

## Expanded Composition Program

As part of our mission to offer first-year composition courses that address individual needs and provide the most opportunity for success and retention, the Department of English at The University of Southern Mississippi is piloting an expanded version of Composition I (ENG 101). Based on Arizona State University's very successful *Stretch Program*, we are targeting students who enter our university with a composite ACT score between 17 and 19.

In compliance with IHL regulations, we currently require English 099 for students with an ACT index of 16 or below who might not be prepared for college-level writing. However, students with an ACT score between 17 and 19 are not well served by English 099, failing at a rate of 21%. But these same students fail at a disproportionately higher rate (13%) than their counterparts when they enroll in 101.

This new offering, *Expanded Composition*, is a two-semester, six credit hour sequence of classes that expands English 101 over two semesters. We designed *Expanded Composition* to help build a real writing community as each student experiences our first-year composition course with the same teacher, the same group of peers, and even the same classroom for both semesters.

*Expanded Composition* provides students with extensive experience in reading and writing. Students in these classes read the same texts and complete the same types of assignments as students enrolled in traditional English 101. The extra time provided by the *Expanded* format allows students to spend more time developing effective writing and reading strategies that will benefit them throughout their academic careers.

We are piloting six sections of the *Expanded Composition* program. Interested students will register for ENG 100E for the Fall 2009 semester. They will then be block registered by the Registrar's Office into the appropriate ENG 101 course in the spring (these will be marked by slightly different section numbers). Students will receive three hours of elective credit for the ENG 100E component of the class and their three GEC hours for the 101 component.

Please feel free to contact me or Dr. Sheldon Walcher, Director of Composition, if you have any questions. In addition, students interested in transferring into one of the *Expanded Composition* sections once the Fall 2009 semester begins should be referred to Darcie Conrad in the English Department. Thank you for helping us make this program a success!

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