessons offered in classrooms.
13. As is the case now in the University Academic Success Program (UASP) writing centers at ASU, the tutors will be peers who are trained and supervised.
14. To enhance efficiency, the UASP writing center on each campus should be integrated into the Studio—or vice versa. UASP writing center staff will work closely with the faculty who offer the courses. The current physical writing centers on the four campuses are not large enough to accommodate the volume of traffic in the new model, so other spaces will need to be identified.
15. Students will be expected to be present in the virtual or physical studio at least three hours per week.
16. Because providing writers with rhetorically appropriate and timely feedback is crucial for developing their knowledge and skills, students will be expected to seek and receive in-process feedback from multiple sources—e.g., teachers, tutors, peers, online writing communities—for each writing project and the full portfolio. Because not all online writing communities are appropriate for our students, we will identify some that we recommend. We also should establish some new online writing communities that can support our students. We could even collaborate with other writing programs across the country to establish some communities. Regardless of the venue, we can provide students with guidelines and/or rubrics for useful feedback. For readers who are not instructional staff at ASU, we ask that they respond as interested readers rather than teachers who assign grades.
17. Both campus-based students and ASU Online students will be expected to share their work in online groups (small discussion boards in *BlackBoard*) for guided peer review.