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Office Hours
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Available via email only

First-Year Writing Guide for Advisors

VT English Department | Summer 2020

WHAT ENGLISH CAN DO

WHAT ENGLISH CANNOT DO

FIRST-YEAR WRITING PLACEMENTS

The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand placement of first-year and transfer students in first-year writing courses.

EVALUATE TRANSFER COURSES

If one of your advisees has taken a course elsewhere that he or she believes is equivalent to ENGL 1105 or ENGL 1106, and it is not in the university's [Transfer Guide](#), please follow your college's policy for having a transfer course evaluated. In English, potential transfer courses for ENGL 1105 or ENGL 1106 should be sent to Derek Mueller (dmueller@vt.edu), the Director of Composition.

VERIFY BASIC PLACEMENT INFORMATION

If you are asked to verify an English placement, and you cannot find the answer in this guide about how to do so, please send the question to jenmoon@vt.edu.

CHANGE PLACEMENT

The English Department does not determine a student's placement in first-year writing and therefore cannot change or make a recommendation about changing that placement. Placement decisions are based on an algorithm that uses SAT or ACT test scores.

HELP STUDENTS "TEST OUT"

A student can receive credit for ENGL 1105 with a score of 50 on the College Level English Placement (CLEP) [College Composition](#) exam. Students must pursue this option on their own by visiting the College Board web site. *Note: Students cannot test out of ENGL 1106.*

SUBSTITUTE A COURSE

Substitutions must be handled on the department/college level, whichever is applicable for your major. We cannot make or recommend substitutions for you.

Students who must take first-year writing fall into one of two placement categories:

(1) ENGL 1105 + 1106

Students who

- bring in no transfer credit for first-year writing and/or
- whose placement scores do not qualify them for Advanced Standing credit (see list below left)

should take ENGL 1105 in the fall semester and ENGL 1106 in the spring.

SAT Score	ACT Score	ENGL Placement
up to 669	up to 30	1105
670-above	31-above	1106

ADVANCED STANDING POLICIES

TRANSFER STUDENT WRITING PLACEMENTS

(2) ADVANCED STANDING: ENGL 1106

If your student qualifies for **Advanced Standing** credit (see left), this placement will be shown on the **Individual Student Orientation Information** page.

- **Advanced Standing: English 1106**

- They will take ENGL 1106 only.
- More sections of ENGL 1106 are offered in spring, so if none are available in the fall, please advise your student(s) to enroll the second semester.
- Students with Advanced Standing status are awarded 3 hours of Advanced Standing credit for English 1105 only if they earn a C- or higher **on their first attempt** at ENGL 1106.
- Students who drop the course before the *Last Day to Drop a Class Without Grade Penalty* timetable deadline will retain the chance for Advanced Standing credit and may re-enroll in ENGL 1106. (They must still earn a C- or better when they complete the course.)
- **HOWEVER**, students who either (a) withdraw from or (b) make a grade of D+ or lower **on the first attempt** at ENGL 1106 lose the possibility to earn Advanced Standing credit. **They must then take the full sequence of ENGL 1105 + ENGL 1106.**
- Students cannot exempt themselves from ENGL 1105. Only students who are awarded Advanced Standing on the basis of scores may skip English 1105 and receive pass/fail credit for it.
- If they skip ENGL 1105 without being eligible for Advanced Standing, they will not receive credit for it, no matter how well they do in ENGL 1106. This is a university policy.

Advisors should follow these guidelines to determine a transfer student's placement:

TRANSFER CREDIT ACCEPTED AND RECORDED

Your advisee will need to take either some or no first-year writing. If the former, use the listed transfer credit information to make the appropriate placement.

NO TRANSFER CREDIT IS FORTHCOMING

Enroll your advisee in the appropriate course using the placement advice found on Hokie SPA's Individual Student Orientation Information page.

TRANSFER CREDIT HAS NOT ARRIVED OR HAS YET TO BE EVALUATED

Ask to see your advisee's unofficial transcript or ask for information about English courses taken at the previous school, and then use the university's Transfer Guide at <http://www.transfer-guide.registrar.vt.edu/> to see if the courses are listed as equivalent to VT courses. Make a placement recommendation based on what you find there.

TRANSFER CREDIT EXISTS FOR ENGL 1106, BUT NOT FOR ENGL 1105

Students who transfer in credit equivalent to ENGL 1106 might have been eligible for advanced standing at their previous school — or they might simply have taken the first-year writing courses out of sequence.

Regardless of the situation, in order to fulfill university requirements, students who transfer in ENGL 1106 but not ENGL 1105 must do one of the following, depending upon their situation:

- prove Advanced Standing eligibility from their previous school (i.e., send their scores to the Registrar),

- take ENGL 1105, or
- complete the ENGL 1105 requirement in some other way, such as taking the CLEP placement exam.

If your student transfers in ENGL 1106 and assures you of Advanced Standing eligibility from a previous school, it is up to you to ensure that the student's scores are submitted to the Registrar. Without proof of eligibility, the student cannot receive AS credit.

FAQS

Some of the most frequently-asked questions involve wait list and force-add procedures, taking ENGL 1106 elsewhere with AS eligibility, and AP and IB credits.

WAIT LISTS

For Fall 19, two wait lists exist for ENGL 1105 (one GE; one non-GE). As you work with and place your advisees, **please remove their names from the wait list**. This will enable us to maintain an accurate count of students who still need either of these courses. **No wait list exists for ENGL 1106.**

FORCE-ADDING

So students can work more closely with teachers, and in accordance with National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) standards, we try to keep first-year writing class sizes low.

As a result, we have the following force-add procedures in place:

- Students are placed into open sections first, according to their schedules, not for time or teacher preferences.
- Students will not be force-added into full sections, unless there is a formally-documented medical need or the course is required for graduation that semester.
- Work schedules, athletic constraints, and teacher preferences are not considered acceptable reasons for force-adding into a full course. Students with work-hours or athletic-hours constraints should block the necessary hours in their schedules by registering for free time.
- Teachers of ENGL 1105 and 1106 are not permitted to force-add students. All force-adds must go through Jennifer Mooney (Shanks 301).

TAKING ENGL 1106 ELSEWHERE

If your student qualifies for AS credit but for some reason cannot or does not wish to take ENGL 1106 at Virginia Tech, he or she can take the course elsewhere and transfer it back without losing AS eligibility.

If problems arise during this process, you will need to work directly with the Registrar to ensure that your student receives AS credit. The English Department can not assist with this process.

AP & IB CREDIT

Information about AP and IB credit can be found on the Advanced Standing/Transferable Credit page at <https://registrar.vt.edu/Advanced-Standing-Transferable-Credit.html>.