Composition Instructor
Handbook

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Northern Michigan University
University
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I. Welcome to NMU’s English Department

If you haven’t been here before, the first thing you will do upon your arrival at Northern Michigan University (NMU) is to introduce yourself to the staff in the English Department’s main office. They have the answer to almost all new instructor queries and can tell you who to talk to for the questions they don’t. The office staff will help you accomplish everything in this section. Whether you are new to NMU or familiar with the university, you must understand the issues in this section before you begin preparing to teach.

To get you started in your new role, you will need to return your Contract, W4 form, and Oath card if you haven’t done so already. The following list provides an overview of everything this section covers:

- Forms and Documents You Need to Have
- Wildcat Card
- Keys
- Office Space
- Office Telephone
- Supplies
- Classroom
- Paychecks
- Parking
- Perks
Forms and Documents You Need To Have

- Take your completed W4 form to the Office of Human Resources (Services Building). If you have not received your W4 by the week prior to the first week of class, talk to the English Department office staff.

- Sign the oath that came with the W4 form promising to uphold the Constitution of State of Michigan and faithfully discharge your responsibility.

- Return the oath card to the Office of Academic Affairs, 610 Cohodas, where the office staff will notarize it. If you have not received your oath by the week prior to the first week of class, talk to the English Department office staff.

Keys

After being assigned an office, the office staff will let you know when your office key is ready to pick up at the Public Safety Building. This key opens your office, the work/copy room, and the professional development room.

Wildcat Card

All NMU students, and employees have a Wildcat identification card. This card is used for checking out library books, entering events at student rates, entering Jamrich Hall and the English Department suite when they are closed to the general public, and confirming that you are associated with NMU.
Office Space
Ask one of the office staff on your first visit where you have been assigned an office. You will be sharing office space with up to three other teaching assistants while a contingent instructor will be given an office with at least one other contingent instructor.

Office Telephone
You will need to obtain your office phone number from the English Department office staff. Your phone will not be activated until you start to teach. You will share your phone with your officemates; however, there will be a different ring tone and different number for each of you. Also, you will be able to use NMU’s digital voicemail system and instructions can be found at www.nmu.edu/adit/node/8

Remember, you must press 9 before calling any off campus phone numbers. Finally, you cannot use your office phone to make long distance calls.

Supplies
NMU will provide basic supplies such as paper and pens. Staplers or electric pencil sharpeners are available in the department workroom. You may ask the English Department secretaries about any item you are unsure of, but as a rule of thumb you will be responsible for most of your supplies.
Classroom
Visit your classroom before your class meets to familiarize yourself with its location, layout, and technology access.

Paychecks
NMU has **bi-weekly pay periods** that begin on Sunday and end on the following Saturday. Payday is on a Thursday 12 days after the pay period ends. The payroll calendar can be found at [www.nmu.edu/paydates](http://www.nmu.edu/paydates).

NMU payroll has two convenient options - direct deposit to your bank account or a Visa pay card. **You must choose one of these two options at least one week prior to your first paycheck.**

Information on how to setup **Direct Deposit** via MyNMU can be found at: [webb.nmu.eduDirectDepositInformation.html](http://webb.nmu.eduDirectDepositInformation.html). Information regarding the **Visa pay card** and the authorization form can be found at: [webb.nmu.eduPayCardInformation.html](http://webb.nmu.eduPayCardInformation.html).

Supplies
You will be supplied with basic office supplies such as: paper, pens, pencils, highlighters, index cards, paperclips, post-it notes, and one grade book.
Perks
Instructor perks include, but are not limited to, the following: receiving complimentary text books from publishers, applying for funding for student travel to conferences and events, having faculty library borrowing privileges, using the refrigerator and microwave in the department kitchenette.

Printing/Copying
You are allowed 1000 copies per machine per course per semester. Teaching assistants should use printer 1 and faculty/contingent staff should use printer 2. If you max out your allotment, you may use the other printer.

Parking
You will be provided with a free parking permit. Each permit is only valid in specific parking lots around campus.

Laptop and Email
When you receive your laptop, you will be given an eight-letter email address. This email address will most likely consist of your first initial and your last name or the first seven letters if your last name. As an instructor at Northern, you will be given an IBM ThinkPad for use in your classes.
II. Structure and Purpose of the Composition Sequence and Courses

Curriculum

Essentially, NMU offers five courses in the composition sequence which, depending upon the students’ academic paths, may differ for various individuals. Each course addresses core skills of written expression. As students move through the composition sequence, they will be expected to gain greater mastery of higher order as well as lower order concerns.

EN 080, Reading and Writing, and 090, Developmental Composition, are remedial and developmental courses. For students placed in EN 080 and EN 090 who are seeking an associate or bachelor's degree, these courses do not count within their program; however, these courses do count towards certain diplomas or certificates as well as for financial and semester credit counts.

EN 111, College Composition I, and 211, College Composition II, are the two traditional courses most students take to complete Division I of the Liberal Studies program as they are required courses for all students seeking bachelor's degrees.

A new bridge course, EN 109, Intensive College Composition, and its one-credit workshop, EN 109W, are an alternative option for international and domestic students who test in this course. Students who complete EN 109 with a B or higher can use the course to satisfy their first of their two Division I courses and can move directly to

Although all fulfill the same basic requirement, students may have questions as to which section best suits the path they are planning and should consult with their advisors.

**EN 080 Reading and Writing (4 Credits)**

This course provides an intensive, integrated review of reading and writing skills, study strategies, and vocabulary development.

Students will be expected to have numerous, varied, short reading and writing assignments. The minimum amount of words for the course in the form of journals, prewriting, and drafts would be 3,000 words.

**Goals:**

1. Engage students in the writing process. Examples would be prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

2. Develop students’ abilities to read with fluency and increased awareness of main ideas and significant details

3. Introduce Students to study skills strategies and vocabulary development
Performance Objectives:

Content (focus and development)
Appropriate topic selection

Structure (organization and transitions)
Adequate topic sentence with primary and secondary supporting sentences

Stance (audience awareness)
Recognition of various audiences

Convention (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)
Emerging control of writing conventions

Incorporation and documentation of sources into essays
Understanding of introductory research methods and ability to integrate one source using MLA

EN 090 Developmental Composition
(4 Credits)

This course develops students’ abilities to write sentences, paragraphs, and brief essays with increased fluency and greater accuracy.

Students will be expected to write four essays and to have written a minimum of 4,000 words, in the form of journals, prewriting, and drafts.
Goals:

1. Engage students in the writing process with prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

2. Develop students’ abilities to read, create sentences, short focused paragraphs, and essays

3. Introduce students to the craft of narration, description, and explanation

Performance Objectives:

Content (Focus and development)
Satisfactory focus and sufficient ideas. The use of examples and evidence.

Structure (organization and transitions)
Adequate development of central idea or theme, effective introduction and conclusion, competent use of transitions

Stance (audience awareness)
Acceptable level of (in)formality and reasonable perspective

Convention (Grammar usage, punctuation, spelling)
Satisfactory control of writing conventions

Incorporation and documentation of sources into essays
Understanding of introductory research methods and ability to integrate 2+ sources using MLA
EN 109 *Intensive College Composition and Workshop (4 credits) + (1 credit)*

This course provides the time, coursework, and support necessary for students to develop their writing skills over a sustained period of time with tutorial assistance.

Students will write, read, and discuss paragraphs and essays about significant subjects. In addition to the four-credit course, the required tutorial component, is worth one credit. Students will participate in weekly, faculty-supervised, tutor-led workshops. All grading and arrangement of the workshops will be done by the faculty member. Students will be expected to complete five essays, and a minimum of 5,000 words in the form of journals, prewriting, and drafts.

**Goals:**

1. Engage students in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

2. Develop students’ abilities to read, discuss, and write well-developed paragraphs and essays about significant subjects

3. Introduce and extend students’ understanding of narration, description, and explanation. Introduce students to the craft of persuasion and argument

**Performance Objectives:**

**Content (focus and development)**
Consistent focus and good ideas, examples, and evidence
Structure (organization and transitions)
Logical development of central idea or theme, successful introduction and conclusion, and effective use of transitions

Stance (audience awareness)
Controlled level of (in)formality and clear perspective

Convention (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)
Very good control of writing conventions

Incorporation and documentation of sources into essays
Understanding of research methods and demonstrate ability to integrate 4+ primary and secondary sources using MLA across multiple assignments

EN 111 College Composition I (4 Credits)

This course develops students’ abilities to write, read, and discuss paragraphs and essays about significant subjects. Students will be expected to write five essays, and will need to write a minimum of 5,000 words in the form of prewriting, journals, and drafts.

Goals:

1. Engages students in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

2. Develop students’ abilities to read, discuss, and write well-developed essays about significant subjects

3. Extend students’ understanding of narration, description, and explanation Introduce students to the craft of persuasion and argument
Objectives:

Content (focus and development)
Consistent focus and good ideas, examples, and evidence

Structure (organization and transitions)
Logical development of central idea or theme, successful introduction and conclusion, and effective use of transitions

Stance (audience awareness)
Controlled level of (in)formality and clear perspective

Convention (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)
Very good control of writing conventions

Incorporation and documentation of sources into essays
Understanding of research methods and demonstrate ability to integrate 4+ primary and secondary sources using MLA across multiple assignments

EN 211 College Composition II (4 credits)

This course continues the development of students’ abilities to write carefully, to read closely, and to discuss critically. Writers expand their stylistic range, awareness of form, and ability to deal with complex issues. Students will write longer papers with at least one paper using information from other sources.

Students will be expected to complete 6-7 essays, documents, or projects. They will also need to complete a minimum of 6,000 words in the form of journals, prewriting, and drafts.
**Goals:**

1. Engage students in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

2. Develop students’ abilities to critically analyze and create texts

3. Extend students’ understanding of narration, description, explanation, persuasion, and argument. Introduce students to critical analysis

**Objectives:**

**Content (focus and development)**
Insightful, clear, focused, and well-developed ideas, examples, and evidence

**Structure (organization and transitions)**
Exceptional development of central idea or theme, engaging introduction and conclusion, and excellent use of transitions

**Stance (audience awareness)**
Keen level of (in)formality and distinctive perspective

**Convention (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)**
Very good/outstanding control of writing conventions

**Incorporation and documentation of sources into essays**
Understanding of research methods and demonstrate ability to integrate 6+ primary and secondary sources using MLA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>EN 080 Reading and Writing (4 Credits)</th>
<th>EN 090 Developmental Composition (4 Credits)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin Description</td>
<td>This course provides an intensive, integrated review of reading and writing skills, study strategies, and vocabulary development.</td>
<td>This course develops students' abilities to write sentences, paragraphs, and brief essays with increased fluency and greater accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial Component</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Essays</td>
<td>Numerous, varied, short reading and writing assignments</td>
<td>4 essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Words (journals, prewriting, and drafts)</td>
<td>3000 words</td>
<td>4000 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal One: Writing Process</td>
<td>Engage students in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing</td>
<td>Engage students in the writing process prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Two: Development</td>
<td>Reading Process: Develop students' abilities to read with fluency and increased awareness of main ideas and significant details.</td>
<td>Develop students' abilities to read, create sentences and short, focused paragraphs and essays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Three: Genre</td>
<td>Introduce students to study skills strategies and vocabulary development.</td>
<td>Introduce students to the craft of narration, description, and explanation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objective One: Content (focus and development)</td>
<td>Appropriate topic selection</td>
<td>Satisfactory focus and sufficient ideas, examples, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objective Two: Structure (organization and transitions)</td>
<td>Adequate topic sentence with primary and secondary supporting sentences</td>
<td>Adequate development of central idea or theme, effective introduction and conclusion, competent use of transitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objective Three: Stance (audience awareness)</td>
<td>Recognition of various audiences</td>
<td>Acceptable level of (in)formality and reasonable perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objective Four: Convention (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)</td>
<td>Emerging control of writing conventions</td>
<td>Satisfactory control of writing conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Objective Five: Incorporation and Documentation of Sources into Essays</td>
<td>Understanding of introductory research methods and ability to integrate 1 source using MLA</td>
<td>Two understanding of introductory research methods and ability to integrate 2+ source using MLA across multiple assignments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EN211 Exit Expectations

Upon finishing the sequence, students' achievements at differing grade levels should match those on the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Content (focus, development, support, documentation)</th>
<th>Structure (organization, transitions)</th>
<th>Stance (audience awareness)</th>
<th>Conventions (grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Insightful and clear focus</td>
<td>Exceptional development of central idea or theme</td>
<td>Keen level of informality</td>
<td>Outstanding control of writing conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Well-developed ideas, examples, and evidence</td>
<td>Engaging introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>Distinctive perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent use of transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Consistent focus</td>
<td>Logical development of central idea or theme</td>
<td>Controlled level of informality</td>
<td>Very good control of writing conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good ideas, examples, and evidence</td>
<td>Successful introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>Clear perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective use of transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory focus</td>
<td>Adequate development of central idea or theme</td>
<td>Acceptable level of informality</td>
<td>Satisfactory control of writing conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sufficient ideas, examples, and evidence</td>
<td>Effective introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>Reasonable perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Competent use of transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Weak focus</td>
<td>Inadequate development of central idea or theme</td>
<td>Inconsistent level of informality</td>
<td>Weak control of writing conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited ideas, examples, and evidence</td>
<td>Ineffective introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>Weak perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate use of transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Inconsistent focus</td>
<td>Deficient development of central idea or theme</td>
<td>Inappropriate level of informality</td>
<td>No control of writing conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient ideas, examples, and evidence</td>
<td>Inappropriate introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>Unclear perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No use of transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. The First Week and Beyond

Now that you have completed everything necessary to start teaching, section three will cover what you can expect for the first week of classes and into the semester. The first week of class creates unexpected challenges and unforeseen responsibilities. The following suggestions, procedures, and tips should help you proceed smoothly and are covered in this section.

Enrollment Caps
The English Department caps the maximum number of students allowed in each EN 111 class, and that number is currently 25. *You may not add students above this cap* without the explicit permission of the English Department Head. If students ask to be added and the class is already full, explain that this is the department’s policy. You can encourage students to keep checking back on MyNMU or to contact the English Department office.

Diagnostic Writing Sample
During your first few days of class, assign and review a diagnostic writing sample to ensure that your students are at an appropriate level of skill and knowledge to complete EN 111. Test your students’ writing with a timed writing exercise to complete in class. Allow four or five topics for the students to choose from and reserve the class period for the students to complete the essay. Once you have had a chance to read each of your students’ essays and review them according to the departmental rubric, bring any you are concerned about to the Director of Composition to review for possible placement changes.
Drop/Adds
Students may use www.mynmu.nmu.edu to add themselves to classes that have openings and can also drop classes before the allotted deadline. After the drop deadline passes, students must call registration to withdraw from classes and must also understand all consequences of doing so.

Automatic Withdrawal
If, within the first full week of class, you have any students on your roster who have never attended class, you should fill out an automatic withdrawal form to have them removed. The automatic withdrawal forms can be found on the English Department website under the “Forms & Info” tab and under the faculty tab (www.nmu.edu/english) but please note their submission deadline is the Tuesday of the second week of class.

Plagiarism
Academic dishonesty is an important issue and is treated very seriously in the English Department at NMU. The student handbook’s policy on plagiarism states: “No student shall submit as his or her own to an instructor any work which contains ideas or materials taken from another without full acknowledgement of the author and source.”
If you suspect one of your students is guilty of academic dishonesty, contact the Director of Composition immediately. The director will advise you on how to deal with the situation and the student.
Absence From Class
On occasion, you may miss class due to illness or emergencies. You should avoid missing class whenever possible, but if you must miss class, follow these steps:

- Call the English Department office to inform the office staff at 227-2711 or 227-2712 (only leave a voicemail if you cannot reach any office staff member).
- Fill out an Absence From Class form when you return which can be found in the Department office.

Note: Submit Absence From Class forms anytime you are not going to be physically present in the classroom. Even if you decide to hold conferences in your office during class time, it must be reported on an Absence From Class form prior to the conferences.

The only time an absence from class may be submitted after the fact is when you call in sick. If you miss class to attend a professional conference, try to arrange with another instructor for coverage of the missed class.

Preparing for Snow Days
Due to inclement weather, NMU may cancel classes; if it does so, a notice will pop up on your NMU laptop, and you will receive an e-mail from NMU Public Safety. If the University is not closed but the roads are unsafe for driving, you may decide not to come in. Remember that if you cancel class, you must contact the English Department and your students.
Your students follow the same policy for severe weather conditions. The severe weather policy is posted on the NMU website at the following address: www.nmu.edu/publicsafety/node/35

Counseling

Students often feel comfortable sharing their problems with faculty. Therefore, you may be the first person to notice behavioral changes in students that may signal psychological distress. Watch for the following changes in behavior:

- Withdrawing from social interactions
- Becoming easily argumentative
- Missing classes
- Having trouble concentrating
- Allowing grades to fall drastically
- Being preoccupied with or making references to death

According to the NMU Counseling Center's website (www.nmu.edu/counselingandconsultation/node/1), you should take the following steps if you suspect a student is in psychological distress:

- Take any type of message about suicide seriously. If you believe a student is in danger of harming himself/herself, immediately contact Public Safety.
- Refer the student to the appropriate office on campus. The NMU Counseling Center (3405 Hedgcock) provides confidential counseling for all NMU students free of charge.
• Inform Housing and Residence Life if an on-campus student seems to be at-risk for self-destructive behavior.

**Student Conferences**

Student-instructor conferences provide opportunities for individual students and their instructors to communicate their ideas, concerns, and feelings. For conferences, set aside an appropriate amount of time (depending on class size) and meet with each student in a specific class during the time period to discuss course material. Spend sufficient time preparing for as well as holding these conferences. Consider these suggestions when planning your student conferences:

• Create goals that conferencing will achieve.
• Design a conference system incorporating rules and requirements for students in conference.
• Plan sufficient time for student conferences.
• Reserve space in the department or work with your office mates to ensure collegiality.
• Explain and discuss the conferences with your students and establish meeting times with each.
• Evaluate and design the conference environment to welcome your students without distracting them.

Since students may feel nervous during conferences, greet them warmly and personally. Students may often fear conferences that involve grading, so remain supportive and encouraging throughout the meeting.
IV. End of the Semester
As the end of the semester nears, you should begin completing final paperwork and tie up loose ends. This section addresses the following issues:

- Final examinations
- Turning in Final Grades
- Grade changes
- Evaluations

Final Examinations
NMU policy requires that all classes meet during their scheduled final examination periods. Most instructors rely on one of the following Final Exam week strategies:

- In-class essay examinations
- Take-home final compositions
- Exit conferences

In-class essay examinations require a student’s response to a question or topic presented during an examination period. Because examination times usually limit the responses to 300-400 words, consider using topics and issues that students acknowledge and understand so the students can adequately plan their responses.

Take-home final compositions often resemble typical course compositions, usually incorporating many writing concepts and strategies taught throughout the semester. Final composition assignments are also usually lengthy and detailed. These examinations often benefit students that write slowly or require extra concentration when writing.

In lieu of testing, some instructors schedule exit conferences with each of their students to go over their final grades and to return submitted work.
Turning in Final Grades

All faculty, including TAs and contingent faculty, are required to do grading online. You will not receive paper grading rosters for the courses you teach. The following is a list of the steps you must take to turn in your grades:

1. Link to http://mynmu.nmu.edu
2. Enter your email ID and password, in lower case, under “NMU Login” and click “OK”.
3. On the next screen, click on the “Faculty Services” tab.
4. On the next screen, click on “click here to” under the “Academic Services” tab.
5. Under “Faculty Services,” click on “Web for Faculty.”
6. Then, under “Main Menu,” click “Faculty and Advisors.”
7. Finally, click on “Final Grades.”

You will now be able to select the term and proceed with faculty or advisor services.
Grade Changes

Instructors alter students’ grades only when extenuating circumstances prevent teachers from accurately grading their students. These circumstances include mathematical errors when calculating grades and misplaced work. However, changing student grades can cause considerable discontent among the NMU registration staff, so avoid the problem with proper care and planning. Most grade changes result from mathematical mistakes made before submitting final grades. Consider the following suggestions before calculating your final grades:

- Ensure that you have collected and graded all submitted work.
- Allow enough time to complete the grading.
- Before submitting your students’ final grades at the end of the semester, check your calculations twice for each student.

Despite thorough preparation and review, some errors may persist. If you find an error in a final grade, obtain a Change of Grade form located on the English Department website under “Forms & Info” (www.nmu.edu/english). The completed form requires the faculty assigned grade, the accurate grade to be assigned, and an explanation of the change’s necessity. Give your completed form to the English Department office staff and they will then circulate it to the department head, and finally to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. Upon signed approval, the department head and Dean will make the document official, as well as the grade change.
Withdrawals

Students can decide to withdraw from a course up to the 10th week of class. This would result in the student receiving a (W) grade and would not count against their GPA, a good option for students who may have already fallen too far behind in their coursework. It must be noted, however, that dropping a class may cause a student to fall out of “full-time” status (which for undergraduates is 12 credits), which may cause them to lose out on financial aid, insurance coverage, or other important things. Encourage all students considering (W) grades to see a financial aid counselor to discuss their individual circumstances.

An incomplete (I) can be assigned to a student that faces an extremely difficult situation, such as injury or a family member’s death, preventing them from finishing assigned work by the semester’s end. Instructors only offer incompletes as temporary substitutes for grades, allotting time-extensions to such students so that they can finish their work when able.

Instructors can only assign incompletes near the semester’s end; students facing difficult circumstances before the last month of the semester must appeal to the Dean of Students.
Evaluation for Contingent Faculty

(From Master Agreement between AAUP and NMU Administration)

5.4.1. d. Contingent faculty must submit evaluations documenting their accomplishments only in the area of assigned responsibilities (usually teaching). This will include:

1. Narrative/self-evaluation
2. Colleague evaluation
3. Student ratings

Contingent faculty may also document service, scholarship, professional development, and other relevant information, but are not required to do so. All materials for each course shall be reviewed once per year using the schedule of 5.4.1.1.1. More frequent evaluations may be required if requested by the department head or departmental faculty evaluation committee.

5.4.1.1.1 Evaluation for other than promotion or tenure review shall be conducted in accordance with the following schedule:

- February 1: The faculty member submits the evaluation to the departmental evaluation committee.
- April 1: The departmental evaluation committee submits the evaluation to the department head.
- April 30: The department head submits the departmental evaluations together with a
statement of concurrence or non-concurrence to the faculty member for review and comment.

- May 15: The faculty member submits the signed evaluation to the department head with comments as appropriate.
- May 20: The department head submits the faculty evaluations to the dean.
- June 30: The Dean signs the faculty evaluations and submits comments, if any, to the faculty member.
- September 15: The faculty member may respond to any comments made by the Dean.

Should the faculty member, evaluation committee, department head, or Dean fail to adhere to the preceding schedule, the process shall proceed to the next step unless an extension is granted by the administrator or committee at the next step. Failure to receive the appropriate evaluation materials will be noted in writing in the next evaluator’s statement and become part of the cumulative record for promotions and tenure.
How to Do It:
On or before February 1, submit to the Department Office the following three documents:

- **Your Narrative/self-evaluation** statement, commenting upon your teaching. This should not exceed 300 words.

- **Your colleague or Peer Teaching Evaluation:**
  - EDEC will assign an evaluator of equal or higher rank, who is on a full-time or term (not contingent) appointment.
  - Peer Teaching Evaluator: Please comment on the teaching effectiveness of your colleague, keeping in mind classroom organization, clarity of communication, student engagement and responsiveness, classroom atmosphere, variety and effectiveness of classroom activities, etc. The evaluation should not exceed 300 words.

- **Student Ratings,** using the electronic department form. (You may attach an additional form for student ratings, if your students complete one.)

Your service on committees, scholarship and professional development is entirely **optional.** If you perform any of these additional activities, simply attach a list or an abbreviated CV (**Curriculum Vitae**) of no more than two pages to your Narrative/self-evaluation.
V. Teaching Assistants

TAs should refer to this section of the handbook to be sure they have completed all requirements for EN 509 and beyond. The pages that follow include valuable information TAs will be able to use in preparation for and reflection upon their teaching. The following issues will be addressed in this section:

- EN 509, Teaching Colloquium
- Evaluation
- Fine tuning your performance
- Effective teaching assignments for former English Department TAs

If, at any time, TAs or Contingent Faculty would like assistance with their teaching, their students, or other related matters, please contact the Director of Composition.
EN 509, Teaching Colloquium

You will accomplish most of the preparation for your first semester of teaching while attending EN 509 Teaching Colloquium. This class begins before the regular NMU fall semester and covers a wide variety of subjects related to your experience as a teaching assistant. Some of the things you can expect to cover in this class are:

- **Syllabus** – During the weeks of EN 509 prior to the start of the fall semester, you will be given all of the necessary information and training to complete your own syllabus. You will also be given a check sheet to make certain all the necessary elements are included in the syllabus you give to your students.

- **Diagnostic Writing Samples** – The first few weeks of EN 509 will prepare you to give your students a diagnostic writing sample to determine their strengths and challenges in writing.

- **Grading** – The EN 509 instructor will give you advice on how to read, respond, and evaluate EN 111 students’ writing.

**Text(s)** – New teaching assistants will use the textbook and materials selected by the Composition Committee, the Director of Composition, and experienced teaching assistants. For the second year of your assistantship, you will be allowed to chose
• your own materials. You will receive guidance from the Director of Composition in picking your own materials and designing your syllabi.

• **Sexual Harassment Policy** – Some of you may be around the same general age as many of the students you will be teaching. Sexual harassment issues tend to come up slightly more often in a setting where instructor and student are close in age. Please keep this in mind as you conduct yourself in your class and one-on-one with your students.

• **Confidentiality** - Also, you may require your students to keep journals. If so, this information is to be kept confidential. For information about this and other policies go to www.nmu.edu/equalopportunities.

• **Plagiarism** – Plagiarism will be covered in EN 509 and that it is taken very seriously at NMU. For more information on plagiarism and its consequences, see page 18.

• **Extra 509 Events** – Besides your regular EN 509 curriculum, teaching assistants are also expected to attend a variety of orientation and informational presentations as well as professional development sessions throughout the academic year. You will be informed of these events as soon as information is available.
• **Copy Machines** – TAs will receive instruction as a group during the orientation/509 process. You will be assigned a four digit code that will allow you to use the copy machine. Don’t forget to clear your code when you are done copying. For more information on copying procedures, see [page 5](#).

**EN 509 Teaching Portfolio**

Sometime during your first semester of teaching, the Director of Composition will require you to submit a teaching portfolio. More information on this will be given in EN 509; however, the following material should be included:

• Your Teaching Philosophy
• Copy of Fall EN 111 Syllabus
• Director of Composition’s Classroom Observation
• Peer Observations
• Samples of Students’ Assignments
• Samples of Students’ Graded Work
• Weekly Lesson Plans
• Reflective Teaching Journals
• Final Reflective Essay
Evaluation By Director of Composition

At least once during your first term of teaching, the Director of Composition will visit one of your class sessions. The director visits the classroom to check your teaching, your classroom atmosphere, and your interaction with your students. This is not limited to your first semester, and may occur again while you TA at NMU.

The visit should not make you nervous; it is merely a way for the Director of Composition to monitor how the teaching assistants are evolving during the semester. View the visit as something to look forward to; the Director of Composition will give you some good tips that will help your teaching.

You also are encouraged to visit other TAs classrooms. Peer visits are helpful for several reasons: you may learn from another TAs teaching style, you may share tips and ideas with each other, and you will see how other TAs are approaching their first semester.
Fine Tuning Your Performance

At the end of the semester, your students will have filled out end of the semester evaluations. English Department secretaries will record these evaluations. Then, the Department Head and Director of Composition will review them before giving the results to you.

When you receive the evaluation results, note any areas of strength and weakness and think about how you may improve your teaching next semester. Students are encouraged to write additional comments on their evaluations, and you will be given these comments as well. Often the criticism that students give can be very helpful to you in improving your performance.

Try not to take it too personally if a student has a negative comment about your class. Some students react negatively to required classes, and their comments may reflect this attitude more than your performance as an instructor.
Effective Teaching Assignments

The following section lists some effective teaching methods and assignments that were collected from teaching assistance in the English Department at NMU.

- “After briefly lecturing on argument/persuasion, using the “Mountain Survival Problem” exercise for students to put their arguing skills to the test has worked wonderfully every semester I’ve spent at NMU. Though each of my classes approached it a little differently and asked a variety of questions, it proved to be fun, difficult, effective, and a true bonding experience each semester.”

- “My first two assignments encourage students to develop an ownership in their learning. I first ask them to make a list of future writing needs in their personal, professional, and spiritual lives, so that they understand where writing fits in. The next day I have them write up their philosophies of writing (why they write), general goals, and specific goals for the semester. During, and at the end of the semester, they refer to these goals as they reflect on their progress in written form. I find their levels of engagement with the basics of EN 111 and their own writing much enhanced by assigning these easy and quick tasks during the first week.”

- “Asking students to respond to reading assignments written by professionals and having them discuss what
makes them stand out as good and bad examples of writing has worked to show them what to do and what not to do. Also, reading in itself can teach students by process of osmosis. The Macmillon Reader is a text that provides short, precise definitions of different genres, but, more importantly, the essays allow students to see the results of those definitions.”

- “To get students thinking about audience I have students write a description of how to tie a show (in-class writing). When they are done, I have a volunteer read his/her description while I try to follow instructions. I am very ignorant about things like “bow,” “loop,” “over,” and “through,” so the process does not work well, and I end up with a mess. Then I invite them to try again with more explanation.”

- “In EN 211, the most effective teaching assignments I have used were those that had students write instructions about simple tasks, then test one another’s instructions. I did this with setting mousetraps ad with tying shoes. In both cases the students leaned a lot about about process analysis. They were made to think about a familiar or simple task as if they did not already know how to do it.”

- "In EN 111, the most effective assignments I gave were the 100-150 word summary/response pieces I had my students write about once each week. These assignments were useful because they taught both reading and writing skills; students learned how to
single out what was important in a piece of writing, and how to express their ideas concisely.”

- “One of the hardest things for some EN 111 students to do is put him or herself in someone else’s point of view and actually empathize with another person. I tell them that to make an effective argument, they must be able to understand the opposition’s argument. In order to help them take that imaginative leap, I bring in a poem called ‘Skinhead,’ which is from the point of view of an angry skinhead. After we discuss the poem, I tell them it was written by an African-American woman, Patricia Smith, and for a minute or two, they are unsure of their world—how an African-American write such a thing? I then ask them to write down the name of a person who they hate, or strongly dislike. They hem and haw for awhile; no one likes to admit they hate someone. When they’ve finally decided on a name, I ask the students to write a paragraph from the point of view of that person, in order that the reader may empathize with that person. At first, they hate it. But after the initial shock of doing something for foreign, they get wrapped up in it, and it’s hard to make them stop writing. This assignment has been one of my most effective because it pushed the envelope of students’ imagination and makes them want to write.”
VI. Appendices

Appendix A: Workshopping Syllabi and Lesson Plans

The purpose of this workshop is to gain both complimentary and constructive feedback from your peers in order to enhance the clarity, cohesion, and completeness of your syllabus and later, your lesson plans.

Syllabi Peer Review
Please spend time going through your syllabi and devote approximately 20 minutes for each individual’s document. Begin by reading through the document silently. Next, review the prompts below and then jot down your written feedback directly on the draft syllabus for your peer.

- **Completeness**— Identify any areas of information that are missing. Note any areas that need further explanation or clarification. How do the descriptions of assignments, essays, and other work meet the departmental objectives? Are descriptions provided?
- **Coherence**— Examine the flow of assignments and instruction. How has the author structured the semester? How is this structure conveyed to students?
- **Clarity**— Jot down any areas that are unclear. This is particularly important in the section(s) on the following: attendance, classroom policies and/or rules, and grade calculation. How enforceable and realistic are these areas and others? Identify any areas where you feel the language needs reworking.
- **Concision**— Mark any areas where the author can state things more directly and be more economical with
language. Remind one another to use back to back printing of final syllabi copies.

**Further, be sure to consider whether the author’s syllabus has each of the following:**
- Tentative dates for Library and Writing Center tours (and that requests are made)
- At least two sessions of individual conferences with students
- A final examination date and time

**Lesson Plan Review**

When reviewing your peers’ lesson plans, provide feedback on the following topics:
- Concision of topic or subject (short phrase(s) of major focus or topics)
- Daily sessions that connect and build on one another throughout the week
- Objectives stated from point of view of what students will learn, do, or experience using Bloom’s Taxonomy language
- Methods briefly but clearly written that show a session that includes instruction, modeling, and guided practice to prepare students for independent practice
- Methods that promotes student engagement and active learning experiences
Appendix B: Sample Syllabus

Syllabus
Fall 2012

EN 111 College Composition, 4 credits.
Course Sequence Number: _____

Instructor: Class Time/Days
Room:
Office: Office Hours:
Phone:
Email:

NMU Bulletin Description for EN 111: College Composition,

The first of two required courses in Division 1 – Foundations of Communication

“This course will prepare students to develop their abilities to read and discuss and to write paragraphs and short essays about significant subjects.” Students who complete EN 111 should be able to “generate ideas for writing; organize ideas logically; and use correct and effective grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.” During the semester, students will complete at least five evaluated assignments and will write a minimum of 5000 words.

NOTE: You must receive a grade of C or higher in order to enroll in EN211, the second composition
course in Division I – Foundations of Communication.

Required Texts


Performance Objectives for EN 111

**Writing Process:** Engage in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing

**Development:** Read, discuss, and write well-developed paragraphs and essays

**Genre:** Practice narration, description and explanation as well as persuasion and argument

**Content:** Maintain consistent focus and provide good ideas, examples, and evidence

**Structure:** Use logical development of central idea or theme, employ successful introductions and conclusions, make effective use of transitions

**Stance:** Control level of formality or informality, provide clear perspective

**Convention:** Show good control of writing conventions (grammar, usage, mechanics)

**Incorporation and Documentation:** Be able to incorporate four to five credible sources using MLA

Late Work Policy
All work or drafts must be turned in hard copy of the beginning of the hour on the specified due date. Please use double-spaced Times New Roman 12 point font and MLA formatting. Any work submitted late will be reduced by one full letter grade for business day it is late.

Plagiarism
Academic dishonesty is an important issue and is treated very seriously in the English Department at NMU. The pertinent sections of the NMU Student Handbook Student Code on academic dishonesty are listed below.

2.2.3 Academic Dishonesty (penalty: not less than disciplinary probation; not more than expulsion) This regulation does not preclude an academic penalty imposed by an instructor as provided for in Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section 1.2.3.

.02 No students shall submit as their own to an instructor any work which contains ideas or materials taken from another without full acknowledgement of the author and the source.

.03 No students shall submit as their own any work or assignment which contains content falsified by the student or content the student knows to be false.

.06 No students shall knowingly participate in, or otherwise facilitate, the academic dishonesty, as described above, of another student.

Attendance/Tardiness/Decorum Policy
You are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time, have your assigned work completed, and participate in classroom activities and discussions. You are also expected to be respectful towards your professor and your
classmates. If you do not abide by the above conditions, I will instruct you to leave the classroom and to meet with me in my office before I will permit you to return to class. If you have a legitimate, documented excuse for your absence or tardiness, please notify me immediately.

You will be allowed to miss four class sessions without penalty; however, each additional absence will lower your final grade by one step on the grading scale (i.e. from a B to a B-).

**Laptop/Cell Phone Policy**
Please keep your laptops closed in class unless I instruct you to open them for use. You may use your laptop to take notes during class; however, if at any point I find you chatting, e-mailing, checking websites, or the like, you will be told to leave and to meet with me in my office before you can return to class. Further, your cell phones must be turned off during class. Any cell phone use, including texting, will result in your removal from class and meeting with me in my office.

**ADA Statement**
If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock (227-1700). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Inclement Weather Policy**
On occasion, the University may cancel classes due to inclement weather. To find out if classes are being held,
check the NMU website, or call 227-BRRR (2777), the weather line for NMU.

**Final Examination Period:**
You are required to come to my office during our final examination time to pick up your graded work.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88 – 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82 – 87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78 – 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72 – 77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68 – 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62 – 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 – 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Criteria**

**A/A- Paper**
- Sharp, distinct focus
- Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content, sophisticated and well-developed ideas
- Obviously controlled and/or subtle organization
- Writer’s voice apparent in tone, sentence structure and word choice
- Few mechanical, grammatical and usage errors

**B+/B/ B- Paper**
- Clear focus
- Specific and illustrative content
- Logical and appropriate organization
- Precision and variety in sentence structure and word choice
Some mechanical and usage errors

**C+/ C/ C- Paper**
- Adequate focus
- Sufficient content
- Appropriate organization
- Some precision and variety in sentence structure and word choice
- Mechanical and usage errors not severe enough to interfere with the writer’s purpose or the reader’s understanding of content and message

**D+/ D Paper**
- Vague focus
- Content limited to listing repetition, or mere sequence of idea
- Inconsistent organization
- Limited sentence variety and word choice
- Mechanics and usage errors that interfere with the writer’s purpose

**Failing Paper**
- Absence of focus
- Absence of relevant content
- Absence of organization
- No apparent control over sentence structure and word choice
- Mechanical and usage errors that seriously interfere with the writer’s purpose

Adapted from: Richmond, Kia. “Portfolio Assessment Guidelines.” NMU, Fall 2001 Strickland, Kathleen and James. *Reflections on Assessment: Its Purposes, Methods, and*
Sample of How Grades are Determined/Description of Assignments from Zarah Moeggenberg

**Classroom Participation: 5% -- 40 points (up to .75 point per day)**
Participation is essential for your success in this class. Your participation will be assessed through the following:
- Class attendance
- Punctuality
- Willingness to ask questions
- Willingness to volunteer answers
- Engagement in discussion
- Contributions to fellow students during writing workshops
- Attitude and enthusiasm
- In-class assignments, one-on-ones, panel discussions

**Steps and Reading Response: 22.5%--225 (15 x 10 points each and 5 x 15 points each) 250 words each**
Steps help me guide you toward bigger papers and act as building blocks. They also work as a resource for me to see how well the class understands key concepts, processes examples, and addresses higher and lower order concerns. Throughout the semester you will submit responses to prompts that are constructed from discussions and activities inside and outside of class, as well as from *The Lazarus Project* by Aleksandar Hemon. These steps will be an opportunity for you to develop your writing and critical thinking skills. The journals are not weighted as heavily on your final grade as the papers, but they should be treated with the same dedication and will be graded under the
same expectations. These steps will be discussed, and it will be expected that each student will read from time-to-time what they have come up with.

**Workshops: 10%--100 points (4 x 25 points each)**
Throughout the semester you will workshop the first or second draft of each paper with your classmates. For workshops, you **must bring a completed hard copy draft for each member of the workshop group and submit a hard copy draft to me as well** (this will account for half of the workshop points). Critical Reading Workshop Guides will be filled out and given to each group member during the workshop (this will account for the other half of workshop points).

**Papers: 60%--600 points (see breakdown below)**
During this course you are expected to turn in five polished papers in EN 111.

- **Papers must be double spaced, in size 12 Times New Roman font, with 1 inch margins**
- **Papers must include assignment information (name, professor, class, date, assignment title) in the top left hand corner. It must also include a page number and your last name on all pages. See MLA guidelines in How to Write Anything p471-473 to format your paper correctly.**
- **Papers must be stapled. Please do not paperclip.**

The writing process is as important as the final product, and you will have the option and are encouraged to revise your essays for your portfolio. All grades on papers are tentative, meaning that you may revise heavily as many times as you wish to receive a possibly higher grade on them. Any
previous drafts must accompany that revised paper. 
I will only accept revisions until Thursday, December 8th, 2011.

Handouts will be given out with lengthy detail on the following papers you will be required to write. The following shows small summaries of each paper required.

Essays

Paper 1: Personal Narrative Essay (500-750 words) 75 points
This paper allows you to present yourself to readers by telling a story from your past that discloses something significant about you. By shaping your memories and feelings, you should be able to create a compelling story that conveys the meaning and importance of the experience. Please submit in MLA format.

Paper 2: This I Believe Essay (500-750 words) 75 points
This type of essay presents a personal belief. It uses narrative to illustrate the belief. In this essay you will take a belief you have and ground it in the events of your life. You will consider moments when belief was formed or tested or changed. Think of your own experience, work and family, and tell of the things you know that no one else does. Your story could be serious or funny, but certainly real. Make sure your story ties to the aesthetic of your daily life philosophy and the shaping of your beliefs.

Paper 3: Proposal (Persuasive) (1000 to 1500 words) 125 points
A proposal is a persuasive essay that identifies and explains a problem, offers a solution, and presents steps for implementing the solution. Proposals appear in newspapers, magazines, and online. You will be required to use 2-3 sources and follow MLA guidelines/format.

Paper 4: I-Search (4 parts: approx 200, 500, 800 and 1500) 175 points
We will discuss various topics, themes, issues, and reader responses related to The Lazarus Project by Alexandar Hemon throughout the semester. You will be required to choose one of these, narrow the scope, and perform an I-Search. The project consists of four parts: proposal, working bibliography, annotated bibliography, summaries, and commentary. The purpose of the assignment is to focus on the research process. You will develop skill in locating, assessing, and understanding secondary materials, and in properly documenting them.

Final Paper: Cultural/Rhetorical Analysis Paper (1500 words) 150 points
Explore a cultural trend or phenomenon that you discover to be significant and revealing about our culture. This could be something that has been around for a while or something completely new. It should be something that our culture embraces, perhaps a trend, fad, or obsession. For example, you could choose low cut women’s shirts, leggings, saggy men’s pants, using celebrities, Facebook, Twitter, UP bumper stickers, a top-of-the-chart song, flags…the list goes on and on. You should analyze your topic, offering your own observations, and those of experts
to convince your reader of its significance and the questions it raises. You must use and integrate a minimum of six sources.

600 points total

EVALUATION:
Four Essay Draft Workshops (25 points each)
100 points possible ______
Five Papers
600 points possible ______
   - Personal Narrative Essay (75)
   - This I Believe (75)
   - Proposal (125)
   - I Search (175)
   - Cultural Analysis (150)
2 One-on-One Conferences (25 points each)
50 points possible ______
15 Steps (10 points each)
150 points possible ______
5 Reading Responses (15 points each)
75 points possible ______
Participation
25 points possible ______

Total

1000 points possible ______
## Appendix C: Sample Lesson Plan

### Lesson Plans for Week 3

| Tuesday  
| September 7 | Wednesday  
| September 8 | Thursday  
| September 9 |
|---|---|---|
| **Topic or subject** | Show; Don’t Tell. | Revision, Research, and Reports | Avoiding Plagiarism. MLA. Picking a Topic. |
| **Objectives to reach goals** | - Construct sentences that use showing details  
- Compare and contrast showing and telling sentences  
- Critique sentences, justifying which sentences build a stronger narrative  
Invent a brief story that uses only showing details | - Compare and contrast “editing” and “revising” a paper  
- Explain the significance of report writing  
- Critique the quality of some given web sources | - Define plagiarism  
- Develop sentences that properly incorporate outside sources  
- Write a topic proposal for the report paper |
| **Materials needed** | - “Show; Don’t Tell” Sample Sentences  
Chalkboard and Chalk | - Samples of “edited” versus “revised” paragraphs.  
- “Evaluating Web Sources” Handout  
- Sample Web Sources to be Evaluated | - Samples of sentences that plagiarize  
- “How to Use Outside Sources” Handout  
- Paper 2 Proposal Form  
- Computer and Projector |
| **Methods to be used** | - Using the “reporter’s questions,” we will discuss how to make better “showing” sentences.  
- In groups, students will discuss sentences they have made and critique what makes one better than another.  
- In pairs, students will address “telling” verbs in their rough drafts, pointed out by partners.  
- Individually, students will work on rewriting their “telling” sentences to make stronger narratives. | - Discussion about the difference between revision and editing, using the sample paragraphs.  
- Discussion of the significance of Report Writing with an emphasis on practical application, introducing Paper 2 to the group.  
- Brief lecture on evaluating the quality of a web source.  
- Overview of the “2 Sources Analysis” assignment, due tomorrow. | - A brief lecture over the importance of academic honesty and ways to avoid plagiarism.  
- Discussion over the difference between plagiarizing and citing a source.  
- Using sample sentences individually then as a group, we will discuss appropriate use of outside sources and punctuation.  
- I will introduce the Paper 2 Proposal assignment, due Monday. |
| **Homework or extension activities** | - Paper 1 Final Draft  
- How to Write Anything p. 424 – 427  
Analysis of 2 Sources | - How to Write Anything p. 424 – 427  
Analysis of 2 Sources | - How to Write Anything p. 45 – 46; 325 – 327  
Paper 2 Proposal |