

WAC 101: Stretch First-Year Composition

The Stretch Program is a two-semester, six-credit-hour sequence of classes that "stretches" English 101 or English 107 over two semesters. In effect, these connected Stretch Program classes (WAC 101 followed by English 101 or, for international students, WAC 107 followed by English 107) provide students the opportunity for extended experience at working with many and various ways of both reading and writing. Students usually have the same teacher, work with the same group of students, and often even have the same classroom for both semesters.

We designed Stretch to help build a real writing community, as everyone has an entire year to work together to improve his or her writing. The Stretch Program is designed specifically for those university students who lack experience with the kinds of academic writing they will be asked to do at ASU. These students have good ideas and may be effective writers in some situations, but they may have minimal training and experience with academic writing. Stretch gives these students more time to develop effective writing strategies--strategies they will use in all of their university classes.

Students in Stretch classes read the same texts and do the same kinds of assignments as students in English 101 or English 107. The extra time allows students to learn and practice a wide range of composing strategies, to help them understand what techniques are appropriate for any particular situation: reading strategies (to effectively read their own textbooks, as well as their classmates' writing and their own compositions), invention techniques (to help students get started on their writing), composing methods (strategies of organization), and revision and proofreading strategies (to help improve their early drafts of texts).

Students in Stretch Program classes take responsibility for their own education by being involved in a wide range of learning activities, for we believe that students can best learn to write by writing, receiving feedback (from peers and their instructor), and revising texts, always with a view of the rhetorical situation: what do we want our writing to do? During the 16-week semester students will complete three formal written projects. Combined the final drafts of these three projects should result in approximately 5,000 words (this is equivalent to about 20 pages using standard academic format). Additionally, a final reflection is required.