

Overview and Best Practices: Learning Support for Writing

Placement in learning support for the writing area will be determined by the student's ACT English score and by a secondary diagnostic assessment, preferably a writing sample that is scored holistically. Those students who are not prepared for college-level composition must complete the required learning support-

Formats for offering learning support in writing may vary. Possibilities include a semester-long course; a set of modules or minicourses; a college-level writing course paired with intensive learning support; a stretch course extending a one-semester college-level writing course over two semesters with learning support provided. Each institution will submit a plan to the TBR for approval.

Assessment of satisfactory completion of learning support in writing will be made on the basis of each student's written products. Student writing will demonstrate mastery of the skills described in the Outcomes table. While it is recommended that students gain experience writing a series of essays in a variety of genres, exit assessment should be based on expository essays that are similar to the placement essays required in SAT and ACT writing tests. Institutions can award learning support credit only to students who demonstrate at least *limited* or *developing* competence in writing expository essays. To exit learning support students will demonstrate *adequate* competence when writing such essays. This mastery of competence should be demonstrated with some consistency.

Each institution will indicate in BANNER when a student has completed learning support in writing. After completing learning support in writing students should enroll immediately in college-level composition.

The delivery of learning support for the writing area should be based on the following accepted principles:

Learning support in writing

- should emphasize (in placement, instruction, and assessment) the application of skills in the context of authentic writing tasks like those tasks assigned in college-level courses.
- should be customized, as much as possible, in response to individual students' strengths and weaknesses. Instructional design should allow students to exit the program once mastery of skills is demonstrated.
- should employ technology to make instructional materials easily available, to provide timely feedback and reinforcement, and to expand opportunities for practice.
- should reflect the understanding that competence and proficiency in writing depend upon a set of fundamentally interdependent skills and habits that a student develops concurrently. The process of developing these skills, like the process of writing, is a recursive process.
- should include interaction with and feedback from one or more careful readers, which is essential to the development of composition skills.
- should recognize that assessment of a student's writing skills must be made, essentially, by assessment of the intermediate and final products of the composition process, rather than of any exercises or drills meant to help a student develop familiarity with standards of correctness.
- should emphasize the importance of the social component in the learning process, particularly for students who require learning support in writing. Interaction among students and between students and instructors motivates, provides feedback, and promotes understanding of the requirements of effective communication.
- should recognize that competence in reading at the college level is essential to competence in writing at the college level.

Two Competency Mastery Points for Learning Support for Writing

	FIRST COMPETENCY MASTERY POINT FOR LEARNING SUPPORT IN WRITING* Students will demonstrate limited or developing competence† in writing expository essays. Student writing will	EXIT COMPETENCY MASTERY POINT FOR LEARNING SUPPORT IN WRITING** Students will demonstrate adequate competence†† in writing expository essays. Student writing will
Task/Purpose	address the assigned writing task and have a discernible purpose that is sustained throughout most of the text.	fulfill the requirements of the assigned writing task and have a clear purpose that is sustained throughout the text.
Audience Awareness	display awareness of the audience and the requirements of the writing situation, and maintain that awareness with some consistency.	respond adequately and appropriately to the needs of the audience and the requirements of the writing situation.
Organization	have a discernible and logical organization. The organization may be simple, with a basic thesis statement, topic sentences, and transitions, but the reader is able to discern an overall logical progression of ideas.	be logically organized in support of the text's purpose with a clear thesis statement and topic sentences, supporting points that are presented in a logical progression, and appropriate transitions.
Support	provide logical support for the thesis and main ideas, but may display some weaknesses in evidence provided.	provide logical and adequate support for the thesis by employing appropriate rhetorical strategies/patterns and, when appropriate, integrating material from primary and/or secondary sources.
Language Skills	display some variety in sentence structure, vocabulary, and level of formality appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context.	display variety in sentence structure, vocabulary, and level of formality appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context.
Grammar And Punctuation	display basic control of surface features such as basic syntax, grammar, punctuation, word choice, and spelling, particularly those errors that interfere with a reader's understanding. The writing may display some grammar and punctuation errors, but not consistent patterns of serious errors.	display competent control of surface features such as basic syntax, grammar, punctuation, word choice, and spelling, particularly those errors that interfere with a reader's understanding and/or undermine the writer's authority.
Writing Process	reflect the use of basic strategies for generating ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading, although students may still be in the process of developing an individualized and highly effective writing process.	reflect the use of effective strategies for generating ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
	<p><i>*In order to receive credit for learning support in "Writing students must demonstrate limited or developing competence in writing expository text as described in column one of the chart.</i></p> <p><i>†The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program uses the term "limited" for writing at this level of competence; the Education Testing Service, responsible for the SAT writing rubric, and the American College Testing Service, responsible for the ACT writing rubric, use the term "developing." All three of these tests--the TCAP, the SAT, and the ACT score student essays using a 1-6 point scale and would award a score of 3 to the student with "limited" or "developing" competence.</i></p>	<p><i>**In order to exit learning support in writing **Students must demonstrate adequate competence in writing expository text as described in column two of the chart.</i></p> <p><i>††The TCAP, the SAT, and the ACT score student essays using a 1-6 points scale and would award a score of 4 to the student with adequate competence.</i></p>