

A high-contrast, black and white silhouette of a person with short, dark hair, seen from the side and slightly from behind. They are holding an open book, and their head is tilted down as if reading. The background is a solid, vibrant red. The overall mood is studious and focused.

A STUDENT GUIDE TO WRITING AT UCI

FIFTH EDITION



Fifth Edition

A STUDENT GUIDE TO WRITING AT UCI

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ISBN 0-8087-3491-1

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Printed in the United States of America.

J I H G F E D C B A

Address orders to:

BURGESS INTERNATIONAL GROUP, Inc.
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Edina, Minnesota 55439-2143
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Burgess Publishing
A Division of BURGESS INTERNATIONAL GROUP, Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This year's edition of A Student Guide to Writing at UCI introduces both significant revisions of the four earlier editions and entirely new material. The editorial committee has tried to respond to the suggestions of both students and instructors, and this has resulted in some important changes from previous editions.

Chapter 2, for example, has been substantially rewritten to place particular emphasis on reading and writing as a process of discovery. The "Portfolio" essays remain largely the same for WR 39 A and WR 39 B, with the exception of a new WR 39 A "Significant Moment" essay, but the WR 39 C portfolio includes new "Speculative Prospectus," "Position," and "In-Class" papers. The addition of an Appendix on "In-Class Essay Tests" should prove helpful to student throughout the WR 39 sequence. In "An Overview of Courses," readers will now find descriptions of WR 39 A, B, and C that emphasize the specific skills and tasks associated with each class. This material replaces the lists of course assignments, which already appear in the syllabus for each class. The chapter on "Revision" from last year's Guide has been moved to Chapter 3 and is now entitled "A Case Study." The important chapter on "Audiences and Analysis" has been profoundly revised to reflect the approach to reading and writing presented in Chapter 2.

The Guide is a collaborative project that depends on the work of graduate students from the Department of English and Comparative Literature, the Composition Program curricular staff, and undergraduate contributors. Many UCI writing teachers have contributed handouts, suggestions, and comments. Some have actively participated on the editorial committee, rewriting and revising sections and even entire chapters of the Guide. I would like to express my gratitude for all of these contributions.

Special thanks go to the many students who have agreed to have their essays included in the Guide. Their contribution to the Guide's instructional value cannot be underestimated. Professor Christine Ross, our new faculty member for Rhetoric and Composition, offered valuable suggestions and made revisions to Chapter 2 that have significantly affected the perspective, terminology, and tone of the Guide. Eileen Jankowski, in addition to proofreading and editing almost every chapter, also wrote the new Appendix on "Essay Tests" and provided incalculable

assistance at every stage of review and revision. Gretchen Fox reconceived and almost entirely rewrote the chapter on "Peer Review," while Bill Etter, Chris Kuipers, and Brian Crawford substantially rewrote the chapter on analysis, adding considerably to its overall usefulness. Ellen Strenski re-indexed the entire Guide, a daunting task after such sweeping revisions. She also checked and corrected documentation form in all the "Portfolio" essays to make them useful models of citation and quotation. Susan Bouse and Carol Hayes allowed us to adapt material from the Teacher's Guide to Writing 37, which has been incorporated into the "Analysis" chapter. Thanks also to Elaine Wida, Chris Lewis, and Doug Ryals for submitting new student essays for the "Portfolio" chapter, to Eric Friedman and Mark Mullen for updating the Appendix on "Computer Resources," and to Cathy Palmer, the Humanities Librarian, for updating the Appendix on "Library Information."

David Plotkin's annotations to the superior essays in the "Making the Grade" chapter have been retained and will undoubtedly prove invaluable both to students and teachers as they address questions of structure and style. John Schwetman and Jason Wohlstadter's work on the WR 39 A "Object Analysis" example in the "Analysis" chapter also remains intact, reflecting both personal and cultural approaches to this assignment. Credit, of course, must go to Professor John Hollowell, the Writing Director, who has nurtured this project from its inception, as well as to the many graduate students who have contributed to past editions of the Guide. Past contributors include Heather Huddleston, Lee Kress, Paul Morsink, Erika Nanes, John Peterson, Tiffany Richardson, Krista Twu, and Priscilla Wolff (among many others).

Jan Stevens, as always, has provided extraordinary editorial support. She never fails to exemplify the utmost professionalism, attention to detail, personal generosity, and genuine enthusiasm for supporting freshman writers. Vicki Russell, editor of the last three editions of the Guide, also deserves special acknowledgment for her remarkable gifts as a writer, editor, and teacher — gifts which continue to be reflected in the latest edition of the book.

Ray Zimmerman, Editor

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CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF WRITING COURSES

This chapter provides a discussion of the basics of the three lower-division writing courses at UCI and an explanation of what you will need to know to get started. Each course is described in terms of its prerequisites and educational objectives. This material is presented as an overview of all the writing courses in the lower-division sequence. Detailed descriptions of the sequence of course assignments in each course will be provided in your class syllabus. Sample papers written in response to specific assignments frequently taught at UCI are provided in the "Portfolio of Student Essays" chapter.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR WRITING 39 A, B, AND C

The three-course sequence in composition, which provides an introduction for all UCI courses that require writing, begins with WR 39 A for students who must fulfill the Subject A requirement. WR 39 A starts with personal writing and moves on to literary analysis. Students who have already fulfilled the Subject A requirement begin with WR 39 B, which involves increasingly complex tasks of interpreting both fiction and nonfiction. WR 39 C presents the basics of academic argumentation and research and requires a related series of papers that lead to a long, documented essay that allows you to examine many sides of a complicated problem, determine your own position, and

propose a solution or course of action. At the end of the three courses, you will have had guided experiences in writing a personal essay, critically analyzing nonfiction essays, poems or short stories and a short novel, producing timed in-class essays, and finally writing a long paper with multiple sources based upon independent library research. These courses represent the range of the writing normally found in a variety of courses during your four years of college. If you succeed in the 39 A B C sequence, you will be well-prepared for most UCI courses that require writing.

PREREQUISITES: Each writing course has a prerequisite prior course with the exception of WR 39 A, where completion of high school normally qualifies you. Failure to observe these prerequisites may cause you to enroll in the incorrect course, and dropping it later will cost you valuable time and money. In order to enroll in WR 39 A, however, selected students must have completed all ESL (English as a Second Language) courses that they might be required to take. Students who must take the ESL exam receive a letter during the summer regarding ESL testing and courses, but if you are uncertain about your standing, please check with the ESL office in HTC 601 (824-6781). If all your ESL requirements are complete, or you are not required to take ESL courses, you may enroll directly in WR 39 A. Upon completion of WR 39 A, you may enroll in WR 39 B; upon completing WR 39 B, you may enroll in WR 39 C (see p. 11 for other options).

PLACEMENT AND REFERRAL: Once you are enrolled in a writing class, if your instructor detects significant weaknesses in your writing skills, he or she may suggest that you do one or more of the following, based on your individual situation:

1. Arrange for language testing at the ESL office to ensure you have been properly placed in the writing class you are taking.
2. Enroll in special ESL classes and/or develop an individually tailored program of self study.
3. Attend regularly scheduled workshops at the Learning and Academic Resource Center which provide information directly related to your writing class.
4. Sign up for individual tutoring at the Learning and Academic Resource Center.
5. Meet regularly with your instructor during office hours.

DROP / ADD POLICY: After the second week of class, students may not drop any writing course. If special circumstances are involved, students may petition the Course Director. (Inquire in 420 HIB.) Such permission is rarely granted, since many students are trying to enroll in writing courses and allowing a student to drop means a "wasted seat." Students who wish to add a writing course during the first week of classes can obtain an add card from the instructor if there are spaces available.

SECOND DAY RULE: Absence from the second day of class results in your name being deleted from the class roster or the waiting list. If your name is removed from the class roster, **you** must drop the course with the Registrar; you will not be automatically dropped. Failure to drop with the Registrar may cause an "F" or an "NR" to appear on your record. It is your responsibility to make sure that your drop or add is recorded properly at the Registrar's office; you, and not your teacher, are responsible.

PLAGIARISM: The writing program at UCI is designed to enable you to develop into a more effective writer, able to discern what works and what doesn't in your own writing. The courses you take will provide you with the necessary skills to revise your writing to make it more effective. During this process, however, you will need to pay close attention to the kind of help you accept and to what use you put the advice of others including teachers, peers, learning skills counselors, friends, and relatives. Even professional writers seek the advice of others, but they do **not** allow others to do their writing and thinking for them. Ultimately, you are the person responsible for writing that bears your name.

There is a significant difference between what constitutes acceptable help and what is unacceptable. The wrong kind of help is detrimental to your goal of becoming a more effective writer. The following guidelines will help you determine what kind of help is appropriate:

Do's: Ask others to point out places in your writing that are unclear, share questions they have about organization, and alert you to any problems you have with grammar and word choice. Ask others whether or not your essay fulfills the requirements of the assignment. Use others as a sounding board for ideas you have to see whether they make sense and are worth pursuing.

Don'ts: Do **not** allow others to correct your writing for you or substitute their wording and/or ideas for your own. Their job is to point out the strengths and weaknesses of

your writing, not to rewrite it for you. The writing is your responsibility. Using someone else's phrasing and sentences is a form of plagiarism and may be considered academic dishonesty.

In any UCI course, plagiarism is a serious concern for students and teachers. Please read the University policy on plagiarism printed in the Schedule of Classes each quarter. Submitting a paper that you did not write is grounds for failure in the course, or even dismissal from the University. Note also that submitting the same work for more than one class without notifying the instructor is considered plagiarism at UCI. Students who re-take a writing class may not re-submit their old essays. Serious cases of plagiarism and dishonest scholarship are reported to your academic dean.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Each of the WR 39 A B C courses requires four or five essays to be written both in and outside of class. You are also required to work in a peer review and evaluation group, and you may be asked to do short exercises or summaries in and out of class. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, and late papers may not be accepted and may be given an "F." Failure to hand in any assignment is sufficient grounds for failure in the course, as is excessive absence from class.

GRADING: The course descriptions tell you the number of essays to be written in the course; the syllabus will provide you with more detailed information on the percentage of the grade each assignment represents. Peer review and evaluation and participation in class are formal parts of the class, and they figure significantly in the final grade. ("Making the Grade" provides a full discussion of grades and sample graded essays.)

Rewriting of final graded essays for a possible higher grade is not allowed. Before you turn in your final paper, your instructor and your peers will have spent a great deal of time providing you with constructive feedback on your drafts. Once your instructor grades and comments on your final essay, it is time to focus your attention on the next assignment. The time constraints of the quarter system preclude rewriting as an option.

PASS / NO PASS OPTION: Neither WR 39 A nor WR 39 A/Plus may be taken on a Pass/No Pass basis; they must be taken for a letter grade. WR 39 B and WR 39 C may be taken Pass/No Pass, but if you wish to consider this option check first with your

academic counselor. Some majors and some graduate programs require letter grades. Please note that the grade option cannot be changed after the second week of classes.

PORTFOLIO OF WRITING: You should maintain a portfolio of all your written work for each writing course. This material includes informal writing, peer-edited work, in-class essays, and graded final drafts. Your instructor might require you to submit your entire portfolio at the end of the course.

STANDARDS FOR WORK: Working drafts in all writing courses must be readable and reasonably complete. Usually, working drafts represent second or third drafts, and your instructor will require that they be typed. Final essays must be typed and carefully edited. All peer-evaluated drafts must be submitted with the final essay. If you can use one, a word processor is especially helpful because you will be expected to do many revisions. If you do not have a word processor, inquire about ones the University may have available for your use.

Each assignment you complete should include the following information on the first page: your name, your student ID number, name of the course, assignment number, instructor's name, quarter, and date. All final assignments must be typed on white paper; double-spaced; not justified; in conventional typeface (no script); 10, 11, or 12 point font; and with one-inch margins. Use a dark typewriter or printer ribbon to enable your teacher to read your work more easily.

SKETCHES OF WRITING 39 A, B, AND C

To give a sense of the curriculum as a whole, each of the courses in lower-division writing is discussed in the following brief explanations. If you want additional information on a particular course, turn to the "Portfolio of Student Essays" chapter where sample assignments and student essays are presented.

WR 39 A FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPOSITION

This course satisfies the Subject A requirement, and may be the first of your writing courses at UCI. WR 39 A presents a review of basic writing strategies, as it moves from personal writing in an autobiographical mode to writing that is more analytical, the

kind of writing expected in most UCI courses. To enroll in WR 39 A, you must meet two conditions: a) you must have completed all required ESL courses and tests, and b) you must have been informed that you have not yet satisfied the Subject A requirement.

Writing 39 A introduces students to the most basic elements of the writing process. This means, for example, that you learn to work through a number of different drafts; to read your own papers critically, focusing on both your use of language and on the ideas you meant to convey; to revise a first draft substantially from start to finish; and to proofread your own work. Each unit of 39 A is organized around a series of assignments and exercises which help you to work through every stage in the writing process.

Students in 39 A learn the basic skills necessary to produce clear, coherent writing, including description, summary, paraphrase, effective diction, punctuation, and a reasonable command of M.U.G.S. (mechanics, usage, grammar and spelling). WR 39 A students are also introduced to the concept and practice of close reading. That is, you learn to read a text more than once, to highlight or make notes on what you read, to look up words you don't understand, and above all to focus on the language of a text *as* language. The assignments in 39 A are designed so that you develop your ability to read texts critically. You learn how to reconstruct the outline of a text, to identify the topic sentence of a paragraph, to explain how the use of punctuation marks contributes to the sense of a text, and to explain how the use of grammatical structures (e.g. first, second, or third person; active or passive voice) contributes to the sense of a work. You also learn to clarify the connotations and implications of a writer's choice of words, and to show how a writer's description of a thing reveals his or her stance towards it, and the point of view from which he or she sees it.

WR 39 B EXPOSITORY WRITING

WR 39 B is usually taken in your first year at UCI since it is designed to help you succeed in advanced writing courses and in courses requiring writing in your major field. To enroll in WR 39B, you must have satisfied the Subject A requirement and completed any required ESL courses. These prerequisites for enrollment suggest that students who take 39 B have competence in fundamental writing skills. WR 39 B is designed to build on those fundamental skills and to teach you to how to write the academic genres, procedures, and forms of analysis that universities require.