

Department of English

English 101

Information for Students Registering for the Challenge Exam

Test Date, Time, and Location

Date: Last Friday of October and March

Time: TBA

Location: TBA

These are your instructions for the Composition Challenge Exam. Please read this entire document carefully. Close attention to detail will increase your chances of successfully earning credit for English 101.

The Composition Requirement

English 101 is a required course fulfilling Category 1: Communication (Part A) of the General Education requirements.

English 101 Catalog Description:

Students will practice strategies for generating and developing ideas, locating and analyzing information, analyzing audience, drafting, writing sentences and paragraphs, evaluating drafts, revising, and editing in essays of varying lengths. Students will also become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research.

Students who take English 101 should be able to do the following upon completion of the course:

- (a) draw upon strategies for idea generation, drafting, revision, design, and editing;
- (b) analyze and produce texts guided by basic rhetorical concepts;
- (c) practice critical reading skills, including the ability to identify genre conventions and evaluate the claims, evidence, and reasoning in a text;
- (d) demonstrate effective research processes, including the ability to gather academic and non-academic sources and assess their quality and suitability for the writing situation;
- (e) integrate sources in their writing to achieve specific aims, making appropriate use of summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation conventions;
- (f) explain their writing choices, using concrete examples to support their claims;
- (g) employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

You will need to demonstrate these competencies in order to pass the Challenge Exam. **Grading of the Challenge Exam is Pass/Fail only. You must produce “A” level work in order to pass the exam.**

Questions about the Challenge Exam should be directed to Elizabeth Olmanson, Department of English Administrative Assistant, 507-389-2117 or Armstrong Hall, room #230 or elizabeth.olmanson@mnsu.edu.

Challenge Exam Procedures

Registering for the exam

- Complete the registration form, with appropriate signatures.
- Take the registration form to the Cashier's Office and pay \$140 (\$35/credit*4 credits).
- Return to AH 230 with the paid registration form at least **2 weeks prior to the date of exam** and hand them to the Department of English Administrative Assistant.

Preparing for the exam

- On the Friday prior to the exam date, you will be e-mailed
 - 1) an article containing background information on the exam topic and
 - 2) the exam question. Review the article to familiarize yourself with the topic and determine how you will respond to the exam question.
- Gather additional sources on the topic. These should be credible sources that you could use to take a position on the exam question. Print out these sources and bring them to the exam so you can utilize them in your exam essay.

Taking the exam

Report to the exam location on the test date. Please be on time. Before beginning the exam, show the proctor:

- A photo ID, such as your driver's license or your MavCard
- The Challenge Exam prompt and "starter" article (which you should have obtained through e-mail) and the sources you have collected

The proctor will direct you to a workstation and will provide an APA/MLA style handbook.

When the exam period has ended, you will e-mail your essay as an attachment to the English Department's Director of Composition, the exam proctor, and the Administrative Assistant. You will also hand in a printed copy of your essay with these directions, the prompt, and all resources that you used.

After the exam

Your exam results will be sent to you in the mail within three weeks.

About the Exam

Respond to the prompt by writing a carefully argued essay that demonstrates your mastery of the English 101 competencies listed on the previous page. Specifically, you will need to:

- Construct a thesis in which you take a stand on the question posed in the writing prompt
- Provide a brief overview of the issue
- Use your sources to craft a convincing argument
- Analyze and synthesize source material
- Quote, paraphrase, and summarize appropriately and accurately
- Acknowledge and address possible counter arguments
- Document your sources using the conventions of either APA or MLA style
- Use a tone appropriate for academic writing
- Produce writing that is free of errors in grammar and usage, spelling, and punctuation