

State of the Field

Rhetoric and Composition
 First-Year Composition
 Hope's English 113

Rhetoric and Composition grew out of English studies as a need to practically teach composition courses to a diversifying student population (Connors, 1997). The burgeoning subfield realized a need for a theoretical underpinning and turned toward the centuries-old and classical curricula of rhetorical studies (Berlin, 1996).

What is the content?
Traditional English, "literature-focused"
Writing Studies (rhetoric; literacy; discourse analysis; multimodality; technorhet)
The In-Between

What is the purpose?	Instilling a sense of Rhetorical Choices
Grammar, structure, mechanics, style	
Essay Genres	
Analysis	
Career writing (multimodal/ digital writing)	
Service to Hope College	
Effective Rhetorical Choices (purpose-driven writing)	

Reconsidering Instruction	Suggestions (in order of importance)
Council of Writing Program Administrators	Rhetorical Knowledge; Critical thinking, reading, writing; Processes; Conventions; Electronic environments
National Council of Teachers of English's (NCTE's) <i>Teaching Composition</i> (2004); <i>Students' Right to their Own Language</i> (2003)	<p>People learn to write by writing; Writing is a process & a tool for thinking; writing grows out of many purposes; conventions are important to readers (therefore writers--audience-focused); Writing and reading are related; Writing has a complex relationship to speech; Literate practices are embedded in complicated social relationships; Composing occurs in different modalities and technologies; assessment of writing involves complex, informed, human judgement</p> <p>"We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language--the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language."</p>

Expectations for Effective Writing at Hope College

Effective writing at Hope College should be characterized by ten key qualities, regardless of paper type (for example, a lab report, reader response, memo, term paper, research paper, analysis/critique paper).

Unless your professor suggests otherwise, ask yourself these key questions when preparing to write:

1. What is the **situation** or **purpose** for writing, and have you addressed it?
2. Is your audience for the paper an **actual audience** (such as your professor or classmates), an **implied audience** (such as educated people concerned with your subject who are not in your class), or **both**?
3. Does your paper put forth an interesting **answer** to a unique, thought-provoking **question**?
4. Does your paper have a **logical progression**?
5. Have you used **appropriate evidence**?
6. Are your **paragraphs** focused?
7. Do your body paragraphs **support** your **answer**?
8. Have you gone through several stages of the writing process including **revising** and **editing**?
9. Have you received **feedback** from a competent **reader** (such as a more experienced student or a [CWR Writing Assistant](#))?
10. Is your paper as **error-free** as possible?

*Remember that there are multiple resources available on campus that are geared toward helping you improve your writing:

- [Center for Writing and Research](#)
- [Research Help Desk](#)
- [Librarians](#)
- [Academic Support Center](#)

And don't forget the obvious resources:

- Your professors
- Your classmates