**About the Final Self-Assessment Assignment (FSA)**

* 3-4 pages
* 10% of final grade
* Draft due: Nov 23 (peer review and revision will follow)
* Revision due: Dec 7 (final exam slot)

Writing a self-assessment is an important academic skill, especially as your college career continues to progress beyond “memorize-and-repeat,” and towards student-driven instruction that focuses on training you to identify your own goals, and to recognize patterns, assess options, and find creative solutions that will help you reach those goals.

As a senior, you will be asked to write a final self-evaluation paper as part of the graduation progress. The assessment you are writing for Basic Comp may be a very useful resource as you document your progress to graduation.

**Important Review**

I’ve asked for a conclusion that directly addresses the relevance of what you’ve accomplished in Basic Comp to your identity as a writer, a student, and/or a person. Please don’t repeat that question and answer it mechanically. Demonstrate your creativity and critical thinking skills, but reading through the following goals (from the syllabus) and use them to focus on the most important thing you want to say.

Some of the goals of the course will have been easy for you, and some may have been a challenge. Some you may feel you have mastered, and others you may feel you still need to work on. Just as your ILP was specific to you, as a person, what you take out of Basic Comp will be specific to you. Your FSA is your chance to share what you learned, supported by direct references and specific quotations from your own work.

From the syllabus:

Your objectives for this course are to

* Create **individualized writing learning plans** based on the results of **diagnostic tests** and in **consultation with instructor**.
* **Practice** grammar skills (those applicable to the individual student) through frequent electronic and written exercises, with feedback and explanation, both **in and out of class**.
* **Practice** the grammar skills learned in exercises by focusing on these issues **in the composition, revision, and editing phases** of the writing process.
* Develop **sustainable main ideas** for paragraphs and short essays.
* Compose **grammatically correct** (free of both syntax issues and surface errors) **sentences** in paragraph-length writing assignments.
* Practice **writing process skills** such as prewriting, free writing, brainstorming, listing, outlining, mapping, zero drafting, drafting, revising, proofreading, and copyediting
* Plan, write, and revise several types of **short essays**.

This course fulfills the **Communication, Self-Awareness, and Reflection** element of the **Liberal Arts Core**. Keep all drafts of your papers from all your classes. You will need to include a selection of papers in your graduation portfolio -- a required component of each major.   
  
**Course Philosophy and Pedagogical Design**(Why we think this way of teaching you will help you learn.)  
  
Composition is **a multi-stage process** rather than a single-sitting activity. The principle of writing as a process will unite all course activities. This course is designed to **help students identify their own writing strengths and weaknesses** and to build a plan for writing improvement based on those findings. Students will take an early diagnostic test, which, along with guidance from the instructor, will allow them to **identify areas needing work**. Grammar exercises and writing assignments will be tailored to each student, offering practice where needed. The course will also use a **sequential building method**, asking students to analyze their own writing on a sentence-by-sentence level, then on the paragraph level, and finally, in the context of the short essay. The instructor will assign some writing topics; other assignments will allow for student choice in subject matter. A post-test will offer assessment information for instructor and student alike, and a **final self-assessment essay** will give students the opportunity to reflect on writing progress and to identify writing goals and challenges for the future.

**The FSA is an essay.**

* Demonstrate your ability to write about specific incidents and details (SHOW).
* Capture the reader’s interest, through vivid, engaging writing and your own personal “voice.” (Be honest. You will not lose points for fairly and accurately exploring an area that needs work.)
* Brainstorm, plan, proofread, draft, and revise. (That’s the writing process.)
* Be specific.
  + “In Basic Comp, I learned many things.” (Vague.)
  + “In Basic Comp, I learned many things, but the most important were A, B, and C.” (Better, but wordy.)
  + “In Basic Comp, I learned A, B, and C.” (Avoids the wordiness of the previous example, but it’s pretty blunt.)
  + “In Basic Comp, I mastered A and B, I made steady progress on P, but I struggled with X and Y.” (Good. This version SHOWs your ability to organize and evaluate, because it’s just a flat list of details.)
  + You might start with a specific example that SHOWs through emotion (bringing me with you on a day when procrastination got the better of you early in the term, and then bringing me along with you on a day when you planned your time better later in the term.)
* If you do choose to SHOW by telling a story, use only the details that will help you make your point. (Keep the number of characters, time spans, and locations to the bare minimum necessary to make your point.)
* Review your ILP and your MyCompLab diagnostic test results.

Components

Thesis Paragraph

* Opening engages the reader. (How can we do that? Start near the climax of a story and flash back; start with a striking, unexpected, surprising claim or detail; set up a puzzle to be solved.) Simply repeating the assignment question is not usually enough to engage a reader.
* Thesis makes a specific claim about your changing writing skills. (Which skills are you focusing on, and how have they improved? Are you planning to discuss areas for improvement, as well?)
* Mention, in the thesis paragraph, all the main points you plan to bring up.

Body Paragraphs

* Each should have its own topic sentence. Just as your thesis paragraph states the overall claim for your paper, the topic sentence states the claim for this individual topic, mentioning all the supporting points to be found in this paragraph.
* Supply transitions between paragraphs, reminding the reader how each paragraph brings the reader a step closer to the overall conclusion of your paper.
* Evidence.
  + Your paper **must quote specific passages from your earlier and later work**, in order to support the claims you make about your progress.
  + You may also quote from comments you received from your instructor, your peers, the writing center, advice you find on the course website, the textbook, or any other source that helped you.
  + Each claim you make needs support. Every body paragraph should mention specific assignments (even if you are not quoting directly from them).
  + Include frequent, brief quotes—but make them as brief as possible. (Avoid filling space with long, unnecessary quotes.)
* What to write about? (In any order you choose; you may have more to say about some areas than others; you may need to spend two paragraphs on some areas, and you might be able to use the same example to discuss more than one of these areas)
  + **Surface-level,** local issues (demonstrate that you have used MyCompLab to address issues such as punctuation, word order, grammar)
  + **Higher-level** , complex issues (organization, understanding of persuasion through logos/pathos/ethos,
  + **Process** (what steps of the writing process led the most growth? Where do you see the most room for future growth?)
  + **Work habits** (time-management, attendance, attentiveness during class, note-taking, using the various resources you mentioned in your ILP)
  + **Writing voice and style** (Have you worked on being more lively? more focused? more accurate? less rigid? less normative? less wordy? less flowery? How has your writing voice changed over the semester?)
  + **Other** (anything else you’d like to share)

Conclusion

* Draw the pieces together. Synthesize – make something coherent and insightful and unique out of the components you’ve chosen to write about.
* How will you continue to work on your writing? What areas will you work on, and what strategies will you use?
* How and why are your accomplishments in Basic Comp important to you as a writer, as a student, as a person?

Rubric

Part 1: Form

1) General Format / Accuracy (20%)

* Strong: Paper meets all the mechanical requirements (formatting, MLA style, length) and is free from surface-level errors (spelling, punctuation, missing words)
* Good/Acceptable: Only minor lapses in accuracy, or more than 10% too long or short. In “acceptable” papers, the lapses may hurt the effectiveness of otherwise good writing.
* Attempted: Some evidence of an effort to ensure accuracy; frequent or careless mistakes substantially damage or obscure the content; or, more than 25% too short or too long.

2) Phrasing / Sentences (20%)

* Strong: Phrases and sentences are clear (not choppy or run-ons), varied, efficient (not wordy, cliché, or redundant).
* Good/Acceptable: Only minor lapses. In “acceptable” papers, the phrase and sentence-level errors may hurt the effectiveness of otherwise good writing.
* Attempted: Some evidence of an attempt to develop good phrasing and sentences; recurrent lapses substantially hurt the reader’s understanding of the content

3) Evidence / Examples (20%)

* Strong: Good showing throughout, with at least two pairs of direct quotations, illustrating the “before” and “after” for two different points); numerous additional brief, specific references to your own writing; specific reference to specific MyCompLab scores to illustrate at least one major point.
* Good/Acceptable: Some good showing, perhaps unfortunately mixed with unnecessary telling; some claims may not be supported with evidence, and some evidence may be listed but not put to use supporting a claim; “good” papers will have more effective use of the kinds of evidence mentioned in the “strong” item (above). The “weak” papers may rely more on unsupported generalizations, unnecessarily long quotations,
* Attempted: Some evidence of the ability to identify and present evidence that supports a claim about your writing progress.

4) Content/Organization (40%)

* Strong: In a well-formed paper (with a title, thesis, and conclusion that match), paper addresses all of: surface-level, higher-level, process, work habits, voice/style, with an ongoing emphasis on “why” (not just “what”) and a conclusion that answers “so what.”
* Good/Acceptable: A paper that addresses all of the subject areas adequately and at least some of them well, and does at least some of them well; in a format that shows good organization, and rises above summary. “Good” papers will show more strength in each of the subject areas and overall cohesion; “acceptable” papers will show more unevenness in both areas.
* Attempted: Some evidence of ability to organize a coherent paper that addresses the required themes, while also addressing an overall claim about your accomplishment in Basic Comp. Missing sections or filler may impact the paper’s ability to make a unified claim about your achievements.