

**English Department Contact**

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**Orientation Office Hours  
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M -Th 10 a.m. - noon, 1 - 3 p.m.

# First-Year Writing Guide for Advisors

VT English Department | Summer 2018

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# INTRODUCTION

## Questions? Ideas?

Have questions not answered here?  
Have ideas for next year's guide?

Please email [jenmoon@vt.edu](mailto:jenmoon@vt.edu).

## WHAT ENGLISH CAN DO

## WHAT ENGLISH CANNOT DO

The purpose of this guide is to help you better understand placement of first-year and transfer students in first-year writing courses.

Please note that major departments are responsible for verifying placement evaluations in Hokie SPA and for ensuring that students are enrolled in the correct first-year writing course.

During Orientation, new test scores (ex: SAT) arrive weekly, as do transfer credits. Students are placed in first-year writing courses by the Registrar on the basis of available information; however, this information can change during Orientation, as well as through early fall.

It is vital that you and your advisees keep watch for late scores and transfer credits, which could result in a different placement. For example, AP scores could result in your student's placement changing from ENGL 1105 to ENGL 1106.

To understand your advisee's placement, review two locations accessible via the **Faculty and Advisor Student Menu** link on **Hokie SPA**:

- the **Individual Student Orientation Information** page (See **Appendix B**.)
- the **Student Transfer Credits** page (See **Student Schedule and Grades Menu**; Information found here supersedes that found on the other page.)

If a student provides no scores and none will be forthcoming, the default placement is ENGL 1105.

## EVALUATE TRANSFER COURSES

If one of your advisees has taken a course elsewhere that he or she believes is equivalent to ENGL 1105 or ENGL 1106, and it is not in the Registrar's **Transfer Guide**, please follow your college's policy for having a transfer course evaluated.

For a list of suggested contacts within each college and/or department with whom you should begin, please see <http://www.tranguide.registrar.vt.edu/2018/contacts.html>. Your contact then forwards the information to the appropriate individual within each department. In English, potential transfer courses for ENGL 1105 or ENGL 1106 would be sent to Jen Mooney ([jenmoon@vt.edu](mailto:jenmoon@vt.edu)).

## VERIFY BASIC PLACEMENT INFORMATION

If you are asked to verify an English placement, and you cannot find the answer in this guide about how to do so, please send the question to [jenmoon@vt.edu](mailto:jenmoon@vt.edu).

## ACCEPT A NON-EQUIVALENT TRANSFER COURSE

We cannot identify a course as equivalent to one of our freshman writing courses if it is not truly equivalent.

## CHANGE PLACEMENT

The English Department does not determine a student's placement in first-year writing and therefore cannot change or make a recommendation about changing that placement. **Placement decisions are based on an algorithm that uses test scores (SAT, ACT, etc.), class rank, and other factors. If you have questions about placement, please contact the Registrar.**

# FIRST-YEAR WRITING PLACEMENTS

## HELP STUDENTS “TEST OUT”

A student can test out of ENGL 1105 with a score of 50 on the College Level English Placement (CLEP) exam, but they must pursue this option on their own. (For more information, please see **Appendix A**.)

## SUBSTITUTE A COURSE

Substitutions must be handled on the department/college level, whichever is applicable for your major. We cannot make or recommend substitutions for you.

Students who must take first-year writing fall into one of two placement categories:

### (1) ENGL 1105 + 1106

Students who

- bring in no **transfer credit** for first-year writing and/or
- whose **placement scores** do not qualify them for **Advanced Standing** credit

should take ENGL 1105 in the fall semester and ENGL 1106 in the spring.

### (2) ADVANCED STANDING: ENGL 1106

If your student qualifies for Advanced Standing credit, this placement will be shown on the **Individual Student Orientation Information** page.

- **Advanced Standing: English 1106**
  - They will take ENGL 1106 only.
  - More sections of ENGL 1106 are offered in spring, so if none are available in the fall, please advise your student(s) to enroll the second semester.

## ADVANCED STANDING POLICIES

- Students with Advanced Standing status are awarded 3 hours of Advanced Standing credit for English 1105 only if they earn a C- or higher **on their first attempt** at ENGL 1106.
- Students who drop the course before the *Last Day to Drop a Class Without Grade Penalty* timetable deadline will retain the chance for Advanced Standing credit and may re-enroll in ENGL 1106. (They must still earn a C- or better when they complete the course.)
- **HOWEVER**, students who either (a) withdraw from or (b) make a grade of D+ or lower **on the first attempt** at ENGL 1106 lose the possibility to earn Advanced Standing credit. **They must then take the full sequence of ENGL 1105 + ENGL 1106.**
- Students cannot exempt themselves from ENGL 1105. Only students who are awarded Advanced Standing on the basis of scores may skip English 1105 and receive pass/fail credit for it.
- If they skip ENGL 1105 without being eligible for Advanced Standing, they will not receive credit for it, no matter how well they do in ENGL 1106. This is university policy.

# TRANSFER STUDENT WRITING PLACEMENTS

In most instances, on Hokie SPA's Individual Student Orientation Information page, you will find this placement recommendation for transfer students:

*Transfer - May have English Transfer Credit  
ENGL 1105 recommended but not assigned*

Transfer student English placement is not automated the same way as first-year students' placement. Advisors should follow the guidelines below to determine a transfer student's appropriate English placement.

## TRANSFER CREDIT ACCEPTED AND RECORDED

Your advisee will need to take either some or no first-year writing. If the former, use the listed transfer credit information to make the appropriate placement.

## NO TRANSFER CREDIT IS FORTHCOMING

Enroll your advisee in the appropriate course using the placement advice found on Hokie SPA's Individual Student Orientation Information page.

## TRANSFER CREDIT HAS NOT ARRIVED OR HAS YET TO BE EVALUATED

Ask to see your advisee's unofficial transcript or ask for information about English courses taken at the previous school, and then use the university's Transfer Guide at <http://www.tranguide.registrar.vt.edu/> to see if the courses are listed as equivalent to VT courses. Make an assessment and a placement recommendation based on what you find there.

If the courses are not listed in the transfer guide, follow the procedure listed under **WHAT ENGLISH CAN DO: EVALUATE TRANSFER COURSES**.

## TRANSFER CREDIT EXISTS FOR ENGL 1106, BUT NOT FOR ENGL 1105

Students who transfer in credit equivalent to ENGL 1106 might have been eligible for advanced standing at their previous school -- or they might simply have taken the first-year writing courses out of sequence.

Regardless of the situation, in order to fulfill university requirements, students who transfer in ENGL 1106 must do one of the following, depending upon their situation:

- prove Advanced Standing eligibility from their previous school (i.e., send their scores to the Registrar),
- take ENGL 1105, or
- complete the ENGL 1105 requirement in some other way, such as taking the CLEP placement exam. (*See Appendix A*).

**If your student transfers in ENGL 1106 and assures you of Advanced Standing eligibility from a previous school, it is up to you to ensure that the student's scores are submitted to the Registrar. Without proof of eligibility, the student cannot receive AS credit.**

# APPENDIX A: AP, IB, CLEP & DUAL ENROLLMENT QUICK GUIDE

## AP CREDIT

This section of the guide is designed to provide you with the most basic information regarding AP, IB, and CLEP credit for first-year writing courses. It is for quick review purposes only. For a full discussion of transfer credits, as well as for information on other exams, please visit the University Registrar's page at <https://registrar.vt.edu/registration-multi-brief/ap-ib-clep-credit.html>.

Title	Score	Gives Credit For
ENGL Lang/Comp or Lit/Comp	3	ENGL 1105 (3 cr)
ENGL Lang/Comp or Lit/Comp	4 or 5	ENGL 1105 + 1106 (6 cr)

*Note: Credit will be awarded for Language or Literature, but not both.*

## IB CREDIT

Title	Score	Gives Credit For
<b>Higher Level</b>		
English Literature or Literature & Language	4	ENGL 1105 (3 cr)
English Literature or Literature & Language	5-7	ENGL 1105 + 1106 (6 cr)
<b>Standard Level</b>		
Language A	5	ENGL 1XXX (3 cr)
Language A	6-7	ENGL 1105
English A: Literature or Language & Literature	5-7	ENGL 1105

## CLEP CREDIT

The English Department does not administer CLEP exams. Students who wish to take the exam must make their arrangements to do so and to have the scores sent to the Registrar. They should visit <https://clep.collegeboard.org/exams>.

Virginia Tech gives credit only for the exam titled **College Composition**. No other CLEP test scores are accepted. **Note: Students cannot test out of ENGL 1106.**

Title	Min. Score	Gives Credit For
College Composition	50	ENGL 1105 (3 cr)

## DUAL-ENROLLMENT CREDIT

To receive credit at Virginia Tech for a dual-enrollment course, students must request that the college at which such courses were taken send an official transcript to the University Registrar:

Office of the University Registrar (MC 0134)  
Student Services Building, Suite 250, Virginia Tech  
800 Washington St., SW  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

## APPENDIX B: ADVISING FAST FACTS

### FORCE-ADD PROCEDURES

Appendix B covers force-add procedures, lists current SAT and ACT thresholds for placement, briefly discusses first-year writing wait lists, and provides information if your student qualifies for AS credit and wishes to take ENGL 1106 elsewhere.

So students can work more closely with teachers, and in accordance with National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) standards, we try to keep first-year writing class sizes low.

As a result, we have the following force-add procedures in place:

- Students are placed into open sections first, according to their schedules, not for time or teacher preferences.
- Students will not be force-added into full sections, unless there is a formally-documented medical need or the course is required for graduation that semester.
- Work schedules, athletic constraints, and teacher preferences are not considered acceptable reasons for force-adding into a full course. Students with work-hours or athletic-hours constraints should block the necessary hours in their schedules by registering for free time.
- Teachers of ENGL 1105 and 1106 are not permitted to force-add students. All force-adds must go through Jennifer Mooney (Shanks 301).

### SAT & ACT PLACEMENT SCORES

This table reflects current placements for SAT and ACT scores:

OLD SAT Score	NEW SAT Score	ACT Score	Writing Placement
up to 570	up to 669	up to 24	1105
571-above	670-above	25-above	1106

### WAIT LIST PROCEDURES

For Fall 18, two wait lists exist for ENGL 1105 (one GE; one non-GE). As you work with and place your advisees, **please remove their names from the wait list.** This will enable us to maintain an accurate count of students who still need either of these courses. No wait list exists for ENGL 1106.

### TAKING ENGL 1106 ELSEWHERE WITH AS ELIGIBILITY

If your student qualifies for AS credit but for some reason cannot or does not wish to take ENGL 1106 at Virginia Tech, he or she can take the course elsewhere and transfer it back without losing AS eligibility.

If problems arise during this process, you will need to work directly with the Registrar to ensure that your student receives AS credit. The English Department does not assist with this process.