

First-Stage Writing Proficiency Requirement: TRANSFER STUDENTS

A student transferring from another college or university may complete their First-Stage Writing requirement by:

- 1) Transferring **two expository writing-composition courses** (each 3 units or more) passed with a “C” or higher from a previous college or university. These courses must be approved by the Writing Program Director and the College Registrar. Transfer students must request a review and potential approval of these courses in their first semester at Oxy. If a student does not request this review in their first semester, they may be required to fulfill the requirement through options 2 or 3 below. Please note: literature or other courses where papers were required (even if numerous) will not fulfill the transfer course option.
- 2) Demonstrating writing proficiency through the submission of a **Writing Portfolio**. This option is available only to students who have taken and passed (with a “C” or higher) at least one expository writing-composition course (3 units or more) at a previous college or university. This course must be approved by the Writing Program Director and the College Registrar prior to the student’s submission of a portfolio. If a student meets the one-course stipulation and requests the portfolio option, the portfolio must be submitted no later than March 1st of their junior year. If a student does not meet all deadlines to request and submit the portfolio or does not submit a complete portfolio (outlined in detail below), they will be required to take CWP 201 to fulfill their First-Stage writing requirement.
- 3) **Completing CWP 201 with a passing grade of “C” or higher.** If a student does not meet the above criteria to complete the First Stage requirement by transferring two courses or transferring one course plus submission of a passing portfolio, they must take CWP 201. Students are advised to take CWP 201 as soon as possible after matriculating to Oxy. Students are also advised to work with their academic adviser to ensure the completion of 201 along with any other Core and major requirements. Please note: “not enough room in the schedule” or “waited too long to take this course” will not exempt a student from the requirement to take CWP 201. If a student does not pass 201, they must re-take the course (preferably with a different instructor) until they receive the required passing grade.

Clearance Holds:

The Registrar will place Clearance Holds on student accounts until the First-Stage Writing requirement is completed through one of the above methods.

Steps for the Portfolio Option:

- 1) Email the Writing Program Director by February 1st of the junior year to request the Portfolio option. In this email, briefly explain your reasons for requesting the Portfolio option as opposed to taking CWP 201. The central reason should include a request for a review of one expository writing-composition course on the transfer record. Please note: “not enough room in class schedule,” or “waited too long to take 201” do not constitute adequate reasons for requesting the Portfolio option.
- 2) You will receive a reply within two weeks to confirm if you are eligible for the Portfolio option. This email will include a reminder of the submission process and required Portfolio contents (outlined below).

Contents of the Portfolio (all Portfolios should be submitted electronically with attachments):

- ☐ Submit **three (3)** of your essays reflecting polished expository writing (i.e., argument-thesis driven essays).
- ☐ Each paper should be from a college course and (when all possible) represent an assignment for three different professors. At least **one paper from Occidental College** is required. Papers written in high school or for purposes other than college coursework will not be accepted.
- ☐ Please adhere to these guidelines in selecting and submitting your three papers:
 1. You may submit either graded or clean copies of your essays;

2. Paper length may vary, but please do not submit essays longer than 12 pp. (if you do not have any shorter essays that showcase your writing strengths, please explain why in your email submission).
3. For each paper submitted, include a cover sheet (a separate document) with the following information:
 - the assignment prompt (type this out if short enough; if too long, include a copy of the assignment as a separate attachment);
 - a brief “self-assessment” paragraph in which you explain your writing process for the paper including: number of drafts; length of time spent on the essay (from draft through revision); and how you included peer, professor, or other feedback in your final submitted version of the paper.

Portfolio Evaluation:

The contents of your Transfer Writing Portfolio will be evaluated for college-level writing proficiency using the following criteria:

- focus and responsiveness to the assignment;
- thesis and argument clarity and purpose;
- development and analysis of ideas;
- structure and organization;
- appropriate use of evidence and correct citation of sources;
- clear, effective, and error-free prose (style, grammar, and mechanics).

You will receive an email from the Writing Program Director, usually within 2 weeks of receipt of the Transfer Writing Portfolio, to confirm whether you have fulfilled your First-Stage Writing Proficiency Requirement (a copy of the email will be sent to the Registrar’s office). If you do not pass the First-Stage Writing Proficiency Requirement through the submission of a Portfolio, you will be required to fulfill the requirement by taking CWP 201.