

**St. Olaf College OLE Core General Education Curriculum**  
**First-Year Experience: Writing and Rhetoric Requirement**

**Description:**

This course engages students in academic and public discourse (audience, purpose, genre, context) related to a particular topic. Students write in multiple genres and engage in writing as a systematic, interactive process. They understand, evaluate, and use appropriate technologies for different purposes and audiences. Writing and Rhetoric is part of the First-Year Experience, which includes two distinct activities to support college transition: students participate in structured and sustained orientation to support their academic and co-curricular development, and students reflect on this development.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:**

*Students will:*

1. Practice academic and student success skills, learned through sustained, structured first-year student orientation, necessary to navigate the liberal arts college experience.
2. Develop a research-driven project.
3. Apply effective strategies to craft an argument.
4. Engage in writing as a systematic, iterative process.
5. Reflect on their learning during the course and articulate how they will apply it to their college experience.

**Course Guidelines:**

Students complete the First-Year Experience through courses that fulfill First-Year Seminar and Writing & Rhetoric.

- 1. Practice academic and student success skills, learned through sustained, structured first-year student orientation, necessary to navigate the liberal arts college experience.**

Faculty teaching First-Year Seminar and Writing & Rhetoric will collaborate with staff leaders of sustained orientation to reinforce co-curricular programming. Course proposals must demonstrate integration of sustained, structured orientation programming into courses.

- 2. Develop a research-driven project.**

Writing & Rhetoric students will develop a project in which they make a case with guidance from course materials at least in part provided by the instructor. As part of this process, students will consider how the course materials engage with audience, purpose, genre and context. Their

writing or other forms of communication will be informed by modeling what outside authors have done within the context of the course.

**3. Apply effective strategies to craft an argument.**

Students will be expected to identify, investigate, or examine evidence from a variety of sources to structure and support claims. Students must also consider the audience and purpose of their writing within the course structure. Writing & Rhetoric students will be learning about and applying rhetorical strategies appropriate for their audience. For example, students will select tone, evidence, language, technology and communication style to engage the intended audience. Though the focus of the course is on written arguments, courses might also address crafting effective oral arguments.

**4. Engage in writing as a systematic, iterative process.**

The process of writing is very similar in all three GE writing courses. Students will follow a writing process that involves generating drafts, responding to and providing feedback, revising, editing and proofreading. The sophistication with which students do this in Writing and Rhetoric will be less than in the other two courses.

**5. Reflect on their learning during the course and articulate how they will apply it to their college experience.**

Students will reflect at the end of each course in the First-Year Experience taken at St. Olaf, typically at the end of First-Year Seminar, Writing & Rhetoric, or Conversations courses in fall and spring. Reflection should focus on three key areas introduced during New Student Orientation, in First-Year Seminar, Writing & Rhetoric, or Conversations courses, and expanded on during their sustained orientation programming: academic development, co-curricular involvement, and living in community. Reflections can be integrated into course assignments and take any number of forms appropriate to course content and aligned with reflection goals.