



The First-Year Writing Program

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The department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures is the **heart of and home for** writing at Michigan State University. In the teaching and learning opportunities we offer, we emphasize curiosity, discovery, and the exchange of ideas along with attention to the importance of writing and communication—drawing across techniques and media, being attentive to audience and purpose, and sharing one’s ideas with the world.

In AY 2022–2023, 7106 students enrolled in our First-Year Writing (FYW) courses, primarily in WRA 101: Writing as Inquiry, a course designed to:

- welcome students to university meaning-making and writing processes;
- support students to transition to the expectations and goals of university-level writing; and
- engage students in developing skills for transfer—skills that support their writing across their coursework, their electives, and their co-curricular experiences

The FYW Program at Michigan State—winner of a 2023 Conference on College Composition and Communication Writing Program Excellence Award—is an important component of general education at MSU and provides a critical formative and transitional experience for undergraduates beginning their journeys as students at MSU and as professionals and citizens. The FYW experience is designed to orient students not only to processes of inquiry that will continue to serve them as they move ahead in their education and their lives, but also to value and put to use their diverse assets, interests, and goals.

Our FYW program puts learners at the center of learning and focuses on **inquiry, discovery, and communication** by way of three primary rhetorical conditions: **purpose, process, and culture**. These goals reflect our programmatic mission to give students the means by which they can adapt to new writing situations, as determined by their academic (and other) contexts for composing and communicating. In FYW, students learn moves, strategies, and dispositions that will allow them to continue to develop as writers and producers of knowledge beyond first-year writing.

Something my professor incorporated into the class to make sure we are working on growing as writers is having us write reflections after every paper we write. This is something I had never done before but is extremely helpful because it gives you the opportunity to visually see your progress and improvement and reflect on what you did well and what you can improve.

Amanda D., WRA 101 Student

For more information, please see wrac.msu.edu or contact Professor Julie Lindquist (lindquill@msu.edu), Director of the First-Year Writing Program in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures.