



# UNIVERSITY of ALASKA SOUTHEAST

## Welcome to Directed Self-Placement

Choosing your first WRTG (WRTG) course is an important decision. To give yourself the best chance for success, you'll need to choose a course that matches your abilities. UAS offers different options to help you make this critical choice. One of these options is a process called Directed Self-Placement, where you will answer a series of questions to help you determine which WRTG course is the best fit for you.

## Is Directed Self-Placement Right for You?

Before you begin, remember that you may already have the information you need to choose an appropriate WRTG course. For example, you may already have college transcripts, or test scores from other sources, like a campus testing center or affiliated organizations, like Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC) in Juneau. Please review the following alternatives to decide whether Directed Self-Placement is the right placement option for you.

### Alternative #1: Previous Courses

Have you completed a college WRTG or English class before now?

- If so, contact your advisor before you proceed.
- If not, please review Alternative #2, below.

### Alternative #2: Test Scores

Have you taken any of the following standardized tests?

- SAT
- ACT
- Accuplacer
- AP English / IB HL English

If so, check the chart on the next page to see how your scores align to WRTG courses. If you would like to use your scores for placement, contact your advisor. If you do not have test scores, or you feel they do not reflect your abilities, please continue with Directed Self-Placement.

	<u>WRTG 090</u>	<u>WRTG 110</u>	<u>WRTG 111</u>	<u>WRTG 211/212</u>
<b>ACT</b> English and Reading	26–29	30–35	36–59	60–72
<b>SAT</b> Reading and WRTG	390–420	430–470	480–700	710–800
<b>Accuplacer</b> WRTG or Reading	235	250	265	N/A
<b>Accuplacer</b> Combined	≥470	≥500	≥530	N/A

Additional information about placement scores may be found at  
<http://www.uas.alaska.edu/juneau/tlc/testing/>.

### Directed Self-Placement— How Does It Work?

The Directed Self-Placement process consists of 3 parts and should take about 15–20 minutes to complete.

- In Part 1, you'll reflect on your familiarity and comfort level with the work students do in WRTG courses.
- In Part 2, you'll read a short essay that represents a typical reading in a WRTG 111 course. After reading the sample essay, you'll answer a set of questions about how confident you would feel completing assignments about an essay like this in class.
- In Part 3, you'll review the course descriptions for WRTG 090, 110, and 111, and then use this information along with your answers in Part 1 and 2 to choose the right class for you.

Remember, the Directed Self-Placement process is not a *test*. Rather, the questions will help you assess how your abilities fit with each WRTG course. Your professors will make a final placement decision based on your first assignments in class. If you have any questions, please contact your advisor.

## **Part 1: Your Past Experiences with Reading and WRTG**

Please circle your answers to the questions below.

1. During the last two years, how often in school or at work did you write essays or reports that were longer than three pages?

- A. Never.
- B. Rarely (1–3 times).
- C. Sometimes (4–5 times).
- D. Often (more than 5 times).

2a. How often do you read books, articles, reports or other longer written materials, printed or online, in the English language?

- A. Rarely or never.
- B. A few times a year.
- C. A few times a month.
- D. A few times a week.

2b. How do you feel about your ability to understand news articles, essays, or textbooks?

- A. I rarely feel like I understand the material fully.
- B. I sometimes feel like I understand the material fully. However, I sometimes find it challenging to identify the main idea in a piece of WRTG or offer my own response.
- C. I usually feel like I understand the material fully.
- D. I almost always understand the material fully.

3. When you need to write an essay, report, or other important document, how easy is it to organize your thoughts?

- A. I frequently struggle with organizing my thoughts when I try to write a document.
- B. I sometimes have trouble with organizing my thoughts when I try to write a document.
- C. I can usually figure out a good way to organize my thoughts when I try to write a document.
- D. I almost always organize my thoughts effectively.

4. When you need to revise an essay, report, or other important document, how easy is it for you to fix the spelling, grammar, or punctuation, on your own?

- A. I don't have much experience with this kind of WRTG.
- B. I frequently struggle with fixing spelling, grammar or punctuation mistakes in my WRTG.
- C. I can sometimes find spelling, grammar or punctuation mistakes on my own and correct them, but sometimes I can't.
- D. I can usually find spelling, grammar or punctuation mistakes on my own and correct them.

5. When you need to revise an essay, report, or other important document, how easy is it for you to make other changes, like improving the organization or adding details?

- A. I don't have much experience with this kind of WRTG.
- B. I frequently struggle with making changes to my WRTG.
- C. I can sometimes figure out what changes are necessary, but sometimes I can't.
- D. I can usually figure out what changes I need to make.

6. How would you describe your time management skills, such as your ability to follow a schedule, make to-do lists, or use reminders, a calendar, or planner?

- A. I rarely make a plan or follow a schedule for completing my work.
- B. I sometimes make a plan or follow a schedule, but may miss assignments or deadlines.
- C. I usually make a plan or follow a schedule.
- D. I almost always make a plan or follow a schedule, and almost always complete my work on time.

7. In WRTG courses, students are expected to do at least two hours of homework for every hour spent in class. For example, a WRTG 110 student would spend four hours per week in class, and eight additional hours per week on homework, for a total of 12 hours per week. How would you describe the other demands on your time, such as your job, family, classes, or other commitments?

- A. I have many other commitments, so I will not have much time for this much WRTG homework per week.
- B. I have some other commitments, so I will have only a little time for WRTG homework.
- C. I have a few other commitments, but I should still have enough time for this much WRTG homework.
- D. I do not have other commitments. I have plenty of time for this much WRTG homework.

9. In WRTG classes, students are expected to use a computer for some assignments. How comfortable are you using a computer to draft, revise, save, and print or share a written document?

- A. I am not comfortable using a computer in this way.
- B. I am somewhat comfortable using a computer in this way, but I will probably need some help.
- C. I am mostly comfortable using a computer in this way.

D. I am very comfortable using a computer in this way.

10a. In WRTG 111, students need the ability to stay focused on their work. How do you feel about your ability to concentrate and avoid distractions in and out of class?

A. I often have trouble staying focused on my work.

B. Sometimes I stay focused for a while, but sometimes I get distracted or have trouble concentrating.

C. I can usually stay focused on my work.

D. I rarely have trouble staying focused on my work.

10b. In WRTG 111, students may need to work closely with others, such as their peers, their professors, a WRTG center tutor, or other services to make their WRTG the best it can be. How comfortable are you with asking others for help?

A. I have a hard time asking anyone for help.

B. It is difficult for me to ask most people for help, but I can usually find one or two people to help me if needed.

C. I am usually comfortable asking my professor and others for help.

D. I am very comfortable asking my professor for help.

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Take a moment to review your answers to Part 1. If your answers were...

**... mostly 'A', then WRTG 090 might be right for you.**

**... mostly 'B' or 'C,' then WRTG 110 might be right for you.**

**... mostly 'D,' then WRTG 111 might be right for you.**

This is not a final recommendation, as you will still need to complete Part 2 of the self-placement process. Once you have finished Part 2, you will have more information about which WRTG class is the best fit for you. If you have any

questions at this point, please contact your advisor. When you are ready to begin Part 2, please go on to the next page.

## **Part 2: Reading and Reflection**

Below is a sample text like those that you might be assigned to read and write about in WRTG 111. Please read the text and answer the questions that follow.

### **Ernestine Hayes, “Raven’s Intelligent Design” (2012)**

Storytelling is an ancient human art too often portrayed in modern society as best suited to the entertainment of children, and perhaps even perceived as a bit quaint. In our printed and digital age, it's easy to forget that the overwhelming portion of human knowledge and history has been nurtured and preserved by the sophisticated human practice of telling story. The present method of pursuing institutional degrees encourages scholars to gather stories, students to research them, doctoral candidates to study them and craft insightful theses based on imposed literary taxonomy. In the undertaking of these valid pursuits, however, it's crucial to remember that the most worthwhile consequence of storytelling and story listening is the development of our insight into essential human concerns.

It's commonly acknowledged that the art of people indigenous to what is now Southeast Alaska — people commonly identified as the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian nations — is sophisticated and highly developed. Many people are aware that the matrilineal kinship system of these cultures is quite complex. A few others know that Northwest Coast indigenous languages are extremely complex, employing complicated rules of grammar and syntax, and manifesting phonemes not found in most other languages. Some students are aware of the long-established legal systems of Northwest Coast cultures. A few scholars know that by the time of colonial contact, traditional educational systems had been in place and effective for centuries. After hundreds of generations, when the measure of time finally changed from the movements of glaciers to the hands of a clock, every system needed for a culture to survive and thrive had already been developed, refined, and placed into the hands of the next generations by telling this brilliant history and listening to these bright truths.

In the complex Tlingit legal system, stories and songs are intellectual property owned by a clan. Their retelling and performance can only be done with permission and with careful attention to specific attribution. Some stories, though, are so fundamental that they have become part of

traditional worldview. Stories of Raven's endeavors are examples; most are part of the Raven cycle, and many of these stories are well known and often told. Among the many stories told about the land that became known as Southeast Alaska and the beings that live upon that place is a story of Raven's intelligent design.

There was a time when darkness was upon the world, and no light shone on *Lingit Aani*. Raven, ever curious, ever industrious, decided he would do something about the darkness, and through investigation and study, with scheming and plotting, employing improvisation and vision, he accomplished his purpose, and light came upon the world.

We can recall events in 2010, when thirty-three miners were trapped for more than two months in a Chilean gold and copper mine. The world monitored rescue efforts, and one update noted that the miners would need eyewear to protect them against the "unfamiliar sunlight." To experience sunlight after two months must indeed have been astounding. How much more so for people of Raven's time to experience light from the moon, from the stars, and from the sun after their lifetimes of darkness. When Raven caused light to flood the world, all the people must have been deeply alarmed. Even the mountains must have trembled.

Not long ago, all the people on earth lived by the phases of the moon. Nowadays we no longer do that. We don't really live by our environment any more, until a disaster strikes or an unfamiliar natural anomaly occurs. Rather than living by the light and by the seasons, we are guided by printed calendars and scheduled meals. It's sometimes difficult in an artificial world to recognize the natural purpose of our principal storyteller: the land itself.

We can always listen to the land, whether it's because we are among the fortunate who return to a place summer after summer, perhaps to fish, perhaps to pick berries, perhaps to laugh and become part of the land again, or whether it's because we perform our hunting and berry-picking in the manners of the twenty-first century and visit those places in our dreams. The land is telling stories. In the ancient way of understanding — the human way, as it were — listening to the land is an essential element of Raven's intelligent design.

11. How challenging was it for you to read and understand this text?

- A. Very challenging.
- B. Moderately challenging.
- C. A little challenging.
- D. Not very challenging at all.

12. How challenging is it for you in general to read texts like this, especially about a subject you are unfamiliar with?

- A. Very challenging.
- B. Moderately challenging.
- C. A little challenging.
- D. Not very challenging at all.

13. Please take a look at the following discussion questions, which you would need to answer in a WRTG 111 class:

- *What are the main ideas of the text?*
- *Choose one important quote from the text. What do you think it means?*
- *How did you react to the text? What did it make you think about from your own life?*

How challenging would it be to answer questions like these?

- A. Very challenging.
- B. Moderately challenging.
- C. A little challenging.

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D. Not very challenging at all.

Take a moment to review your answers to Part 2 above. Then, answer the question below to see which WRTG course best matches your responses so far.

If your answers to the questions in Part 2 were....

**... mostly 'A', then WRTG 090 might be right for you.**

**... mostly 'B' or 'C,' then WRTG 110 might be right for you.**

**... mostly 'D,' then WRTG 111 might be right for you.**

This is not a final recommendation, as there is still one more section of the self-placement process to complete. When you are ready to begin, please go on to the next page. If most of your responses in Part 1 and 2 did not match, or you have any other questions, please contact your advisor now.

## **Part 3: Course Descriptions**

In Part 1 and 2, above, you received a preliminary recommendation about which WRTG course might be the best fit for you. The last step is for you to learn a little more about each course option before you make your decision.

Below are two tables, which describe the typical tasks required in each WRTG course, as well as the skills that successful students typically possess.

Remember, it is critical to choose the course that best matches your abilities and experience; therefore, please consider the information in these tables carefully. Then, keeping in mind your recommendations from Part 1 and 2, you will be ready to choose the course that is right for you.

### **Typical Tasks Required:**

<b><u>WRTG 090</u></b>	<b><u>WRTG 110</u></b>	<b><u>WRTG 111</u></b>
Write thoughtful responses to and accurate summaries of articles, essays, books, and other academic texts.	Critically interpret and evaluate academic texts and your own WRTG.	Engage with academic texts based on their features, context, design, and relationship to other texts.
Learn specific study skills for understanding and responding to academic texts.	Learn persuasive techniques for use in basic academic essays.	Use tools like research and analysis to support your arguments and address specific audiences.
Write well-developed, coherent paragraphs and short essays.	Create a portfolio of 3–4 brief academic essays, shaped by effective WRTG processes such as revision, class discussion, and using additional texts for support.	Plan, write, and revise longer academic essays, including research papers and/or collaborative projects.

### **Typical Student Skills:**

<b><u>WRTG 090</u></b>	<b><u>WRTG 110</u></b>	<b><u>WRTG 111</u></b>
May have never written an essay, or may not have developed any WRTG of two or more typed pages in many years.	Have written essays before, but they may have been short (1–2 pages) or it may have been many years ago.	Have written several essays of three or more typed pages.
Haven't read printed works of several pages, or may not have in several years.	Have read printed works before, but not regularly, or not in many years.	Have read academic texts of several pages or more regularly in previous classes.
May have grammar and mechanics issues in their WRTG.	May have minor grammar and mechanics issues in their WRTG, but are aware of them to some extent.	Able to fix proofreading and grammar issues in others' WRTG and their own.
		Able to stay focused while working independently and with others, in class and online.
		Willing to stick with a project, developing it over multiple drafts.
		Able to recognize when professors' help is needed, and willing to ask for it.

If you have questions about the information above, or are still uncertain which class would be appropriate, please contact your advisor. Otherwise, when you have carefully considered the information above, please go on to the next page.

## **Conclusion: Choosing Your WRTG Course**

Congratulations! You are now ready to choose your first WRTG course at UAS. In general, if you are having trouble deciding between two courses, we recommend you choose the lower of the two levels. The extra support offered in the lower-level courses will give you the best chance of success.

Based on what you have learned throughout the Directed Self-Placement process, please choose one of the following courses in which to enroll:

**WRTG 090: WRTG and Reading Strategies**

**WRTG 110: Introduction to College WRTG**

**WRTG 111: WRTG Across Contexts**

Your next step will be to contact your advisor for help with registration. At the start of the term, your professor will conduct a brief WRTG exercise to verify your readiness for class and if needed will recommend an alternate placement. Thank you for participating in the Directed Self-Placement process, and see you in class!

—The UAS WRTG Faculty