Welcome to English 102

English 102, "Composition and Rhetoric," is the second required writing course at West Virginia University. English 102 is intended for sophomores and juniors to take prior to enrollment in a writing intensive course.

The purpose of this course is to help you further develop your abilities as a researcher and writer of persuasive texts in academic and civic contexts. You’ll learn more about the research process, argumentation, and ways to read, analyze and contribute to different conversations and topics of inquiry. All English 102 courses share the same goals but fulfill them in different ways. Some courses focus on a particular theme, like social issues or Appalachia, and others offer students opportunities to explore a wide range of subjects. While teachers take a variety of approaches in meeting course goals, all English 102 students will compose approximately 20 pages of polished prose for evaluation (of course, you’ll write more than 20 pages over the course of the semester).

Your teacher will expect you to have some familiarity and expertise with practicing the writing process; writing for multiple purposes; considering the relationships of reader, writer, and text to make decisions about reading and writing; and critiquing your own and others work. In English 102 you will build on these skills and further your learning as a writer, researcher, and thinker.

Outcomes Statement for English 102 at WVU

Introduction

This statement describes the common knowledge, skills and attitudes sought by the Undergraduate Writing Program for students in English 102.

This document defines only "outcomes," or types of results, and not "standards," or precise levels of achievement sought for English 102 students. Standards, determined by the grade descriptors and course guidelines, are described more fully in the English 102 Guide.

Learning to write researched, persuasive work is a complex process that takes place over time with continued practice and informed guidance. Therefore, it is important that teachers, administrators, and an interested public not imagine that these outcomes can be taught in reductive or simplistic ways. Helping students demonstrate these outcomes requires expert understanding of how students learn to do research, work with resources, and compose arguments.

The primary audience for this document is well-prepared university writing teachers and writing administrators. While this document is written for a general public to understand, at times it uses the professional language of expert writing teachers and writing program
administrators. Among such readers, terms such as "rhetorical," "argument," and "research" convey a rich meaning that is not easily simplified.

This outcomes statement describes only what we expect of find at the end of English 102. It is divided into four categories: rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, researching, and writing; processes; and knowledge of conventions.

**Rhetorical Knowledge**

By the end of English 102, students should:

- Address multiple audiences and varied rhetorical contexts for writing, particularly for researched, persuasive writing
- Understand argumentation as a way of responding to and shaping knowledge
- Engage information literacy, find and interpret resource material appropriately
- Know strategies for entering into and participating in civic and academic conversations
- Understand argument as a rhetorical, academic concept
- Understand research as a process

**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**

By the end of English 102, students should:

- Develop abilities to summarize and synthesize material from varied sources to aid understanding of aspects of argument (e.g. claims, evidence, assumptions, reasoning)
- Practice methods for developing and organizing persuasive writing
- Practice research and argumentation as a means of active engagement, dialogic inquiry, and problem solving
- Understand a research assignment as a series of tasks: exploring, finding, reading, evaluating, interpreting, synthesizing
- Understand how language conveys and constructs knowledge and establishes or disrupts authority
- Engage in multiple modes of research: web, library, field research
- Incorporate research into argumentation
- Use writing and reading to understand and interpret complex ideas

**Processes**

By the end of English 102, students should:

- Understand research as a process of gathering, assessing, interpreting, and using information sources
- Continue to develop your composing process
- Continue to learn to work collaboratively with others
- Learn to use technology to facilitate research and drafting
- Be reflective about research and writing processes
Knowledge of Conventions

By the end of English 102, students should:

- Develop knowledge of genre conventions
- Recognize and address patterns in their writing that diverge from audience expectation
- Learn specialized vocabulary, usage, and format of documentation
- Practice using academic citational systems, especially MLA, for documenting work and understanding the need for and logic of such systems
- Control such features as punctuation, grammar, syntax, and spelling