

# PREPARING FOR THE WRITING PLACEMENT TEST

Harold Washington College  
Harry S Truman College  
Wilbur Wright College

March 2012



**CITY COLLEGES**  
*of* CHICAGO  
Education that Works

# Preparing for the Writing Placement Test: Student Guide

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
General Policies and Information about the Writing Placement Test.....	3
What is the Reading Placement Test (and not the Writing Test)? .....	3
What is the Writing Placement Test? .....	3
Preparing for the Writing Placement Test.....	4
Reading the Passage Carefully .....	5
Key Questions to Ask Yourself About the Reading Passage: .....	5
Planning Your Essay .....	5
Understanding the Writing Placement Test Prompts.....	6
How to “Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic you have selected.” .....	6
How to “Support your ideas by discussing the passage above as well as your own experience and knowledge.” .	8
How will the Writing Placement Test be evaluated? .....	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical Response to the Writing Task: .....	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Development of Writer's Ideas: .....	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure of the Response: .....	10
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Use: Sentence and Word Choice: .....	11
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:.....	12
Using your Time Wisely and Planning your Response.....	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading, Underlining and Taking Notes: .....	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Outlining, Planning and Pre-Writing:.....	13
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Your Essay: .....	13
<input type="checkbox"/> Proofreading and Editing:.....	13
SAMPLE TEST .....	14
Sample Student Response with Faculty Grader Comments .....	15
EVALUATION OF SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSE .....	16
What Writing Classes Will You Be Placed Into: .....	16
The Sequence of Courses .....	17
English as a Second Language Courses .....	18
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: .....	18

## **General Policies and Information about the Writing Placement Test**

### **I am a New Student at CCC. Why Do I Need to Take the Writing Placement Test?**

Most new students at CCC need to take placement tests in Writing, Reading and Math. These tests are given in order to verify the best courses for you to take in these subjects. Proper placement into these courses will help to ensure your success both in the short-term and the long-term. Students cannot begin college-level work in an Associates Degree Program until they have achieved proficiency in reading and writing. This packet of information will focus on the Writing Placement Test.

### **Are There Any Exceptions?**

Yes. There are a few exceptions:

- Students who received a grade of 'C' or better in a 3 credit, college-level English course from an accredited college or university are considered proficient in reading and writing.
- Students who have taken the ACT exam within the last 2 years and received a score of 21 or above are exempt from taking the English placement test.
- Students who have taken the general College Level Examination Program (CLEP) can receive credit for English 101 and English 102.

### **What is the Reading Placement Test (and not the Writing Test)?**

The Placement Test in Reading is an un-timed, multiple-choice, computer-based test called the COMPASS exam. The COMPASS differs from other placement tests in that it is computerized and adaptive. An adaptive test generates questions based upon the individual responses of the students taking the test. The test begins with a midlevel question. A correct response will lead to a more difficult question, while an incorrect response will generate an easier question. The process continues until an individual level of performance proficiency is established. In other words, the number of questions given during a testing session is dependent upon the responses of the student testing.

### **What is the Writing Placement Test?**

The Placement Test is a writing test that assesses your readiness for introductory college courses by measuring your ability to write at a college-level. This test is an assessment of where faculty members believe you will be most successful in college writing courses. It is important to realize that this is not a test that you can pass or fail. Nevertheless, please take the test as seriously as possible so

that we can most accurately assess your skill levels. We want you to do well at the City Colleges, and in order for us to understand what courses you belong in, we need to see a serious sample of your writing. With this in mind, please make sure to work diligently and carefully on this test, as it will determine into which course you will be placed.

The learning skills taught in first-year college courses are reflected in the test. In the test, you are asked to read a short excerpt from a text and demonstrate understanding of the excerpt by writing an essay that does the following:

- Responds to the writing prompt
- Demonstrates basic critical thinking in response to the text excerpt
- Organizes ideas and builds connections among them
- Supports the ideas with relevant personal experience, readings, and/or other sources of information
- Demonstrates competence in sentence construction, sentence variety, and word choice
- Exhibits correct usage, grammar and mechanics

**You will have 90 minutes to complete the Writing Placement Test.**

### **Preparing for the Writing Placement Test**

The Writing Placement Test asks you to read a short passage and to respond to this passage by planning and writing a well-organized essay.

In order to prepare for the Writing Placement Test, it is helpful to understand the types of readings that you may encounter.

- The text will be 250-350 words in length.
- Topics will be generally be about education, and they may give students the chance to reflect on their goals for college, past experiences in the classroom, or approaches to studying and learning.
- Passages about education are used because they reflect what is important to your teachers and to the college staff and administration. We also know that the best students think a lot about how and why they learn. In responding to the questions, we are expecting you to think

critically about education and how it will apply to you.

- The readings will generally use language that is clear and direct. The readings will come from recent newspaper, internet or magazine articles or books or essay collections appropriate for first-year college students.
- Reading passages will include a title and author's name. You are encouraged to refer to the author's last name in your response.

### **Reading the Passage Carefully**

The first set of directions for the Writing Placement Test is as follows: “Read the following passage carefully. Select one of the writing prompts. Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic you have selected. You should refer to the reading in your response. Leave time to revise and edit your essay. “

The first thing that you are asked to do is to “read the passage carefully.” You are asked to read the passage carefully because the ability to read, summarize and analyze college-level literature is going to be a key to your success no matter what academic path you pursue. As you read the passage, you can take notes on a separate sheet of paper, or you can make notes on the reading passage itself. As you make these notes, you should find the author's most important ideas. You should attempt to understand why the author has written this passage; what arguments the author is making; how the author is supporting these arguments; and what larger conversation the author is referencing.

### **Key Questions to Ask Yourself About the Reading Passage:**

- In 1-2 sentences, how can you best describe this article?
- Why did the author write this piece?
- What is the author trying to argue or demonstrate?
- Does the author convince you of his or her points?
- In your own educational history, have you ever encountered what the author is discussing? If so, how?
- How can you relate this article to a larger discussion?

### **Planning Your Essay**

The directions ask you “Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic you have selected.”

What does it mean to “plan” your essay? Most academic writers plan their essays by creating outlines or pre-writing their ideas, and we encourage you to create an outline of your own. You can think of an outline as a blueprint, a map, or a set of directions that you will give yourself for the essay.

Outlines help writers isolate their thesis statements or main points and to plan what supporting details they will use to develop their ideas. A successful outline for a short essay creates an easy-to-follow model for each paragraph or section of your essay. As you prepare your outline and plan your response, please note that a well-written academic essay should include the following:

- An introduction that sets up a map for what the rest of the essay will look like
- A thesis statement or main idea
- Topics and ideas organized into neat paragraphs and units
- Supporting details to defend the thesis statement
- A conclusion

### **Understanding the Writing Placement Test Prompts**

Reading passages will always be followed by two essay topics (A and B) to choose from.

Question A will always state the following: “In your own words, discuss the author's most important ideas. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Support your ideas by discussing the passage above as well as your own experience and knowledge.”

Question B will ask you to discuss how the issues mentioned in the reading passage relate to your own life. The questions will vary for “B”, but a typical “B” question may be something like: “Discuss a time when you learned something important from a mistake you made in school, in work, or with friends or family. As you write, provide specific examples to illustrate your points.”

The first question will ask students to engage with the reading passage and to offer their own ideas and interpretations of the author's writing.

### **“Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic you have selected.”**

When we use the phrase “a well-organized essay,” what we wish to emphasize is that your academic

writing should be divided into paragraphs, and your central ideas and supporting details should be highlighted so that the reader can easily identify them. As we discussed before, a well-organized essay should include: an introduction, a clear thesis statement, supporting details organized into neat paragraphs and units, and a conclusion.

## **Question A**

### **“Discuss the author's most important ideas.”**

When you are asked to “discuss the author's most important ideas,” what we are trying to assess is to what degree you can understand and communicate the key points of the reading passage. Therefore, as you read, take notes or underline what you think the author's most important points are. The author might not always tell you directly what his or her most important points are, so you will have to use your best judgment as you critically assess the passage.

### **“Do you agree or disagree with the author?”**

When you are asked to “agree or disagree with the author,” what we are trying to assess is your ability to make an argument and to analyze the reading passage. You can make an argument by stating your agreement or your disagreement; you can analyze the argument by stating why you agree or disagree with the reading passage. Obviously, your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the author will be personal; however, what you want to focus on is providing a logical explanation of your thoughts so that the reader can clearly understand your beliefs.

What do we mean by “make an argument?” In many of your college courses, you will be expected to write argumentative essays with thesis statements or main ideas. In academic terms, then, an “argument” refers to your ability to take a stand on an issue, to state your opinion and to demonstrate why you think your opinion is right. In many cases, you will be asked to make arguments about essays or works of literature that you read in your classes.

Again, we are focusing here on key skills that will be important to you throughout all of your college career. The abilities to demonstrate that you understand college-level literature and to demonstrate that you are able to articulate your thoughts about this literature are fundamental skills that will support your success from college entrance through graduation.

**“Support your ideas by discussing the passage above as well as your own experience and knowledge.”**

When you are asked to support your ideas, here we are attempting to assess your ability to defend your argument. In other words, if you write an excellent essay, it will not simply state that you agree or disagree with the author. Instead, it will state why you agree or disagree with the author. These reasons for your agreement or disagreement are called supporting details, and they are key to the success of an argumentative essay.

One simple way of thinking about this is the following: your friend calls you on the phone and tells you that she has seen a new movie; she thinks the movie is very good, and she thinks that you should go see it at your local theater. Her main idea or argument here is that the movie is very good; now, if she is going to convince you that the movie is very good, she will need to provide adequate supporting details. Her supporting details may include: the strong performances from the actors; the hilarious script; the colorful scenery and costumes; the surprise ending, etc...To put this another way, it's not enough for her to just say that the movie is good. Instead, she has to show you, through these strong supporting details, that the movie is worth seeing.

In the case of your Placement Essay, you are being asked to support your ideas by discussing the reading passage as well as your own experience or knowledge. What we want to emphasize here is that you need to find specific moments from the reading passage with which you either agree or disagree. Additionally, your own experiences and ideas may also help to support your answer.

**Question B**

The second question will provide the opportunity for the student to write a narrative essay whose subject is related to the essay they have just read. By “narrative essay,” we mean an essay that tells a story about your life that is related to the reading passage. If you choose to write on Question B, it is still necessary to briefly discuss the reading passage. However, in Question B you do not need to discuss the reading passage with the same level of detail that you would in Question A. The purpose of Question B is to get you to relate the reading passage to your own life, and then to tell a brief story that illustrates the ideas in the reading.

## How will the Writing Placement Test be evaluated?

There are five main components that the graders will be looking for in your essay. Your exam will be scored holistically. This means that we will look at your ability to combine or synthesize these different components in your essay. These five categories are: Critical Response to the Writing Task; Development of Writer's Ideas; Structure of the Response; Language Use: Sentence and Word Choice; Language Use: Grammar, Usage and Mechanics.

- **Critical Response to the Writing Task:** This category looks at your ability to complete the writing task by critically discussing the reading passage and integrating your own ideas into the response or by creating a coherent narrative that is adequately supported with relevant details.

What do we mean by “critically discussing” the text? In college, you may hear the term “critical analysis” or “critical writing” or “critical thinking.” Outside of academic environments, the word “critical” normally has a different meaning. It normally is used when one person has unfavorable opinions about another, as in this sentence. “I don't like Joe. He's so critical of me.” In colleges and academic writing, however, “critical” refers to one of its other definitions, and it's more about stating your ideas in relation to academic topics. With this in mind, your “critical” ideas do not necessarily need to be negative, although they can. “Critical thinking” and “critical writing” refer to your ability to show that you are able to state intelligent, logical, convincing and well-supported ideas about the materials you will encounter in your college classes.

- **Development of Writer's Ideas:** This category looks at your ability to develop your ideas in a clear and organized way. Your response should include both general statements and specific details and examples. By “develop your ideas,” we want to emphasize the importance of including details and providing enough ideas in your writing so that your point can be adequately made. Again, think back to the example of the friend who is trying to convince you to go see the movie. If she only provides one reason for why the movie is worth watching (e.g. the strong performances of the actors), then you might not be so inclined to see it. On the other hand, if she provides four or five logical reasons why the movie is worth watching, then you will most likely be more interested. By providing several reasons for why you should

see the movie, she is, in academic terms, providing a well-developed defense of her thesis or argument.

- **Structure of the Response:** This category evaluates your ability to organize ideas into a coherent essay that supports a thesis, or a central idea. First, it is important to note that your thesis, or central idea, should be stated towards the beginning of the essay, and that the rest of the essay should work to support this thesis.

One thing we mean by “organization” is your ability to write an essay that is divided into paragraphs and which clearly separates and differentiates your ideas. You may have learned in previous courses about the 5-paragraph essay. Your essays for this exam do not need to be 5 paragraphs or 3 paragraphs or any pre-determined length. The length and structure of your essay should make sense for your individual response. What's most important here is that your essay be divided into paragraphs and that there is a logic to how you separate and organize your ideas.

Another way to think about “organization” is in regards to the ways that you make logical connections between your ideas. This is about how you “transition” from one idea to another. By using transitional phrases and by establishing a logical order to your paragraphs, you will create a structure that makes your essay conform to academic standards, and which will make it easier to read.

One way to think about this is the following: imagine you are having a conversation with a friend who is talking very quickly about the problems he has had in the past month. Your friend starts talking about school, then without making any shift he starts talking about dogs, and then he starts talking about his car, and then he starts talking about traffic in Chicago and then he starts talking about ice cream. As he discusses these different subjects, you, the listener, feel very confused because you cannot see how the speaker is making connections. The connections do not seem natural or logical, and the speaker is not telling you why he is discussing these issues, and in this order. However, the speaker might do a better job of communicating his ideas if he inserted some organizational structure and transitional phrases into his speech. He could do this by saying things like:

- “*The next issue* I want to discuss is...”
- “*Furthermore*,” my life has been more complicated because of my dogs...
- “*Another* problem I have had is...”
- “*Moreover*, traffic has also been a problem for me...”
- “*Finally*, I have been eating too much ice cream lately...”

The words and phrases in italics can be thought of as transitional devices. That is, they help your writing because they signal to the reader that you are moving from one idea to another.

- **Language Use: Sentence and Word Choice:** This category evaluates the degree to which you demonstrate sentence control and variety in sentence structure. By “variety in sentence structure,” we mean that in academic writing, it is appropriate to use a variety of patterns in your sentences; not all of your sentences should begin the same way.

By “using appropriate vocabulary,” we mean your ability to write in what your English teachers might call an ‘academically appropriate voice or style.’ What this means is that in your college courses, there is a standard way of speaking and writing that may be different from how you speak or write in other environments (with friends and family, at the gym, etc.). An appropriate vocabulary for college courses is one which is more formal, and avoids slang speech or abbreviations, such as “u” for “you.”

It's important to note here that we are not saying that one form of speaking is better than another. We are simply saying that in an academic environment, your language is expected to conform to certain formal standards.

It's also important here to mention the use of the word “I”. Many students have learned at one point in their studies that it is not appropriate to use “I” in writing assignments. In college, your teachers will have mixed opinions about this. Some may think it is appropriate and some may not. In your English courses, we tend to think that it is okay to use “I”, especially if you are talking about yourself or your ideas. Having said that, you do not have to use it too much. For the purposes of your placement essay, though, we want to make clear that it is okay to use “I” and that this is considered an acceptable practice in this particular

academic context.

- **Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** This category looks at your ability to follow the conventions of standard American English language use in terms of grammar and mechanics, so that meaning is clear.

For example, it is expected in academic writing that your writing should be free from:

- **“Run-on” Sentences:** These are sentences that do not use proper punctuation (periods or commas) and that just 'run on and on.'
- **Sentence Fragments:** These are incomplete sentences that do not have a subject and a verb. An example of a sentence fragment to avoid is: “Because I did not get to school on time.” One way to make this a complete sentence would be to write: “Because I did not get to school on time, I could not talk to my teacher.”
- **Subject-Verb Agreement:** This is when there is not correspondence between the subject and the verb in a sentence. An example of a sentence with a subject-verb agreement error is: “The kids loves pizza.” The subject (kids) does not agree with the verb (loves). The sentence can be corrected by writing: “The kids love pizza.”
- **Verb Tense:** If you are discussing something that takes place in the present, make sure to use present tense verbs. If you are discussing something that takes place in the past, make sure to use past tense verbs.
- **Spelling:** Using appropriate spelling in your essay.
- **Punctuation and Sentence Control:** As you write, be careful to use appropriate punctuation in your sentences. Make sure to include commas, when necessary, and to use periods to separate sentences.

### Using your Time Wisely and Planning your Response

You will have 90 minutes to write your essay. We recommend that you use your time in the following manner:

- **Reading, Underlining and Taking Notes:** Devote about 20 minutes to carefully reading the passage, taking notes, and marking important ideas.

- **Outlining, Planning and Pre-Writing:** Devote about 10-15 minutes to outlining your response, or pre-writing. Your notes and outlines will not be turned in; they are for your benefit, and the purpose of them is to provide an easy-to-follow plan that you can refer to when you begin to write your response.
- **Writing Your Essay:** Devote about 45-55 minutes to writing your essay. Make sure to follow the directions and make sure that you answer all parts of the essay question. Again, to emphasize what has been stated previously, your essay will be evaluated on the following: your ability to critically respond to the writing task; the development of your ideas; the structure of your response; your sentence and word choice; and your grammar, usage and mechanics. These areas are covered in detail in the previous pages.
- **Proofreading and Editing:** Devote about 10-15 minutes to proofreading and editing your essay. Read your essay carefully and make any changes that you feel would improve your writing. As you proofread, consider the following questions:
  - Did I answer the question and follow the directions?
  - Did I organize my essay with an introduction, conclusion, and supporting details divided into neat paragraphs and units?
  - Do I provide enough details to really develop my thesis or main idea?
  - Am I using proper punctuation, including the proper use of periods and commas?
  - Do all of my sentences make clear, grammatical sense?

**SAMPLE TEST**  
**Writing Placement Test**  
*Form 6*

This test is an assessment of where faculty members believe you will be most successful in college writing courses. This is not a test that you can pass or fail. Nevertheless, please take the test as seriously as possible so that we can most accurately assess your skill levels.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the following passage carefully. Select one of the writing prompts. Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic you have selected. **You should refer to the reading in your response.** Leave time to revise and edit your essay.

“Advertisers frequently use the testimony of a celebrity to support a claim: a football star touts a deodorant soap, an actress starts every day with Brand A coffee, a tennis pro gets stamina from Brand X cereal, a talk-show host drives a certain kind of car. The audience is expected to transfer approval of the celebrity to approval of the product. This kind of marketing is misleading and insults the intelligence of the audience. Am I going to buy the newest SUV because an attractive talk-show host gets paid to pretend he drives one? I don’t think so. We should boycott this kind of advertising and legislate rules and guidelines for advertisers.”

—Sue Jozui

**Plan and write a well-organized essay on the topic below.**

**A.** In your own words, discuss the author's most important ideas. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Support your ideas by discussing the passage above as well as your own experience and knowledge.

## Sample Student Response with Faculty Grader Comments

American culture is unavoidably and irreversibly immersed in the media. Men, women, teenagers, and children are subject to the powerful influence of media today. As consumers, we are subject to a flourishing atmosphere of subliminal messages. While some strive to be like those they see on television or in the movies, it is vital to realize in our active lives that a billboard with a favorite celebrity sprawled across it does not always deserve respect and extensive praise. As consumers, we need to become more aware of the negative influences advertising has on our society; however, legislating rules and guidelines for advertisers, as Jozui suggests, seems like an extreme measure to take.

**Comment:** Up to this point the student is establishing background for the topic – media influences consumers.

**Comment:** Here, the writer is transitioning into his thesis statement. The idea of negative influences is pulled from the Jozui excerpt.

Jozui points out how marketing is misleading, and she is correct. Marketers want us to buy their products, and if it means advertising the product with celebrity X, they will use that celebrity. There is no doubt that Americans have given advertisers the power to throw any kind of marketing scam at us, usually without us even noticing their goal: to make money. Advertisers and marketers target all ages, races, ethnicities, etc.

**Comment:** Writer takes position by responding to the writing task – *Do you agree or disagree with the author?*

**Comment:** Writer's first point addresses one of Jozui's claims.

No one is truly immune from advertising. For example, many famous actresses who have beautiful skin market Proactive Acne solution. Many people are fooled by marketing ploys. For example, a friend of mine was won over by the celebrity endorsements, and went out and bought the product. As you might guess, the product did not help; it only made her acne worse, but in the end she has learned from this mistake.

**Comment:** Writer concedes to her point.

**Comment:** Writer includes an example to support HIS claim.

Many of us want to relate to celebrities, and advertisers know this. You could look it as Jozui does, as advertisers and marketers insulting consumer intelligence or as big business doing its job. The most appropriate solution is to simply make ourselves and children more aware of the marketing strategies that confront them.

**Comment:** Again, the reasons the writer provides connect well to the reading (i.e. celebrities and advertising).

Although Jozui recommends boycotting advertising, I find this request impossible to fulfill. We simply could not effectively boycott all celebrity-oriented advertising.

**Comment:** This paragraph continues to build on the writer's critique of Jozui's proposition.

Advertising holds much too broad of an influence on culture today. Media education and a little self-control can help protect consumers. We must work towards a modern day America where we, as citizens, realize the influence of media upon us and acknowledge its presence.

## EVALUATION OF SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSE

**Critical Response to the Writing Task:** The writer understands the reading and is able to discuss the parts of the reading which she agrees and disagrees with. For example, at the end of the first paragraph she writes, "...however, legislating rules and guidelines for advertisers, as Jozui suggests, seems like an extreme measure to take."

**Development of Writer's Ideas:** The writer has a thesis statement that answers the writing prompt and has included two body paragraphs to explain her thesis. Although the first body paragraph is more developed than the second body paragraph, the writer does show sophisticated thinking about the topic. In the second paragraph, the writer states her reason: that marketing is misleading. The remainder of the paragraph discusses the reason in more detail and provides a real-life example to support the reason.

**Structure of the Response:** The essay is organized and coherent, and the writer's reasons support her thesis. The writer uses transitions within and between paragraphs (i.e. "Although Jozui recommends" and "...however, legislating rules...")

**Language Use: Sentence and Word Choice:** Student exhibits a command of college-level vocabulary, and uses complex sentences in the essay. For example, the student writes, "Although Jozui recommends boycotting advertising, I find this request impossible to fulfill."

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** Student shows command of grammar and mechanics.

**Writing Placement:** English 101

### What Writing Classes Will You Be Placed Into:

City Colleges of Chicago offers four different levels of English Composition to support students in preparing for success in college-level writing. The four different levels are: Foundational Studies; English 098; English 100; and English 101.

**Foundational Studies:** This is an appropriate description of a student who might enroll in Foundational Studies.

*I do not know how to organize my writing into essay form. People often say that they cannot understand what I am trying to express in writing.*

*I am told that my papers are filled with spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure errors, but I don't really see what's wrong.*

**English 098:** This is an appropriate description of a student who might enroll in English 098.

*I struggle with organizing an essay beyond indicating the main idea. People often say that my written documents are unclear or undeveloped.*

*I frequently make errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure. Though I can sometimes see that something is wrong, I am not able to identify the particular errors or figure out how to correct them.*

**English 100:** This is an appropriate description of a student who might enroll in English 100.

*I can organize and write a basic essay with a thesis statement, but I know that I still have a lot to learn about writing a polished essay that is well developed and focused according to audience and purpose.*

*I sometimes make errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure, but I am getting better at identifying the errors and correcting what is wrong prior to receiving feedback. I am also learning how to apply feedback in effective ways.*

**English 101:** This is an appropriate description of a student who might enroll in English 101.

*I know how to organize and write an essay for a number of different audiences and purposes. I am aware of organizational and developmental strategies for polishing my essays. However, I still have a lot to learn about the art of essay writing and fully developing my own personal style of writing.*

*I rarely make errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure, but when I do, I can identify and correct the errors. I am also well-versed in applying feedback.*

## The Sequence of Courses

- **Foundational Studies:** Students who complete Foundational Studies will end the semester by re-taking the Writing Placement Test. They will be placed into a new course according to this essay.
- **English 098:** Students who complete English 098 will automatically advance into English 100.
- **English 100:** Students who complete English 100 will automatically advance into English 101.
- **English 101** is a college-level course, and eligibility for English 101 is a pre-requisite for most

other college-level courses. This means that you cannot enroll in most other college-level courses until you are eligible to take English 101.

### **English as a Second Language Courses**

- English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are appropriate for students whose native language is not English, and who write with greater ease and fluency in their native language.
- City Colleges of Chicago offers ESL courses at the levels of Foundational Studies; English 098; and English 100.
- Please note that there is no difference in level between the ESL sections of these courses and the non-ESL sections of these courses. In other words, some students often think that English 100 is a higher-level course than ESL100. This is not true. Both courses address the same materials. However, the ESL course is designed to appropriately address the particular needs of students whose native language is not English.
- Like students who complete English 098, students who complete ESL 098 will advance automatically into English 100.
- Like students who complete English 100, students who complete ESL 100 will advance automatically into English 101.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The information in this packet was assembled by:

Rosie Banks, English Department, Harold Washington College

Daniel Borzutzky, English Department, Wilbur Wright College

Kim Steffen, Communications Department, Harry Truman College

As we prepared these materials, the Student Handbook for the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing was extremely helpful to us. We thank the un-named authors for making their work publicly available.