

First Stage Writing 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** passed with a “C” or higher from a previous college or university. These courses must be approved by the Writing Programs 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 courses (even in an English department) 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 at a previous college or university. This course must be approved by the Writing Programs 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 WRD 201 to fulfill their First Stage writing requirement.
- 3) **Completing WRD 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 WRD 201. Students are advised to take WRD 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 waiting too long to take this course will not exempt a student from the requirement to take WRD 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 Programs Director, Professor Julie Prebel (jprebel@oxy.edu) by February 1st of the junior year to request consideration for the Portfolio option. In this email, briefly explain your reasons for requesting the Portfolio option as opposed to taking WRD 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. Feel free to ask any questions about the submission and evaluation processes in this email.
- 2) Professor Prebel will email in reply in 1-2 weeks to confirm if you are eligible for the Portfolio option. In this email, she will provide 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 papers reflecting polished expository writing (i.e., argument-thesis driven essays).
- Each paper should be from a college course and if possible represent a student’s writing 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:
 - Submit graded essays when possible (scan these to send electronically); if you do not have a graded essay, or a paper with the professor’s comments, you can submit a ‘clean’ copy.

- 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).
- For each paper submitted, include a cover sheet (a separate document) with the following information:
 - 1) the assignment prompt (type this out if short enough; if too long, include a copy of the assignment as a separate attachment);
 - 2) 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 Writing Center feedback in your final submitted version of the paper.

Portfolio Evaluation:

The contents of your Writing Portfolio will be evaluated for college-level writing proficiency using these criteria: academic quality and originality, thesis clarity, development of ideas, structure and organization, appropriate use of evidence and correct citation of sources, and effective, error-free prose (style, grammar, and mechanics).

You will receive an email from the Writing Programs Director, usually within 1-2 weeks of receipt of the Portfolio, to confirm whether you have fulfilled your Writing Requirement at the college (a copy of the email will be sent to the Registrar’s office). If you do not pass the Writing Requirement through the submission of a Portfolio, you will be required to fulfill the requirement by taking WRD 201.