Rhetorical and Critical Writing
Course of Study for LCE1

Description
This course of study presents the required sequence of learning steps and activities to help you develop competence in rhetorical and critical writing. Your competence is assessed through the Rhetorical and Critical Writing assessment (LCE1), a proctored impromptu objective essay assessment taken at a secure testing facility. Depending on your educational background and work experience, this course of study can take up to five weeks to complete. Following this document sequentially is an important part of your assessment preparation. This tool is designed to help you become an independent learner by providing multiple learning methods. These steps may be completed more quickly than presented as determined in consultation with your course mentor.

Introduction
Welcome to the Rhetorical and Critical Writing Course of Study at Western Governors University. Here at WGU, we have worked to build added support into each course of study. If at any time you require additional assistance, or if you have any questions during your progress through this course of study, please feel free to contact the course mentors: José Otero, Wendy Pickett, Alice Stefaniak, Patricia Ploesch, and Ryan Allen at languageandcommunication@wgu.edu

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Course Mentor .................... Patricia Ploesch
Overview
Have you ever been in the audience for a great speech or presentation and wondered what elements made it fantastic? Did the presenter use writing techniques that you were able to break down and focus on why the speech left a good impression with you? The rhetorical and critical writing academic discipline will help you focus on techniques and methods for writing toward a particular audience and for communicating information to people or persuading them to see your point of view. In order to help you understand techniques of writing toward a specific audience, you will have the opportunity to engage critically with readings, activities, and writing examples that help you demonstrate competency in this subject.

As you work through the activities contained within this course of study, you will begin to address questions such as the following: Why is it important to identify your audience? Why is it important to understand the writing process? What is the difference between persuasive and informative writing?

Some of the activities you will be asked to complete may incorporate skills and knowledge you already possess. As you work through them, try to think of ways to apply this knowledge to your personal and professional life, as well as your career as a WGU student.

This course of study will provide a broad overview of these techniques of writing toward a specific audience. Ultimately, this course is designed to help you in all areas of study to achieve a greater understanding and appreciation of what it means to communicate written information on a topic or bring an audience to understand your point of view. Your competence in these areas will be assessed by an impromptu objective essay assessment taken at a secure testing facility.

Specifically, the Rhetorical and Critical Writing Assessment (LCE1) covers the following topics.

• Adapting communication to specific audiences and purposes
• Engaging in writing processes
• Writing an informational essay
• Writing a persuasive essay

The Rhetorical and Critical Writing Assessment (LCE1) is a scheduled proctored objective exam taken at a secure testing center. You will have 3 hours to complete two (2) essays.

1. When you take the LCE1 assessment, you will be given three possible essay prompts. You will then be directed to write responses to two of the three prompts.
2. There are 12 points possible on each essay. A combined score of 16 is passing.
For a more detailed explanation of the concepts you will be expected to demonstrate your competency in, please see the competency list below.

**Competencies Covered:**

**Competency 103.1.1: Reading with Comprehension**
The graduate reads narrative and expository passages with comprehension, extracting main ideas and supporting details from texts, using the context to derive meaning.

**Competency 103.1.2: Reading Critically**
The graduate reads critically, identifying relationships and differentiating between fact and opinion, bias, and logical reasoning.

**Competency 103.1.3: Reading Efficiently**
The graduate reads efficiently, surveying the initial text and incorporating effective reading and reviewing strategies.

**Competency 103.2.1: Inquiry and Research**
The graduate uses inquiry and research to retrieve information from oral, written or electronic sources to inform an audience about complex subjects.

**Competency 103.2.2: Evaluating Information**
The graduate accurately evaluates the validity, reliability, and significance of information in a given context.

**Competency 103.2.3: Documenting Sources**
The graduate documents sources accurately.

**Competency 103.3.1: Adaptation**
The graduate adapts the style and format of a message to suit different audiences or purposes.

**Competency 103.3.2: Writing Process**
The graduate understands and uses the writing process to produce well-constructed informational texts.

**Competency 103.3.4: Logic, Clarity, and Persuasiveness**
The graduate distinguishes fact from opinion and presents a position that is supported by evidence that is presented clearly, logically, and persuasively.

**Competency 103.4.1: Organizing Ideas**
The graduate effectively organizes ideas for oral presentation.

**Competency 103.4.2: Presentation Technique**
The graduate presents information to an audience using effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies and techniques.

**Required Learning Resources**

*MyWritingLab and MyCompLab* – online, interactive, independent learning resources from Pearson in CourseCompass. This online resource contains electronic version of the required textbooks:

Assessments:
This course of study is designed to prepare you for the LCE1, a proctored essay assessment which will be administered at a secure testing center. You will have three hours to complete two essays.

The rhetorical and critical writing assessment (LCE1) covers the following topics:
- Adapting communication to specific audiences and purposes
- Engaging in writing processes
- Demonstrating logic, clarity, and persuasiveness in writing
- Observing language conventions

You should review the assigned material in the textbooks, read and study recommended readings from CourseCompass, and complete activities in MyCompLab and MyWritingLab. Once you have done the readings and worked through the rhetorical and critical writing activities, you will need to submit a referral for the preassessment for the LCE1 (PALE) through your AAP. After you have obtained a satisfactory score on the preassessment for LCE1 (PALE), you will refer for and schedule your LCE1 assessment.

Week 1
Preparing for Success
In this subject you will be introduced to the learning resources that you will need in order to achieve success in this area of study. Below you will find instructions on how to order and access the resources that are available to you.

The Learning Resources
The following activities will guide you through acquiring and accessing the learning resources required for this area of study.

☐ Take the Student Self-Assessment
Before you begin your preparations for the LCE1 assessment, you should complete the Student Self-Assessment (SSA) for this area. You can access the SSA by following these instructions:
- Click on this link: https://web5.wgu.edu/aap/content/LCE1%20SSA_11_09.doc
- Download the Student Self Assessment to your computer
- Follow the directions on the Student Self Assessment rating your knowledge of the various topic areas
- Forward your results to your mentor of record.

This Student Self-Assessment can be taken on your computer at home or any other convenient location. Do not use your notes or texts when completing the Student Self-Assessment. This will help indicate areas you will need to study before taking the PALE preassessment and LCE1 assessment. Depending on how you scored yourself on the self-assessment, you may be able to take the preassessment sooner. This should only be done in consultation with your mentor of record.

Textbooks:

Electronic versions of the texts aligned to this course of study are included in the Reading, Writing, and Composition learning resource you will enroll in through your AAP. If you would like hard copies of the texts, you are encouraged to purchase them at your convenience.

*Note: The WGU Bookstore has these books available for immediate purchase and delivery. You may shop at other online bookstores, but be sure to order early and use the correct ISBN to get the correct edition.*

**Register for CourseCompass Reading, Writing, and Composition:**
- Open your AAP.
- Click on “LCE1” under the “Assessment Codes” column.
- Click on the “Learning Resources” tab.
- “Reading, Writing, and Composition” should appear as a learning resource.
- Click on the “Enroll Now” link under the “Status” column.
- Click the “Enroll Now” button.

**Follow these steps to access your e-texts and online learning labs:**
First, you need to enroll in the CourseCompass learning resource called Reading, Writing, and Composition by Pearson (located on the available “Resources” tab in your AAP). Then you will get an e-mail from learning resources that contains your CourseCompass log-in ID and password information. If you cannot find this e-mail, please have your mentor contact the Learning Resources Department, and they can retrieve it for you.

When you get to the CourseCompass log-in page (pictured below), enter your log-in information.

1. Once you have logged in, you will be taken to the page below. The purple menu on the left side will take you to the e-texts (click on “e-books”) and the learning labs. You DO NOT need an access code for the e-texts.
2. When you click on “MyWritingLab” for the first time, you will need this access code: Arts00220001W.

3. Make sure you select the “Join Instructor's Course” option and NOT the “self-study” option. There is additional sign-in help listed on the CourseCompass homepage.

4. You do not need an access code for MyCompLab or for the e-texts.

Please retain all e-mails and materials you receive regarding your learning resources. The information contained in these materials is very helpful.

The Learning Community
The WGU learning community for the LCE1 is led by course mentors José Otero, Wendy Pickett, Alice Stefaniak, Ryan Allen, and Patricia Ploesch. The learning community is available for additional support as you prepare for the LCE1. Should you need further assistance during your course, post a question in the learning community or contact the course mentors directly at languageandcommunication@wgu.edu.

Adaptation: Writing to Fit the Audience and Purpose
The activities for this subject will introduce you to the concepts associated with adapting your writing for a particular audience, methods for identifying your audience, and the needs you should address when writing toward different audiences. These techniques will help you understand the needs for different styles of writing, from short speeches and presentations to e-mails and more formal writing situations.

Background Information
There are many situations that prompt people to communicate through writing. Each situation calls for writing that is individualized to meet the needs and backgrounds of different audiences. These writings will also differ according to the writer’s purpose in a particular situation. For instance, writing to inform will produce a different kind of writing than writing to persuade.
Competency 103.3.1: Adaptation
The graduate adapts the style and format of a message to suit different audiences or purposes.

Identifying Your Audience
For the essays in LCE1, you will be given an audience to which you will write, or you will be asked to choose an audience type. The content of your writing not only must fit the audience types, but it must also fit the purpose. Writing to inform will produce a different kind of writing than writing to persuade. For example, writing to create support for an issue is a different writing context than writing to explain a step-by-step process.

Creation of a Study Notebook
By creating a notebook or a digital file for your domain of study, you will have a place to collect important topics and reminders, as well as an area to record progress data. Use file dividers or other organizers to separate your work.

Suggested divisions include:
• A personalized Dictionary of Terms – This is a place to enter terms that are new to you or of which you have only partial understanding.
• Writing Tips – This section is a personalized strategy and style guide.
• You may want to keep a list of useful strategies for academic writing and reading. These entries might consist of reminders and examples. For writing, think about rhetorical, grammatical, or mechanical writing tips.
• Double Entry – This is a place to quote from your reading and then to add your comments. It could also be a place to include the focus questions from this course of study along with the answers you found in the reading and websites. You might also want to summarize the main ideas from your reading and then evaluate their usefulness to you. You could also give your initial impression of an idea and then follow up later with comments made after reflection. In each case, there are two interrelated entries, thus the double-entry title.
• Preassessment Results (your strong and weak areas)
• Assessment Information (instructions, date, and location)
• Checklist and Timeline

Read Chapter 6 in The Reader's Handbook

Pay close attention to the following questions as you read this chapter:
• How does the writer’s awareness of the intended audience help determine the organization, language, elaboration, and evidence of a particular writing?
• How does a writer’s purpose help determine the genre, tone, and content of a particular writing?

Enter definitions, questions, and thoughts into your notebook or folder.

Read Chapter 1 in SF Writer
Read chapter 1, “Writers at Work,” in SF Writer.

Pay close attention to the following questions as you read this chapter:
• What are the various situations and purposes for which you write?
• How do you discover writing topics that you enjoy?
• How do you write for a specific audience?
• What are the various types of essays you might write?
☐ Read Chapters 5 and 6 in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond


Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
• What is your aim when you start to write?
• How do you create thesis statements?
• What are the most common genres in essay writing?
• How do you identify the rhetorical situation for an essay?
• How will your reader know you are a credible author?
• What are the qualities of effective writing?

Enter your questions and thoughts into your notebook or folder.

☐ Review External Links for Audience Awareness

URLs:
Audience
http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/audience.html

Audience Awareness and Rhetorical Contexts
http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/co300man/pop5a.cfm

Follow these links for a brief discussion of audience and how it shapes the decisions writers make, for suggestions on how to analyze a particular audience, and for information on rhetorical awareness.

Pay close attention to the following questions as you review these links:
• How do you perform a rhetorical analysis of a text?
• How can you focus your writing for a particular audience?

Enter your questions and thoughts into your notebook or folder.

☐ Competence Builder: Audience Awareness

Follow these directions to complete the Competence Builder: Audience Awareness activity:

Chapter 1 of SF Writer, page 13, contains an example of a bumper sticker that would only make sense to people who live in the vicinity of Austin, Texas. Reread that section of the text (“Write to Explore Ideas”).
• Think of a visual representation of an idea (a T-shirt, a billboard, etc.) that, in your experience, only speaks to a particular audience.
• Decide what the benefits are of directing that message to a narrow or closed audience and what the drawbacks are.
• Post your examples and comments in the learning community discussion thread, “Competence Builder: Audience Awareness.”
Week 2

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

Have you ever read an e-mail, a wedding invitation, or a letter and seen a glaring mistake that jumped out at you? The activities for this subject will introduce you to writing tips associated with grammar, usage, and writing mechanics. This information will be useful as you learn about how mistakes with grammar and language can contribute to the effectiveness of your written communication.

Background Information

When a writer observes the conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics, it is more likely that readers will not be distracted as they read for meaning. That is, readers will be able to make judgments based on content, not on sentence errors, punctuation mistakes, misspellings, and stylistic lapses that put into question a writer’s credibility.

Competency 103.3.3: Writing Conventions

The graduate follows established conventions for correct sentence structure, grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Learning to Write Clearly and Effectively

Good writers achieve a flow in their writing. This is a skill that you will learn about when dealing with how to use the right kind of language for the task you are given. This means you will be paying attention to the words you use to catch a reader’s attention and the placement of those words within an essay. Punctuation, syntax, proper word choice, good grammar and usage, and proper sentence construction will create clear and effective essays.

☐ Read Chapters 30–45 in SF Writer

Read the following chapters in SF Writer:
- Chapter 30 (“Key Grammatical Terms”)
- Chapter 31 (“Sentence Fragments, Comma Splices, and Run-ons”)
- Chapter 32 (“Modifiers”)
- Chapter 33 (“Subject-Verb Agreement”)
- Chapter 34 (“Verb Tense, Voice, and Mood”)
- Chapter 35 (“Pronouns”)
- Chapter 36 (“Suggestions for ESL Writers”)
- Chapter 37 (“End Punctuation”)
- Chapter 38 (“Commas”)
- Chapter 39 (“Semicolons and Colons”)
- Chapter 40 (“Quotation Marks and Ellipses”)
- Chapter 41 (“Parentheses and Brackets”)
- Chapter 42 (“Dashes, Hyphens, and Slashes”)
- Chapter 43 (“Italics and Capitalizations”)
- Chapter 44 (“Apostrophes, Abbreviations, and Numbers”)
- Chapter 45 (“Spelling, Dictionary, Thesaurus”)

Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
- What are the most common errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and sentence structure?
- What impact do errors have on a reader’s judgment of a writer’s ideas?

Enter your most frequent errors and writing strengths in your notebook.

☐ Read Chapters 29–33 in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond

Read the following chapters in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond:
• Chapter 29 (“Writing Effective Paragraphs”)
• Chapter 30 (“Writing Effective Sentences”)
• Chapter 31 (“Avoiding Errors”)
• Chapter 32 (“Understanding Punctuation and Conventions”)
• Chapter 33 (“Writing in a Second Language”) (if applicable)

Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
• How do errors in grammar and syntax distract from the quality of sentences and paragraphs?
• What kinds of grammar errors are you having trouble understanding?
• What might help you improve your writing?

☐ “Grammar Diagnostics” Activity in MyCompLab
Review the “Grammar Diagnostics – Diagnostic 1” activity in MyCompLab.

To access the MyCompLab resource, follow these steps:
  1. Log in to Pearson’s Reading, Writing, and Composition website using the information you received when you enrolled in the resource (the log-in page displays the title “CourseCompass”).

  2. The first page you encounter after logging in contains important announcements in the center panel. Please read these announcements.
3. The purple menu on the right-hand side of the screen gives you access to the different areas of the Pearson Reading, Writing, and Composition resource. Click on the link for “MyCompLab.”

4. An initial link will appear at the top of the page, followed by an icon, and then several more links. **Important:** First click the last link under the icon, “Click here to launch browser tune-up.” Follow the instructions to make sure you browser is ready for the resource. DO NOT click any of the other links under the icon, as you may receive an error message.

5. The next page you see will have three main divisions in the center. For the first listing in this module, you will be using the first section, “Grammar.” Find the link for “Grammar Diagnostics” in this middle section, and click it.
6. Take “Comprehensive Grammar Diagnostic 1.” You will get automatic results from the diagnostic test. Once you have your results, go to the link called “Exercise Zone” to work on specific grammar topics.

   Note: If you are an ESL student, you may want to visit the link called “ESL Exercise Zone.”

7. You may take as many of the “Targeted Grammar Diagnostics” as you like. When you have completed your study of grammar, go back and take “Comprehensive Grammar Diagnostic 2” to see your progress.

8. For an extensive assortment of additional grammar activities and explanations, please visit the sites listed in the “Web Links” category on the Main Menu page of MyCompLab. This link is located under the link for “Grammar Video Tutorials.”

☐ Review the “Longman Outline Handbook” in MyCompLab

Review the “Longman Outline Handbook” in MyCompLab. Pay close attention to the following exercises as you view this section:

• Sentence grammar
• Common sentence problems
• Punctuation and mechanics
• Advanced sentence concepts

To access the “Longman Outline Handbook”:

1. Log in to Pearson’s Reading, Writing, and Composition website using the information you received when you enrolled in the resource (the log-in page displays the title “CourseCompass”).
2. The menu on the left-hand side of the screen gives you access to the different areas of the Pearson “Reading, Writing, and Composition” resource. Click on the link for “MyCompLab.”
3. Click the first link on the page, “MyCompLab.”
4. To access the “Longman Online Handbook,” find the link in the right-hand side menu. This link is also available for quick access under “Grammar” on the “MyCompLab” home page. Consult this resource as needed depending on the grammar areas in which you need improvement.

☐ “Grammar Video Tutorials” in MyCompLab
Review the “Grammar Video Tutorials” in MyCompLab. Pay close attention to the following questions as you view this material:
• What are your most common grammar errors?
• How can you fix your most common grammar errors?

To access the “Grammar Video Tutorials”:
1. Log in to Pearson’s Reading, Writing, and Composition website using the information you received when you enrolled in the resource (the log-in page displays the title “CourseCompass”).
2. The menu on the left-hand side of the screen gives you access to the different areas of the Pearson “Reading, Writing, and Composition” resource. Click on the link for “MyCompLab.”
3. Click the first link on the page, “MyCompLab.”
4. To access the “Grammar Video Tutorials,” find the link in the right-hand side menu. This link is also available for quick access under “Grammar” on the “MyCompLab” home page. Consult this resource as needed depending on the grammar areas in which you need improvement.

☐ Additional Practice, “Exercise Zone” in MyCompLab
If you feel you need more practice, review the “Exercise Zone” activity in MyCompLab. Pay close attention to the following concepts:
• Sentence grammar
• Basic grammar
• Usage and style
• Punctuation and mechanics
• Sentence editing
• Paragraph editing

To access the “Exercise Zone”:
1. Log in to Pearson’s Reading, Writing, and Composition website using the information you received when you enrolled in the resource (the log-in page displays the title “CourseCompass”).
2. The menu on the left-hand side of the screen gives you access to the different areas of the “Pearson Reading, Writing, and Composition” resource. Click on the link for “MyCompLab.”
3. Click the first link on the page “MyCompLab.”
4. To access the “Exercise Zone,” find the link on the right-hand side menu. This link is also available for quick access under “Grammar” on the “MyCompLab” home page. Consult this resource as needed depending on the grammar areas in which you need improvement. The “Exercise Zone” contains thousands of practice questions divided into topic-specific categories.
Competence Builder: Grammar Challenge

URL: EasyWriter: The 20 Most Common Sentence Errors Among U.S. College Students
http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/easywriter3e/20errors/

Complete the Competence Builder: Grammar Challenge activity by doing the following:

After completing the grammar diagnostics in “MyCompLab,” determine your major problem areas and write them down. Go to the “Easy Writer” link above. Look over the top 20 most common errors and see if any of your problem areas are in the list.

• Pick your top problem area and write a sentence that contains the error. Go to the learning community and post your grammar challenge in the thread called “CURRENT Competence Builder: Grammar Challenge.”
• Invite students to answer your grammar challenge. In exchange, answer the grammar challenges of other students.
• The student who provides the most correct grammar challenge answers each week will have his or her name listed in a special congratulations announcement on the LCE1 home page. You may also gain points for identifying the type of error, such as a comma splice, and so forth.

External Link for Grammar and Punctuation

URL: Grammar and Punctuation
http://www.grammarbook.com/

Follow the link above for an easy-to-use, online reference on grammar and punctuation. Pay close attention to the tips and rules for everything about the following concepts:

• Grammar
• Capitalization
• Punctuation
• Commonly confused words

Week 3
Writing Different Types of Essays

Have you ever had to write as objectively as possible on a topic to provide basic information about a subject? Have you ever been in an argument before and had to defend an issue that is important to you? The activities for this subject will introduce you to writing the different types of essays you will encounter on the LCE1 assessment, such as writing an informational essay that teaches someone about a topic or a persuasive one which influences an audience to see your point of view.

Background Information

The essays you write for the LCE1 assessment fall into two major categories: persuasive and informational. While a persuasive essay argues for a point or position, an informational essay is primarily meant to convey information. This information may cover a range of topics, from a personal experience to a step-by-step process for accomplishing a task.

Competency 103.3.1: Adaptation

The graduate adapts the style and format of a message to suit different audiences or purposes.
Competency 103.3.4: Logic, Clarity, and Persuasiveness
The graduate distinguishes fact from opinion and presents a position that is supported by evidence that is presented clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Persuasive Writing
An argumentative essay has a defined issue, your position on the issue, logical reasons for your position, and evidence that supports your claims. Additionally, you should acknowledge other views about your argument and establish why your position is superior.

☐ Read Chapters 18 and 19 in SF Writer
Read chapter 11, “Writing With Style,” and chapter 18, “Strategies of Argument,” in SF Writer. Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
• How do writers make a claim?
• How do writers effectively support a claim with evidence?
• What are the most common strategies of persuasive writers?
• How do writers use logic to support a claim?
• How do writers effectively use parallel structure in an argument?
• How do writers create balanced and cumulative sentences?
• What are some argumentative fallacies you need to avoid?

In your study notebook, write down the persuasive strategies that make the most sense to you.

☐ Read Chapters 13 and 14 in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond

As you read these chapters, please keep in mind the following advice:
• Chapter 13 has numerous examples of a position argument.
• There is a template for writing a position paper on page 462.
• The templates presented in the e-text are not always appropriate for writing impromptu essays, as you will be doing on the assessment.
• Chapter 14 contains clear help for writing a persuasive paper. A handy outline of an argument for change starts on page 486, and there is a template on page 524.
• There are also numerous examples throughout the chapter and a template on page 524.

☐ Review External Link for Writing an Argumentative Paper
URL: Argument
www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/argument.html

Follow this link for practice on writing a persuasive paper from the Utah Valley State College writing center.

Keep this advice in mind as you review these links:
• Notice the steps involved in writing an argument.
• There are great examples of each aspect of writing this type of paper.
☐ Attend a Chat on Persuasive Writing
Attend a chat or review a chat log on persuasive writing. Attend a chat in the learning community on template writing for persuasive papers, or read the chat log in the “Documents” section if you are unable to attend.

☐ Practice Essays Using Prompts in MyCompLab or MyWritingLab
You may write practice essays on the prompts included in either MyCompLab or MyWritingLab. Please keep in mind that these essays are just for practice, and they are not graded by Pearson or the LCE1 course mentors. You may contact an LCE1 course mentor if you would like to discuss one practice essay.

MyCompLab Practice Essays:
- When you access the MyCompLab main menu, you will see the middle section called "Writing."
- Look under that category for writing resources, including written explanations in the link called "The Writing Process" and video tutorials in the "Writing Video Tutorials" section.
- You can locate practice prompts in MyCompLab under the "Writing Activities" link.
- After you click that link, you will be presented with four icons. Click on the book image labeled "text-based prompts."
- You are taken to a list of prompts organized by type.
- You may complete one or more of the prompts in the "Argue" section. Please save a copy of your essay in a word-processing document for future reference.

MyWritingLab Practice Essays:
- In MyWritingLab, the sections "The Essay: Recognizing the Essay," "Essay Organization," and "Argument" are all relevant to writing a persuasive essay.
- If you write an essay while in MyWritingLab, please save your essay in a word-processing document for future reference. Do not post an essay in the lab itself.

☐ Post Practice Essays in the Peer Review Thread
Submit the practice essays you wrote using the practice prompts in MyWritingLab and MyCompLab in the learning community peer review thread.
- Alternately, you can e-mail an LCE1 course mentor to review one of your practice essays. Please attach the prompt and the essay in a word-processing document. Also, please allow at least seven days before your assessment for the return of your practice essay.
- DO NOT submit essays based on the prompts in Week 5 to the learning community or to the course mentors.

Informational Essay Writing
When you begin to write an informational essay, keep in mind that your main goal is presenting content to the reader in a clear and organized manner. First, organize your thoughts in an order that makes sense to you. Next, decide on an argument, called a thesis statement, which will encompass your ideas. Finally, think of clear examples and details that will make the essay vibrant and exciting.

☐ Read Chapters 11 and 12 in SF Writer
Read chapter 11, “Writing With Style,” and chapter 12, “Shaping Effective Paragraphs,” in SF Writer. Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
- How do writers make a claim?
- How do writers effectively support a claim with evidence?
• How do writers use logic to support a claim?
• How do writers effectively use parallel structure in an argument?
• How do writers create balanced and cumulative sentences?
• How do writers shape effective paragraphs?

In your study notebook, write down the informational writing strategies that make the most sense to you.

☐ Read Chapters 7, 8, and 9 in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond

As you read these chapters, please keep in mind the following advice:
• What does a general template for an informational paper look like? (Hint: See pages 168 and 169.)
• What are the most common strategies of reflective writers?
• What are the most common strategies of observational writers?
• What are the most common strategies of informational writers?
• How do reflective, observational, and informational writing differ?

☐ Review External Link for Writing an Informational Paper
URL:
Informative Paper
http://archive.metrostate.edu/writingcenter/clues/inform.html

Follow this link from the writing center at Metropolitan State College to learn more about writing an informative paper. Keep these guiding questions in mind as you review this link:
• What is the purpose of an informative paper?
• What are the steps involved in writing an informative paper?
• What are the pitfalls of writing an informative paper?

☐ Attend a Chat on Informational Writing
Attend a chat or review a chat log on informational writing. Attend a chat in the learning community on template writing for “Informational Essays,” “Group Essay Writing,” or “Basic Essay Guidelines.” Read the chat logs in the “Documents” section if you are unable to attend.

☐ Practice Essays Using Prompts in MyCompLab or MyWritingLab
You may write practice essays on the prompts included in either MyCompLab or MyWritingLab. Please keep in mind that these essays are just for practice, and they are not graded by Pearson or the LCE1 course mentors. You may contact an LCE1 course mentor if you would like to discuss one practice essay.

MyCompLab Practice Essays:
• When you access the MyCompLab main menu, you will see the middle section called "Writing."
• Look under that category for writing resources, including written explanations in the link called "The Writing Process" and video tutorials in the "Writing Video Tutorials" section.
• You can locate practice prompts in MyCompLab under the "Writing Activities" link.
• After you click that link, you will be presented with four icons. Click on the book image labeled "text-based prompts."
You will be taken to a list of prompts organized by type.
You may complete one or more of the prompts in the "Inform" section. The sections called “Compare,” “Describe,” and “Discuss” may also be helpful for your LCE1 preparation. Please save a copy of your essays in a word-processing document for future reference. Please do not post an essay in the lab itself.

MyWritingLab Practice Essays:
- In MyWritingLab, focus on the sections called “Part 1: Getting Started” and “Part 4: The Essay.” All of the sections in MyWritingLab, however, will be helpful to you.
- If you write an essay while in MyWritingLab, please save your essay in a word-processing document for future reference. Please do not post an essay in the lab itself.

☐ Post Practice Essays in the Peer Review Thread
Submit the practice essays you wrote using the practice prompts in MyWritingLab and MyCompLab in the learning community peer review thread.
- Alternately, you can e-mail an LCE1 course mentor to review one of your practice essays. Please attach the prompt and the essay in a word-processing document. Also, please allow at least seven days before your assessment for the return of your practice essay.
- DO NOT submit essays based on the prompts in Week 5 to the learning community or to the course mentors.

Week 4
Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
Have you ever read a newspaper or online journal and wondered how objective the information really is that is being presented? The activities for this week will introduce you to distinguishing between what is considered fact and what is an opinion in various types of writing examples. This knowledge will go a long way to help you understand the credibility of different sources.

Background Information
Sometimes writers tell their readers how they feel or think about an issue, but they do not provide facts that can be verified. As a writer, you need to make sure that you do not confuse your reader by substituting opinion for established fact.

Competency 103.3.4: Logic, Clarity, and Persuasiveness
The graduate distinguishes fact from opinion and presents a position that is supported by evidence that is presented clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Correctly Supporting Your Writing Position
When planning a persuasive essay, it is important that you provide clear, logical reasons and credible evidence to support your position. A position supported by opinion and poor evidence will be quickly dismissed; therefore, it is vital that your reasoning and evidence are sound. The following readings and activities will help you think critically about your arguments and the arguments of others so you will be able to effectively support your position.

☐ Read Chapters 8c and 10 in The Reader’s Handbook

Pay close attention to the following concepts as you read these chapters:
• How do facts differ from opinion?
• When is it most important to include facts rather than opinions?
• What is the best way to include both facts and opinion in persuasive or informative writing?

☐ Read Chapters 3a, 18, and 23 in SF Writer
Read chapter 3a, “Finding a Focus” (pp. 23–24), chapter 18, “Strategies of Argument” (pp. 182–187), and chapter 23, “Evaluating Sources,” in SF Writer.

Pay close attention to the following questions as you read these chapters:
• How do writers effectively present evidence?
• How do readers and writers identify a topic in a piece of writing?
• How do writers make sure their claims are factual?
• How do writers logically arrange an argument?
• How do writers evaluate the credibility of their evidence?

☐ Read in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond
Read page 471 in Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond. Pay close attention to the following concepts as you read these chapters:
• Notice the hints for distinguishing facts and opinions in writing

☐ Complete Competence Builder: Find the Red Herring!
Follow these directions to complete the Competence Builder: Find the Red Herring activity:
• Review The Reader’s Handbook definition of relevance fallacies on page 198. Find the definition of red herring and put it into your own words.

The red herring technique is frequently used in movies and mystery novels to subvert the truth. Go to the learning community module 6 competence builder thread, and give an example from a movie, play, novel, or real-life situation in which you've seen the red herring technique used effectively.
• Explain how and when you determined that the red herring was not fact.
• Want an example? The Harry Potter books are full of red herrings.

☐ Review External Link for Writing With Facts
URL: Interpreting What You Read
http://www.cuesta.cc.ca.us/campus/student/support/lrnskills/iwyr.htm

As you review this link on writing with facts, keep this question in mind:
• How can you tell the difference between a fact and an opinion?

Week 5
Steps for Assessment Preparation
The activities for this subject will test your readiness and prepare you for the LCE1 assessment.

Background Information
At your assessment test site, you will be randomly assigned three essay prompts from which you may select two to write on for your assessment. The five possible essay prompts for the assessment, along with advice on how to structure your essays, are included in this week’s activities.
Competency 103.3.1: Adaptation
The graduate adapts the style and format of a message to suit different audiences or purposes.

Competency 103.3.3: Writing Conventions
The graduate follows established conventions for correct sentence structure, grammar, usage and mechanics.

Competency 103.3.4: Logic, Clarity, and Persuasiveness
The graduate distinguishes fact from opinion and presents a position that is supported by evidence that is presented clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Conclusion
Congratulations on completing the Rhetorical and Critical Writing Course of Study in the liberal arts at Western Governors University! You are now ready to take the pre-assessment (PALE) and refer for the final LCE1 assessment. As you progress through your program, remember the information you have learned here and how it can be applied throughout the rest of your WGU student career. The techniques of understanding your audience and using methods of persuasive and informative writing can help you communicate and look at the world in new and exciting ways. As you work through your other courses at WGU, remember and reflect upon the information you learned within this course of study to help hone in on your analytical skills, which are inherent in all forms of inquiry and learning.

Review Major Points
In this course, you learned how to write an introduction that revealed the intentions or thesis of your essay. You created a body in your essay that had major points elaborated by details, and you found a way to create an effective conclusion. All of this happened because you carefully reviewed grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and paragraph development. You also learned how to use vivid language and write clear descriptions of your thoughts in your informational essay. When it came to your persuasive essay, you wrote convincing, factual evidence to support your claims and issues.

The Preassessment for the LCE1 (PALE)
Now that you have done the reading and worked through the rhetorical and critical writing activities, you are ready to take the preassessment (PALE) for the LCE1 proctored essay assessment.

☐ Complete the Preassessment
Take the preassessment before taking the LCE1 proctored essay assessment. Follow the directions below.

This preassessment can be taken on your computer at home or any other convenient location. Do not use your notes or texts when taking the preassessment. This will better indicate areas you will need to review before taking the LAE1 assessment. You can request this through your AAP. To request the PALE, do the following:

• Find the LCE1 on your AAP.
• Click the “Yes” link under “Preassessment Available.”
• Click the link for request to take this preassessment.
• Wait for your mentor to approve this request.
The preassessment includes two essay questions. Each response should be about 500 words. You will have two hours to complete the two short essays. While you write, be sure to hit the save button or icon about every 10 minutes so you don’t lose your work.

Evaluators for the preassessment are primarily looking for two things: (1) that you clearly state one idea about your topic and write so everything in the essay develops that one idea or thesis statement; and (2) that you develop the topic with a clear introduction, middle, and conclusion. You will also be assessed on your use of language conventions, such as punctuation, usage, grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.

**Background for the Preassessment:** As you prepare to take the preassessment, here are some points to consider:

1. **Introduction:** You can introduce your topic in any ONE of these ways: (1) share an incident related to the topic; (2) describe a scene related to the topic; (3) state a recent statistic or trend regarding the topic; or (4) explain your understanding of the topic, and define any related terms the reader needs to know. Next, establish the importance or significance of this topic. That is, why should the reader care about this issue? Finally, give your position or view of this topic; this position or view is considered your thesis statement.

2. **Middle:** The task in this part of the essay is to develop your topic. Include reasons or evidence which validate your position on the topic. Evidence can come from a variety of sources: (1) your personal experience; (2) what experts have written or said; (3) research findings; (4) what others have reported to you about their experience; (5) what you and your readers both know about how the world works (shared experience); or (6) anything you have seen, heard, or read about the topic. You may not have access to all of these kinds of support, but try to include at least two different kinds of evidence. If you include evidence in your argument, you are moving from a generalization (your position or viewpoint) to supporting details (specific information). Readers expect you to make this move. You can also introduce objections others might have who disagree with your position. You should then elaborate by responding to their objections.

3. **Conclusion:** You will want to do at least two things here. First, remind your reader of the importance of your topic and your viewpoint on this topic. Second, state the consequences or likely outcomes if your viewpoint is accepted and also if it is rejected. That is, why does it matter if your reader thinks the way you do or not? Remember to restate your thesis and your main points from your body paragraphs.

**Note:** One of the prompts you receive may ask you to (a) write an essay for a certain audience, and then (b) revise the first two paragraphs of that essay for another audience. This revision should be two new paragraphs entered into the textbox underneath your first essay. In other words, parts A and B should be in the same textbox.

**☐ Additional Review**
Based on your score on the preassessment, additional review may be needed. Please contact a course mentor and your mentor of record to review your scores.

**The LCE1 Assessment**
Once you have obtained a satisfactory score on the preassessment, you are ready to demonstrate your competency by taking the LCE1 proctored essay assessment.
Complete the LCE1 Assessment

During a call with your course mentor, you will refer for and schedule your LCE1 assessment. To refer for the LCE1:

- Look at your AAP.
- Find LCE1. Click on "Assessment Referral."
- Click the tab “Request Assessment.”
- Find your proctored site.
- Enter the dates when you expect to be finished with the domain.
- Wait for your mentor to approve this request.

You will be setting the date for the completion of this exam as your drop date. This is the date that this exam must be completed by, or you will receive a “Not Passed” on your first attempts. “Not Passed” does appear on your transcript if it is not removed during the current term. It is important for you to continually move forward with your degree.

Any assessment that is not successfully completed by the end of the current term will be marked “Not Passed” on the transcript.

The Language and Communication Essay Assessment (LCE1) is a scheduled proctored objective exam at a secure testing center. You will have 3 hours to complete two (2) essays.

Review the possible essay prompts provided to you on this COS. When you take the LCE1 assessment, you will be given three of these prompts. You will then be directed to write responses to two of the three prompts.

1. Give yourself adequate time to arrive at the testing site. Bring identification and wear comfortable clothing.
2. Do not bring notes or texts, but when you arrive at the testing site, do ask for blank paper. Use this paper for making notes, listing, mapping, whatever strategies you use to get started when you write.
3. As soon as you read the three prompts for the LCE1 assessment, select the two you will write responses for. Next, begin planning for one of these prompts by listing the points you want to include in your essay. Spend ten to fifteen minutes in planning.
4. Next, begin drafting your essay, following the introduction/middle/conclusion pattern. Keep in mind the readers for whom you have been asked to write. This will help you choose the appropriate content, language, and evidence.
5. Give yourself enough time to reread what you’ve written in order to make any needed corrections. Editing your writing is respectful of your audience and helps these readers focus on your meaning.
6. Repeat this process for the second prompt.
7. There are 12 points possible on each essay. A combined score of 16 is passing. Remember to hit the save button approximately every ten minutes so you don’t lose your writing. Monitor your time carefully.
8. One of the prompts you receive may ask you to write (A) an essay for a certain audience and then (B) REVISE the first two paragraphs of that essay for another audience. This revision should be two new paragraphs entered into the text box underneath your first essay. In other words, parts A and B should be in the same text box.
Transfer/Application to Work
Now that this course is done, you will be able to transfer these ideas to work and lifelong learning settings when you have to communicate about a situation that demands detail or includes persuading someone to join you in a venture. This might include writing reports at work or creating factual and informational documents for your home or neighborhood community. You might be writing a family memoir, creating a community plan, writing a school board assessment, evaluating a colleague, writing a recommendation, or persuading someone to hire you for a job. All of these experiences might entail using the skills from this course.

Feedback
If you wish to provide feedback on this course of study, please contact Bryan Benson at bbenson@wgu.edu.