

## Which writing course to take? *English 120 or English 121*

No matter your major at EMU, you can expect to do a great deal of very intensive writing and reading.

EMU first-year students report that they read about 150 pages per week and spend about 15 hours each week on reading alone. They also say they spend an additional six to nine hours weekly working on writing projects.

EMU offers two first-year writing courses – Composition I (ENGL 120) and Composition II (ENGL 121) – to help you develop the writing, reading and thinking strategies you will use throughout college.

You may take only ENGL 121, or you may take ENGL 120 in one semester and ENGL 121 in another.\*

This handout provides information on both courses and a survey that will help you to make an *informed* choice about which course to take.

\*Students who chose to participate in the PASS program will be enrolled in English 120.



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUGGO

### Are you still unsure about which class to take?

You can find additional information about English 120 and English 121 at [www.emich.edu/english/gsp](http://www.emich.edu/english/gsp). You also can contact one of the first-year writing directors below:

#### Dr. Linda Adler-Kassner

734.487.0148

[linda.adler-kassner@emich.edu](mailto:linda.adler-kassner@emich.edu)

#### Dr. Heidi Estrem

734.487.0148

[hestrem@emich.edu](mailto:hestrem@emich.edu)

Additional information about classes and samples of student work are available at [www.emich.edu/english/gsp](http://www.emich.edu/english/gsp).

## English 120 – Composition I

English 120 is an elective-credit class. Students in this class typically complete 30 to 50 pages of writing per term that culminate in four, four-to-six page academic essays that incorporate evidence primarily from non-fiction, academic readings. At least one of these papers involves research. At the end of the course, students extensively revise at least two of the four essays to be included in a course portfolio. English 120 *does* count toward graduation as an elective; however, it *does not* fulfill General Education requirements. English 120 will help students develop the reading, writing, and thinking strategies used in English 121.

## English 121 – Composition II

English 121 is required of most EMU students, fulfills General Education requirements, and is a prerequisite for many courses across the University. Students in this class develop research questions and explore them through observations they conduct, academic articles and books they locate in the EMU library, and other sources. Students in the course complete 50 to 80 pages of writing a semester that culminate in three, five-to-eight page essays, at least two of which are research papers. At the end of the course, students participate in the Celebration of Student Writing, a large event featuring projects based on the work of students in English 121.

### How do I choose a course?

In the column on the right, you will find statements that will help you decide whether English 120 or English 121 is the right course for you. In each row, circle the statement from column one or column two that seems to fit you best. Circle only one statement per row.

	Column 1	Column 2
<b>Row 1:</b>	Every year for the past four years, I have written and revised three or fewer essays of five or more pages.	Every year for the past four years, I have written and revised four or more essays of five or more pages.
<b>Row 2:</b>	I rarely write and revise for myself.	I often write and revise for myself.
<b>Row 3:</b>	I am not comfortable writing for school.	I am always comfortable writing for school.
<b>Row 4:</b>	I rarely read books longer than 100 pages.	I often read books longer than 100 pages.
<b>Row 5:</b>	I am not comfortable reading non-fiction books and articles.	I am comfortable reading non-fiction books and articles.
<b>Row 6:</b>	I do not consider myself a strong reader and writer.	I consider myself a strong reader and writer.
<b>Row 7:</b>	I have little experience conducting research using various sources (e.g., library research, observations).	I am very experienced conducting research using a wide range of sources (e.g., library research, observations).
<b>Row 8:</b>	In the past four years, I studied approximately two hours per night or less.	In the past four years, I studied approximately three hours per night or more.
<b>Row 9:</b>	I struggle to complete work on time.	I generally complete work on time.
<b>Total circled responses</b>		

If you have circled three or more answers in column 1, English 120 is probably the right class for you to start with. At Fast Track, let the adviser know that you would like to register for English 120. If you have circled seven or more statements in column 2, English 121 is probably the right class for you to start with. At Fast Track, let the advisor know you would like to register for English 121.