

# Developmental Writing

## Course Description

This course examines the fundamental process, theories, and methods that enhance a student's overall writing ability. It introduces various strategies for writing within multiple disciplines and professions.

This course examines basic principles of effective college-level writing through drafting and revising sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Topics to improve sentence structure and clarity include grammar, punctuation, and word choice. In addition to learning proper research techniques, students explore various writing genres including narration, cause and effect, compare and contrast, definition, and argumentation.

## Course Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Appreciate the skill of writing as form of critical thinking.
- Describe the steps in the writing process.
- Define "draft" and identify key differences between writing a first and final draft.
- Revise paragraphs and essays to be clear and concise.
- Edit sentences to improve clarity and eliminate errors.
- Use appropriate and vivid word choices to express ideas.
- Develop and explain the differences between a topic sentence and a thesis statement.
- Develop sensory details and write a descriptive narrative paragraph.
- Create a relationship between causes and effects; write a cause and effect paragraph.
- Develop a strong definition paragraph through contrast, explanation, and other techniques.
- Write a comparison and contrast essay using subject-by-subject or point-by-point methods.
- Compose an original argument essay that acknowledges and appeals to the audience's viewpoint.
- Identify and describe the main factors for developing a good résumé and cover letter.
- Respond to essay exam prompts clearly and concisely.
- Explain the research process and conduct research to explore a specific topic.

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take Developmental Writing.

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected of all students.

To reflect academic honesty, students must:

- Submit only their own work.
- Use quotations and citations to indicate words taken from another source.

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- Cite instances of paraphrasing (rewording) information.
- Cite ideas or examples that are not general knowledge.

## Important Terms

In this course, different terms are used to designate tasks:

- **Tutoring:** memberships include online tutoring for students to access with any content/subject related questions in the place of faculty. If your tutor is not able to answer your questions please contact a student advisor.
- **Assignment\*:** A written piece that will be submitted to SMARTHINKING for a grade when the final draft is complete. Your final grade for each assignment is calculated from the raw score provided from SMARTHINKING. If you have any questions about your calculated Assignment grade please contact your course advisor.
- **Practice Exercise:** A non-graded quiz or writing piece that provides practice using skills discussed in a topic.
- **Graded Quiz:** A graded online assessment.

\*Each Graded Writing Assignment must be completed to complete this course.

## Course Evaluation Criteria

StraighterLine provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. See [Academic Questions](#) section in FAQ for further details on percentage scores and grading scale. A passing percentage is **70%** or higher.

If you have chosen a Partner College to award credit for this course, your final grade will be based upon that college's grading scale. Only passing scores will be considered by Partner Colleges for an award of credit.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Topic	Assessment	Points Available
A1	Graded Quiz: Plagiarism	15
1	Graded Quiz: Grammar	18
2	Graded Quiz: Word Use	21
3	Graded Quiz: Sentence Types	30
4	Graded Quiz: Audience, Tone, and Purpose	19.5
4	Graded Quiz: Narrative Paragraph and Structure	9
4	Graded Quiz: Paragraph Structure	27
5	Graded Quiz: Audience, Tone, Purpose, and Word Choices	18
6	Graded Quiz: Organization, Support, and Unity	16.5
7	Graded Quiz: Thesis, Details, and	16.5

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	Introduction/Conclusion	
8	Writing Assignment 8-B: Final Draft of the Descriptive Narrative Paragraph	60
8	Graded Quiz: Descriptive Narrative	7.5
9	Writing Assignment 9-B: Final Draft of the Definition Paragraph	60
9	Graded Quiz: Definition	25.5
10	Writing Assignment 10-B: Final Draft of the Cause & Effect Paragraph	60
10	Graded Quiz: Cause and Effect, Part 1	13.5
10	Graded Quiz: Cause and Effect, Part 2	12
11	Graded Quiz: Essay Structure	25.5
11	Graded Quiz: Pronouns	12
11	Graded Quiz: Transitions	15
11	Graded Quiz: Essay Development	15
12	Writing Assignment 12-B: Final Draft of the Comparison and Contrast Essay	100
12	Graded Quiz: Comparison and Contrast	16.5
13	Writing Assignment 13: Graded Process Essay Exam	100
13	Graded Quiz: Essay Exams	18
14	Graded Quiz: Resumes	7.5
14	Graded Quiz: Cover Letters	9
15	Writing Assignment 15: Graded I-Search Essay	100
15	Graded Quiz: Research	33
16	Writing Assignment 16-B: Final Draft of the Argumentative Essay	100
16	Final Graded Quiz: Argument	19.5
Total		1000

## Course Topics and Objectives

Topic	Lesson Topic	Subtopics	Objectives
1	Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar Basics</li> <li>Mechanics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and describe good grammar.</li> <li>Explain the process of developing a grammatically correct sentence.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Punctuation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Define manuscript form, capital letters, numbers, and abbreviations; explain how to use each in a piece of writing.</li> <li>● Define and describe the methods for improving punctuation usage including apostrophe, quotation, and comma.</li> </ul>
2	Word Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vocabulary</li> <li>● Improving your Spelling</li> <li>● Commonly Confused Words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify and describe the major strategies for building your vocabulary.</li> <li>● Use the five steps for spelling to improve spelling skills.</li> <li>● Identify the most commonly confused words to improve your application of these terms.</li> </ul>
3	Writing the Sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Basics</li> <li>● Revising the sentence</li> <li>● Editing the sentence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write and revise sentences using the 6 major strategies for writing smooth and clear sentences.</li> <li>● Edit sentences to improve grammar and eliminate errors.</li> </ul>
4	Writing the Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paragraph Form</li> <li>● Paragraph Structure</li> <li>● Paragraph Content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain how to structure a clear and concise paragraph.</li> <li>● Define and describe the major strategies for incorporating content into a paragraph.</li> <li>● Define paragraph form and write a topic sentence.</li> </ul>
5	Write to be Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● College-Level Writing Overview</li> <li>● Understanding Content and Support</li> <li>● Writing and Skill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Examine the basic principles of effective college-level writing.</li> <li>● Explain writing as communication.</li> <li>● Distinguish the skill of writing as a form of critical thinking, not a natural or biological phenomenon.</li> </ul>
6	Writing Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prewriting</li> <li>● Drafting</li> <li>● Revising</li> <li>● Editing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe the pre-writing process and write an effective topic sentence.</li> <li>● Explain how free writing, listing, and clustering can help you overcome writer's block.</li> <li>● Develop brainstorming techniques for generating topics using free association of words and ideas.</li> <li>● Define draft and identify key differences between writing a first and final draft</li> <li>● Explain the revising process and practice revising a first draft.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice editing revised drafts and summarize the criteria for a well-written final draft.</li> </ul>
7	Point & Specific Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point of Origin</li> <li>Supporting the Point with Evidence</li> <li>Organizing and Connecting the Evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain what a “point” is and write a topic sentence.</li> <li>Practice writing original essays supporting and reinforcing your point with specific evidence, examples, and illustrations.</li> </ul>
8	Description and Narration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description as a Picture</li> <li>The Description Process</li> <li>Narration as Storytelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define description as a picture.</li> <li>Examine the process of developing description.</li> <li>Analyze the narrative process.</li> <li>Combine descriptive details and narration to construct a strong descriptive narrative paragraph.</li> </ul>
9	Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal and Informal Definitions</li> <li>Developing Ideas and Details of a Definition Essay</li> <li>The Process of revising and Writing a Definition Essay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and distinguish formal and informal definition</li> <li>Identify the questions that can help in the revision process.</li> <li>Write an original definition paragraph.</li> <li>Explore a variety of ways to organize topics for a definition essay.</li> </ul>
10	Cause and Effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting Cause and Effect</li> <li>Developing a Cause-and-Effect Paragraph</li> <li>Writing a Cause-and-Effect Paragraph</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the primary conditions that account for cause and effect dynamic.</li> <li>Explain how to develop a cause and effect paragraph.</li> <li>Develop a strong topic sentence that includes both cause and effect.</li> <li>Write a cause and effect paragraph.</li> </ul>
11	Essay Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> <li>Supporting Paragraphs</li> <li>Conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the basic structure of an essay.</li> <li>Create an essay outline.</li> <li>Define and describe the major strategies for writing an introductory paragraph.</li> <li>Explain how to use supporting</li> </ul>

			<p>paragraphs and transitional sentences to develop the body of the essay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe the key methods for ending an essay.</li> </ul>
12	Comparison and Contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the Angle</li> <li>Developing the Comparison or Contrast Essay</li> <li>Writing the Comparison or Contrast Essay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine the two methods for developing a comparison and contrast essay.</li> <li>Incorporate the two methods into the prewriting process.</li> <li>Identify similarities and differences between two ideas.</li> <li>Write a professional comparison and contrast essay.</li> </ul>
13	Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking Essay Exams</li> <li>RAT Exam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe different types of essay exams.</li> <li>Using the essay prompt and the requirements, explain how you can construct a strong response.</li> <li>Write a strong essay exam response that shows someone how to do one step in the writing process.</li> </ul>
14	Resumes and Cover Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing a Resume</li> <li>Writing a Cover Letter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the proper headings used in a résumé.</li> <li>Explain the importance of formatting in a résumé.</li> <li>Describe the essential components of a cover letter.</li> <li>Develop a personal résumé and cover letter.</li> </ul>
15	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducting research</li> <li>Writing a research paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the library and the Internet to conduct research.</li> <li>Explain the six steps of the research process.</li> <li>Write an I-Search essay to demonstrate mastery of research-related skills.</li> </ul>
16	Argumentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument Strategies</li> <li>Argument Essay Development</li> <li>Writing the Argument Essay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe the five strategies for developing a sound and persuasive argument.</li> <li>Write an original argument essay to sway a reader's viewpoint.</li> <li>Explore the questions one must ask in regard to audience, purpose, and narrowing one's thesis in preparation for drafting an argument essay.</li> </ul>

17	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review key content covered in the course.</li></ul>
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