New Video Helps Prospective Students Understand Success in First-Year Composition

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – A new video, “How to Succeed in Composition I at the University of Arkansas,” will help students who hope to enroll in the University of Arkansas understand how they can succeed in an introductory course in rhetoric and composition taken by most first-year students.

“The video was designed so that high school English teachers could show it to their students so they can better understand what will be expected of them in the Composition I course,” said David Jolliffe, professor of English and Brown Chair of English Literacy in the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. “It was designed, filmed, and edited by graduate students Angela Cox and Mollie Throgmorton.”

“How to Succeed in Composition I at the University of Arkansas” is divided into four sections: general academic success strategies, major assignments, the writing process and academic support services.

“We included a prompt at the end of each segment,” said Cox, a doctoral student specializing in rhetoric, composition and literacy. “We hope this will encourage viewers to pause the video and discuss the recommendations covered in that section.”

Two versions of a one-page guide to such discussions are available under “links” at www.uark.edu/literacy. One version has answers, and the other has blanks for viewers to fill in their responses.

“We wanted to make sure that potential students heard from people who had a real understanding of Composition I,” said Throgmorton, a recent masters graduate who now serves as assistant director of the Program in Rhetoric and Composition. “We used actual students, instructors and administrators in the interviews so it would have authenticity.”
The video features Elias Dominguez Barajas, the director of the Program in Rhetoric and Composition; Raina Smith Lyons, the program’s associate director; Composition I instructors; students who have taken the course; and members of the faculty and staff who provide writing and research assistance. Also featured are instructional simulations by Ian Winslow, a current teaching assistant and student seeking a master of arts in English.

To view the newly-released 22-minute video via YouTube, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pAjTh-ZJKc. It may also be viewed with captions for the hearing impaired at this site. To view the piece via iTunes U, go to http://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/how-to-succeed-in-composition/id562887975. At the link, users will be prompted to "View in iTunes" to download the video to their iTunes library. Users new to iTunes will be prompted to install the program.

The video project received support from the Brown Chair in English Literacy at the University of Arkansas and from Shelley Dirst, who coordinates iTunes U for the Arkansas Department of Education. iTunes U, a section of iTunes, is the world's largest repository of free educational media. As an iTunes U provider, Arkansas distributes audio and video podcasts for students, teachers and the public. More information is available at http://adepodcast.arkansas.gov/.

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