

ENGLISH 097 / 099
COMPOSITION PORTFOLIO

Your portfolio starts with the gray folder shown to you by your instructor. At the end of the semester, it will hold **one in-class essay** written in a large bluebook (or greenbook) and **three typed essays** that have been carefully and substantially revised to meet the criteria on the rubric. Each portfolio is read and scored by departmental faculty readers. Incomplete portfolios automatically do not pass, nor do portfolios containing plagiarized material. **Your course grade in English 097 or English 099 is based solely on the score of your eligible composition portfolio. Included below are the criteria for portfolio evaluation.**

Audience Awareness

Overall, the essays reveal an awareness of outside readers: both general readers, who may be reading for pleasure or knowledge, and academic readers, who have specific expectations based on the language of the assignment and on this rubric.

Thesis

Each of the essays has a clear point to it, a claim about a topic that engages readers and prompts them to explore, rethink, or better see that topic. A strong choice of thesis often means challenging your own view of something and assessing your own stance before expressing your ideas to others.

Support

The essays have developed paragraphs that continue long enough to make ideas clear and convincing. These ideas are supported in specific terms, fresh details, and concrete examples. Writers who thoughtfully analyze (or break down a topic and explain how its parts work in tandem or in relation to other ideas) are more likely to persuade readers.

Organization

The essays not only provide clear support for the writer's thesis, but also logically arrange that support. A well-organized essay flows smoothly from one sentence to the next, from paragraph to paragraph, and from start to finish. The writer uses well-chosen transitions and sets up quotations with signal phrases, always relating ideas to the thesis, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Grammatical Control

The essays have been revised, edited, and proofread to ensure that phrasing is clear and effective, that spelling and punctuation are correct, and that sentence boundaries facilitate rather than thwart meaning.

Academic Conventions

The essays respond to and meet all terms of the assignment, including the use of MLA format. Typed essays in English 097 should be 2 ½ - 3 pages (at least a full two-and-a-half), while typed essays in English 099 should be 3 - 4 pages (at least a full three), not counting any Work(s) Cited pages.

PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

4 This is the score needed to pass English 099.

Specifically, essays in this portfolio reveal a majority of the following qualities:

- an **audience-aware thesis** informed by critical thinking
- relevant, convincing, and (as needed) cited **support** for the thesis
- smooth, logical **organization**, with strong openings and closings
- developed **paragraphs**, with transitions
- varied **sentences**, with few grammatical errors
- attention to style and **academic conventions**

3 This is the score needed to pass English 097.

Typically, essays in this portfolio have:

- a clear, if simplistic, **thesis directed to an audience**
- relevant **support** for the thesis, sometimes with citations
- clear, effective **organization**, with introductions and conclusions
- distinct **paragraphs**, usually with transitions
- complete **sentences**, with few boundary errors
- generally appropriate **academic conventions**

2 A portfolio that scores a 2 does not pass.

Essays in this portfolio, while perhaps indicating a student's best effort, may have:

- an unclear, unengaging, or disconnected **thesis**
- overly general or tangential **support**
- unclear **organization**
- undeveloped or disconnected **paragraphs**
- limited control over **sentences**
- problems with **academic conventions**

1 A portfolio that scores a 1 does not pass.

Essays in this portfolio may have:

- an absent, illogical, or insupportable **thesis**
- illogical or off-topic **support**
- haphazard **organization**
- incomplete **paragraphs**
- chaotic or convoluted **sentences**
- glaring problems with **academic conventions**