



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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Date: August 17, 2009

To: First Seminar Faculty

RE: First-Year Student Writing Samples

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Welcome to a new academic year! Since the summer of 2006, incoming first-year students have been required to complete an hour-long assessment of their writing in the form of a short essay as part of the Orientation program (this summer's prompt is included at the end of this memo). You will find your students' essays in your advising folders, and I strongly urge you to review them quickly and share them with your Writing Instructor, if one has been assigned to your seminar.

The essays written by students whose standardized test scores and backgrounds indicated that they might need either ESL or supplementary writing support have been read by faculty in the English department. On the basis of these essays, some students have been placed in sections of First Seminar designed to serve the needs of non-native speakers of English, and others have been placed into sections of First Seminar designed to emphasize revision and to serve writers who need additional instructional support to succeed in the kind of writing demanded by SAGES seminars. Other students have not been placed into these targeted seminars, but would nevertheless benefit from additional structured writing support – in your advising folders, some of these students' essays will be accompanied by recommendations from English faculty about such additional support.

As you read all of your students' essays, you may determine that some of your students would benefit from writing support beyond that which you will provide in your seminar. Though space in the specialized ESL and Writing Foundations seminars is limited, the Writing Programs offer several additional opportunities to support student writers, including:

- **English 183: Academic Writing Studio** – a one-credit supplementary writing workshop course. English 183 is offered on a pass-fail basis, and designed specifically to help students meet the First Seminar writing outcomes.
- **English 180: Writing Tutorial** – a one-credit tutorial (i.e., one-on-one) course offered through the Writing Resource Center, which provides guided practice in academic writing.
- **Writing Resource Center & SAGES Peer Writing Crew Appointments** – single and recurring appointments with experienced writing instructors to support students in their writing for any of their Case Western courses.

I ask for your assistance particularly in advising students who will benefit from English 183 and/or English 180 to register for those courses during the Drop-Add period which begins Saturday morning, August 22. If you have other questions or concerns about the writing sample, about English 183, or about supplementary writing services for students, please do not hesitate to contact me. (*Please direct questions about advising students in general, and about Drop-Add procedures, to Dean Julie Amon.*)

ORIENTATION WRITING SAMPLE
SUMMER 2009

Directions: Read the following prompt carefully, **think about it** (make some notes if you like), and then **write** a well-organized, developed essay. Although you may organize your essay in any way you like, please address both parts of this assignment.

Suggestion: leave your self some time to re-read what you have written and to edit or proofread. Feel free to delete, add, correct – just as long as the finished text is legible, and that the places where you wish to make additions are clearly marked.

PROMPT

Describe the best classroom assignment, activity, or experience you have ever had, and do so in such a way that your reader will understand the reasons for your choice. Be sure, therefore, to include evidence in support of your opinion, as well as specific details.

Out of this memory and your writing about it, answer the following question: **What did this assignment, activity, or experience tell you about how learning best happens for you?** You may wish to consider the importance of your classmates, the role that writing and/or conversation played in this experience, or the guidance of the teacher.

IMPORTANT WRITING PROGRAMS CONTACT INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE E-MAIL ALIASES:

writing@case.edu for general inquiries about Case's writing programs

writingcenter@case.edu for inquiries about the Writing Resource Center and its operation

WRITING PROGRAMS FACULTY CONTACTS:

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