# DIRECTED SELF-PLACEMENT

Directed Self-Placement (DSP) is a process through which students reflect on their past experiences with writing, their confidence related to different writing tasks and skills, and their expectations for first-year writing to choose the first-year writing path (one course or two) that best fits their needs and academic plans. DSP invites students to take an active role in their education by choosing the first-year writing path with which they are most comfortable.

This is an important decision as success in first-year writing correlates with higher overall academic success. Writing is also an essential skill for every discipline and major.

## CHOOSING YOUR FIRST-YEAR WRITING PATH

To choose your first-year writing path, you will complete a two-step process in D2L. You can access the D2L site on your placement card in MyPennWest. On the homepage of the D2L site, you will find a link for each survey. You will take one longer survey that asks you to reflect on your past experiences with writing, and then you will take a shorter survey where you make a choice between **ENGL 1100: Intro to College Composition** or **ENGL 1200: College Composition** for your first-semester schedule.

The differences between the two courses are described to the right. Students who score below 75% on the longer survey and who want extra time to develop their writing skills in the first year, often choose to start in **ENGL 1100**. This course counts for three General Education credits. Students who score 75% or higher often choose to take **ENGL 1200**. This is the course required of all PennWest students. If you start in ENGL 1100, you will follow it up with ENGL 1200.

If you need guidance or have questions, please reach out to Dr. Leah Chambers, Faculty Director of First-Year Academic Success: lchambers@pennwest.edu. If you have trouble accessing the placement, email Claire Pizer: pizer@pennwest.edu.

## ENGL 1100: INTRO TO COLLEGE COMPOSITION

- Emphasizes a variety of processes and practices for writing stronger projects and essays. This includes developing ideas, improving structure and focus, and gaining confidence in your writing skills.

- Students compose three to five projects in different genres. These are approximately three to four pages in length and most will go through a process of revision.

- Students may read 10-15 pages per week.

- There is little or no research writing requirement in **ENGL 1100**. Because it is a requirement in **ENGL 1200**, you may just be introduced to the research process.

- **ENGL 1100** counts as three General Education credits. After taking **ENGL 1100**, you will take **ENGL 1200** to fulfill the Foundations Writing requirement for General Education.

## ENGL 1200: COLLEGE COMPOSITION

- Emphasizes working with other writers' texts while developing your own ideas and arguments.

- Students compose two to four projects in different genres. Most of these are approximately four to six pages in length; one project will be longer. Revision is also part of this course.

- Students may read 20+ pages per week.

- Conducting research and writing arguments and analyses are integral to the course.

- **ENGL 1200** fulfills the General Education Foundations Writing requirement.

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