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CAI Portfolio English 111
A New Direction for Freshman Composition at
Middle Tennessee State University

Maria A. Clayton

A dissertation presented to the
Graduate Faculty of Middle Tennessee State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctorate of Arts

August 1998

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CAI Portfolio English 111:
A New Direction for Freshman Composition at
Middle Tennessee State University

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Abstract

CAI Portfolio English 111:

A New Direction for Freshman Composition at
Middle Tennessee State University

by Maria A. Clayton

A paradigm shift occurred in writing instruction theory and pedagogy during the 1970's, a shift that mandated a move away from the current-traditional emphasis on product and towards a new, more rhetorically-based focus on the composition process. As a result of this shift, two different but complementary pedagogies emerged almost simultaneously, portfolio-based composition, also propelled by needs in the field of assessment, and computer-assisted composition, made possible by the rise in computer applications in the classroom. Portfolio-based and computer-assisted programs have enjoyed a solid following well into the 1990's and, in fact, continue to gain status among academic disciplines, particularly in composition studies. In the past decade the symbiotic potential of portfolio and computer methodologies has been recognized by many institutions of higher education where they have been implemented as natural partners in the teaching of writing.

The marriage of portfolio-based and computer assisted composition can bring innumerable benefits to the writing

Maria A. Clayton

classroom by capitalizing on the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of both print literacy and computer literacy. However, as with all new programs, the successful implementation does not occur unless careful attention has been paid to the theory and pedagogy behind the merger.

CAI Portfolio English 111 is the first attempt at Middle Tennessee State University to incorporate the strengths of both pedagogies. Its first semester of implementation has been a success. The merger works and works well. Through its use, the English Department will finally formalize its move away from product-based composition and formally identify process theory as the mainstay of its first-year composition program.

Implementation of CAI Portfolio English 111 will also afford faculty and students a vehicle through which to bridge the gap between print and computer literacies, bringing them together at a time when higher education and real world requirements move into the next century.

Acknowledgments

The inspiration for this dissertation on CAI Portfolio English 111 came from English Professor Ayne Cantrell, who introduced me to portfolio-based composition and made it possible for me to shed my blinders and re-evaluate my composition pedagogy, and also from English Professor Larry Mapp, who introduced me to computer-assisted instruction and wrought the miracle of bringing me (however haltingly) into the world of technology. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Dr. Cantrell for her tireless efforts making this text a readable, coherent whole and to Dr. Mapp for his technical guidance and scrutinizing eye.

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I would also like to thank my family for their love, encouragement, and support.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Luis and Nicolasa Roque, who always encouraged me to strive for excellence and made me believe I could achieve it.

Only one set of footprints, Father, only one set.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Several decades have elapsed since composition studies finally emerged in the United States as a distinct, fresh, and exciting field separate from its long preferred companion, the study of literature. This was not an easy evolution but one that evidenced a laborious struggle against entrenched paradigms.

As Gerald R. Nelms points out in "A Brief History of American Composition Studies," in the 1800's and early 1900's the current-traditional system of teaching composition, along with the belletristic movement (which focused on the aesthetic rather than on the rhetorical aspects of composition) had served to move American writing instruction towards "the shift from oratory to written discourse" (354). The unfortunate end result had been the decline of the substance of classical rhetorical theory (354-55). Current-traditional rhetoric "was less a theory of composition than a pedagogical system . . . an almost perfect doctrine of writing instruction for an educational system that desire[d] easy evaluation" (356). Understandably, this was a move mandated, at least in part, by the increasing numbers of college students who needed writing instruction and by their teachers who found themselves burdened with stacks and stacks of student papers

to grade. Some of the system's basic features included a focus on product over process, higher value on arrangement and style over rhetorical substance, an emphasis on the modes of discourse (narration, description, exposition, argumentation, persuasion), and an overwhelming importance on grammatical and mechanical correctness (356-57).

In "The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse," Robert J. Connors suggests, "The modes became the controlling force in the teaching of writing after 1895 through the 1930's and allowed no room for theoretical advances" (366-67). Side by side with the modes was "an attempt to govern the written product by rules" (Connors, "Mechanical Correctness" 381). Mina P. Shaughnessy describes the effect of rule-oriented writing instruction: "so absolute is the importance of error in the minds of many writers that 'good writing' to them means 'correct writing,' nothing more"(8). The current-traditional system and the modes became so entrenched in the teaching of English in the first half of the twentieth century that remnants still exist in the 1990's as part of many professors' composition pedagogy.

Nelms and others, such as Andrea Lunsford, argue that because of the emphasis on form and correctness, more and more of the responsibility for teaching composition was relegated to the high schools (Nelms 356, Lunsford 340), and

by the early 1900's, college teachers began to see themselves as teachers of literature, not writing (Connors, "The Rise and Fall" 367). Nelms concludes that "Writing instruction, devoid of rhetorical theory, reduced to rules and formulas, was not considered to be part of higher education but remedial work, instruction that had to be done only because secondary schools had failed" (357). These courses were often punitive, at least by implication, since they offered no credit (Lunsford 341). The Harvard Reports of the 1890's on the status of college students' proficiencies supported this negative view of the educational situation and termed it a "literary crisis" (Nelms 357, Lunsford 338-39). Writing about this situation as it existed much later in the 1900's, Shaughnessy credits basic writing students, brought to the universities by open admissions, with teaching higher education much about learning and teaching; however, she refers to them as students "whom colleges must sustain in a kind of holding action until the lower schools begin doing their jobs" (29). Towards the latter part of the century, the attitude has not changed significantly in regards to the status of basic writing students and the proper place for this level of education.

The move away from the almost comfortable, formulaic approach of current-traditional rhetoric was a slow one, and

early voices clamoring for reform were not heard. According to Nelms, in the 1890's Fred Newton Scott claimed that "composition required a recognition of all aspects of the rhetorical situation: the writer, the audience, the message, and the context. And it required a recognition of the full rhetorical process, including the discovery of substance as well as stylistic expression" (Nelms 358). The 1930's saw other voices joining in to criticize the status quo, and studies on the effectiveness of the focus on correctness demonstrated its futility in improving writing (Connors, "Mechanical Correctness" 385).

Despite this early call away from the focus on product and correctness, the paradigm remained dominant until in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's, three developments emerged to combat the current-traditional system: 1) the revival of classical rhetorical theory that re-established the connection between theory and practice and afforded a new validity to the area of composition studies; 2) the increased emphasis on process over product with invention reasserting its focal point; and 3) a rise in empirical research that tried to "describe and understand the process of composing, not the product" (Nelms 358-60). What emerged as a result of these forces was the catalyst for the shift away from "the abstract, mechanical nature of writing instruction at the time" towards greater focus on communication (Connors, "The Rise and Fall" 372).

The ensuing re-focusing on classical rhetorical theory during the last twenty to thirty years has reaffirmed the importance of Aristotle's well balanced elements of rhetoric--the writer (ethos), the audience (pathos) and the text (logos).

The paradigm shift in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's away from the long-lived focus on writing as a product and the production of mechanically correct essays has provided the impetus for two separate, but complementary, pedagogical approaches to writing instruction: portfolio-based composition and computer-assisted composition. These are the focus of this study.

Portfolio-based composition finds its origins in the late 1970's to early 1980's as educators became more interested in emphasizing how a paper was written (the process) than in evaluating the end result (the product). Kathleen Blake Yancey describes the shift and concludes it involved a move from "objectively based, empiricist methods of evaluating writing to ones more contextually situated, more rhetorically defined, more process oriented" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 102). Similarly, as pointed out by Lisa Gerrard in her Preface to *Computers and the Teaching of Writing in American Higher Education, 1979-1994: A History* by leading authorities in the field Gail E. Hawisher, Paul LeBlanc, Charles Moran, and Cynthia L. Selfe,

the use of computers in composition traces its history to the 1970's and is "influenced by the development of process-based writing" (x). Both of these offshoots of the paradigm shift, each enjoying considerable notoriety and following, afford the field of composition studies in the 1990's a position of fluidity, a position poised for further experimentation, for further pedagogical re-direction. For the past three decades, institutions of higher education across the nation have been actively involved in implementing portfolio-based composition and computer-assisted composition, although the programs have not often been integrated.

Since each pedagogy has proven a strong asset at the English departments where portfolio-based and computer-assisted composition have been implemented, it seems a valid assumption that their integration would bring the strength of each to the teaching of composition. How would such a marriage work in a composition course? What adaptations should be made to each teaching philosophy in order that the strengths of both be applied to implement such a course? Would this course have limitations that would render it ineffective, or would the benefits reaped from the synthesis of the two pedagogies outweigh those limitations? The following study outlines a curriculum designed to answer these questions and to test the viability of the merger. The

curriculum, CAI Portfolio English 111, is a first-semester college writing course. This study addresses the motivation for and the pedagogy behind the course, the method of implementation, the limitations encountered, and the benefits reaped.

In 1997 as I began my project to develop a CAI Portfolio English 111 at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) that would merge our four-year-old portfolio assessment program with the technology available through the English Department's computerized writing classroom (the Frank Ginanni Computer Classroom), I could not escape feeling excited at the prospect of trying something new on our campus. The notion of presenting a blending of two innovative and constantly evolving pedagogical approaches to composition was somewhat intoxicating because setting down and implementing my ideas would allow me to contribute something useful to a new and evolving field of study, to an institution and students I was proud to serve. During the planning and development process, I experienced a good deal of anxiety over how the project would be received--a scaled-down version of the tension encountered by respected, portfolio composition expert, Yancey, as she undertook guest editing a special issue of *Computers and Composition* devoted to Electronic Portfolios. In the essay that opens the issue, "Portfolio, Electronic, and the Links Between," Yancey

voices her fears to her readers: "Most of my teacher friends who 'do' technology don't 'do' portfolios. And most of my portfolio pals who use technology do so for their own purposes; they don't combine it with portfolios" (129). Written in 1996, Yancey's comments prophetically described the situation at MTSU in 1997. My anxiety, then, was brought on by a desire to pique the interest of colleagues involved in using one or the other methodology or, more importantly, in using neither. Computer-assisted, portfolio-based composition could offer these teachers a new avenue, a fresh approach to writing instruction.

However, my initial, and more important objective quickly emerged as the controlling, driving force behind the development of CAI Portfolio English 111: improving the quality of instruction in the English 111 sections I taught. Because of my own lack of training in composition theory, the student-centered, process-focused pedagogy I espoused had been rather hazily defined in my mind until the Fall of 1994, when I became a participant in the Portfolio Writing Assessment Pilot at MTSU. With the guidance of MTSU English Professors Ayne Cantrell and Sushil Oswal, co-designers of the pilot, I was able to crystallize those ill-defined concepts and finally implement a clearly developed pedagogy that stressed the nature of the composition process of prewriting, writing, and rewriting; recognized the student's

need for multiple feedback opportunities; and promoted student ownership of the writing. The proverbial light was on. A portfolio composition program was established at MTSU after the trial period, and I became an active participant, continuing to collaborate with Cantrell and other faculty members committed to the program, such as Linda Badley. Together, we worked towards refining our pedagogy and tailoring the portfolio system to meet student, portfolio faculty, and department needs. In 1996 we published *Portfolio Composition: A Student's Guide for English 111 Portfolio Sections*, now in its third edition. This resource proved to be the foundation for CAI Portfolio English 111.

Perhaps the most important insight reaffirmed by my involvement in portfolio-based composition was that just as the composition process is fluid, recursive, and not finite, so, too, must be an instructor's pedagogy--always perched, ready for the possibility of rethinking, for the possibility of growth, for the possibility of shifting directions, in short, focused on process. Nelms suggests, "we need to recognize that the industry of composition itself is 'in process'" (360), and Connors applauds the questioning and examination within the ranks as proof that "composition studies are finally coming to constitute a genuine discipline and are no longer a mere purblind drifting on the current of unexamined tradition" ("Mechanical Correctness"

387). As a result of my newly gained flexibility, I took a leap to the second, major stepping stone that led to the development of CAI Portfolio English 111.

In the summer of 1997, I participated in a course taught by Larry Mapp, MTSU Professor of English, entitled "Computers and Writing," which focused on familiarizing students with how the Internet and World Wide Web impact the teaching of writing from a practical and theoretical aspect. The more immersed I became in discovering how computers affected learning and, more specifically, writing, the more convinced I became that these two new avenues I had become familiar with--first portfolio-based and then computer-assisted composition--were natural partners whose blending in the writing classroom held much promise. I soon learned, as is the case with most novices in any field, that my idea had been supported by others, among them Steve Watkins of the University of Louisville, Kentucky, who found that using portfolios with networked computer-assisted instruction enhanced "the unique capabilities of the other" (221). The marriage of the two pedagogies had been tried with much success at several institutions since the early 1990's: the University of Rhode Island, Trinity College (Connecticut), Louisville University (Kentucky) and Yavapai College (Arizona), to name a few. However, no such program was yet a

reality in theory nor in practice in the English Department at MTSU.

Despite the availability of a high-tech, computerized classroom in the department, freshman composition had not significantly reaped benefits from it, particularly the first semester component, English 111. Since the inauguration of the Ginanni Classroom in the Spring of 1995, only thirteen 111 sections had been taught using this invaluable resource; none had been portfolio-based. I seized the opportunity to test my hypothesis regarding the positive effect of the integration of the two pedagogies. With Department Chairman William Connelly's approval, I designed and taught two sections of CAI Portfolio English 111 composition in the Spring of 1998.

As this narrative of how I came to create CAI Portfolio English 111 suggests, my primary motive for implementing the merger of portfolio-based and computer-assisted composition was to develop a curriculum that improves the effectiveness of composition instruction and to test the assumption that this combination of pedagogies really enhances students' awareness of their own writing strengths and weaknesses while providing them with the tools necessary to improve the latter. Yet another, no less important motive was to offer details of the methodology implemented and its effectiveness

in order to encourage others to consider new approaches such as this in the teaching of composition.

The remaining chapters of this study will discuss the pedagogy behind CAI Portfolio English 111, the method of implementation, its limitations, and benefits. Chapter II, "Portfolio-based Composition," presents a brief overview of portfolio's history, theory and pedagogy. Its origins make a vital contribution in the shedding of the paradigm that surrounded composition studies before portfolio's inception, one that focused on product and emphasized teacher-centered instruction. MTSU's involvement in portfolio is described from its early days as a pilot program to its status in its fifth year of existence.

Chapter III, "Computer-assisted Composition," follows a similar arrangement as a brief history and a survey of theory and pedagogy of computer-assisted instruction are summarized. MTSU's English Department's program is also chronicled. The focus here is on the continued flexibility of the pedagogy, stressing that in order to stay abreast of the improvements afforded by technology, instructors must learn to continue learning, to be open to change, to re-think, to re-evaluate. In this way, perhaps we can avoid becoming caught up in yet another narrowly construed paradigm that future generations of teachers will find just as difficult to shed.

The merging of the two pedagogies at MTSU through CAI Portfolio English 111 is detailed in Chapter IV, "Merging the Two Pedagogies at MTSU." This section attempts to move beyond just another description of a program, what Cynthia L. Selfe terms, "teaching from the hip" when she refers to case studies that comment on what worked in the classroom despite "localized constraints and resources, specific student audiences, and particular educational sites" ("Preparing" 31). Selfe bemoans the fact that journals abound with such studies, and she rightfully asserts that they often overlook commenting on the pedagogy behind the methodology used in implementing computers in composition--if in fact there is any (31). Portfolio-related pedagogy is at the heart of the newly integrated pedagogies. Each of the steps in the portfolio-based composition process is discussed with commentary on how CAI serves and enhances each. Additionally, the web page that accompanies the course is detailed, and its contribution to the effectiveness of the course is discussed. A hard copy version is presented in Appendix A.

In Chapter V, "The Road Ahead," I address MTSU faculty concerns about adopting portfolio and/or CAI into their teaching methodology and suggest that theirs are more than likely typical of those that surface at other institutions considering implementation of similar innovative approaches

to the teaching of composition. The findings of a faculty questionnaire are presented in Appendix C. I also attempt to offer some projections and recommendations for consideration by MTSU's English Department and those of other universities with similar student populations and writing program challenges. I agree it is time to join institutions that are open to implementing sound pedagogies to improve writing instruction. Using process-based pedagogies like portfolio-based composition and computer-assisted composition not only throughout the first-semester composition courses, but throughout the entire first-year writing program as well, is a logical next step for composition at MTSU.

Chapter II

Portfolio-based Composition

Those not familiar with the portfolio system might well ask, "What exactly is this portfolio-based composition, the basis for CAI Portfolio English 111, that can reap benefits from the computer-assisted classroom so readily?"

Essentially portfolio-based composition allows students to self-select their writing for assessment after their having had much opportunity to revise that writing over the semester's work. This chapter will provide an overview of the historical background and the theory and pedagogy responsible for portfolio's emergence. The development of Middle Tennessee State University's portfolio program will also be chronicled.

Arriving on the scene in the 1970's, by the late 1990's the portfolio-based system for composition assessment had found a home in higher education English departments across the nation. Writing for the *Computers and Composition* journal in 1996, Pamela Takayoshi of Louisville University considers portfolios "standard in a traditional classroom" (255).

An Overview of the History of Portfolios in Composition

The history of writing portfolios is not one that is guided by innovation or developments in an accompanying technology nor is it guided by powers outside the

institutions implementing them. Instead, writing portfolios arise from what Kathleen Blake Yancey refers to as a "grass-roots phenomenon, a practice that teachers, not legislators or administrators, have introduced" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 107). The history is also colored by the fact that portfolio usage varies from institution to institution, not only in purpose, but in procedures as well. In some higher education English departments, writing portfolios are used for entrance placement, in others to show exiting proficiency. However, a growing number of English departments have instituted portfolios as an integral part of their classroom writing programs. William Condon and Liz Hamp-Lyons conclude that "Since portfolio assessment directly links assessment with instruction, the method must be different for each site, since each program that installs it will begin by taking advantage of different strengths . . ." (246).

The seeds for the pedagogy were planted in the 1970's. Brian Huot establishes that "Up until the 1970's, the assessment of writing outside the classroom usually included no student writing of any kind" (327). Turning away from standardized, objective testing used in college entrance and proficiency examinations, higher education brought into play "direct writing assessment using student writing" (327). The drawback to this new (and much welcomed) form of testing was

that "The methods developed to ensure scoring reliability required that students write to the same topic and in controlled or test-type situations. . . ." (327). As a result, product became the measure of a writer's ability. Fortunately, a concurrent development to direct writing assessment had a great impact on the way in which these testing situations were viewed and conducted.

According to Pat Belanoff, the 1970's also saw the culmination of a "search to improve writing instruction" with a new emphasis

which shifted classroom focus from *written products* to *writing processes*. With its strategy of intervention in a student's writing as she writes, process teaching emphasizes the role of purpose, situation, audience, and feedback--emphasizes, that is, context. ("Portfolios" 16)

But while process theory made sense and was given lip service, the method of evaluation used to assess direct writing testing was not process-based in practice. It was this situation that led Belanoff and Peter Elbow to institute the portfolio system at the State University of New York at Stony Brook:

Thus, our initial portfolio use at Stony Brook grew from the need to meet objections raised by timed, self-contained assessments of writing,

recognition that process pedagogy is undermined by such testing, and a growing awareness of the contextuality of all language use. (16)

Although they began their experimentation on a small scale over four semesters, in the Fall of 1994, they officially implemented portfolios in the first semester composition sections (Elbow and Belanoff, "State University" 6).

A number of other programs were instituted in 1986, such as the University of Michigan's to show exiting student proficiency (Condon and Hamp-Lyons 232). In Virginia, Christopher Newport College's program addressed the state's mandate for a study of higher education proficiency (Rosenberg 69-72). Even more importantly, at the University of Cincinnati, writing portfolios were adopted as part of the curriculum in the Freshman English Program, and in 1989 portfolios were integrated program wide (Durst, Roemer, Schultz 287).

Turning towards a different focus of what portfolio could accomplish, in 1988 Kansas State University aimed primarily at establishing "uniform grading standards" in their first and second semester composition courses" (Smit, Kolonosky, and Seltzer 46-7). Wendy Bishop acknowledges that a good many portfolio program implementations were instituted "because this type of evaluation promises more process oriented and fair proficiency testing than do

multiple choice or essay tests" and because "the portfolio method provides a useful semesterlong evaluation for any writing class" (21). Simply put, in writing portfolios teachers found both a more valid means of measuring students' writing proficiency than traditional measures and an assessment tool that complemented process pedagogy.

The early 1990's evidenced several "firsts" that demonstrated the rapidly growing and pervasive presence of portfolios. In 1991 Pat Belanoff and Marcia Dickson published *Portfolios: Process and Product*, the first book-length work to deal solely with portfolios. In 1992 the Miami University Conference on Portfolios (the first one of its kind) "attempted to bring together some of the diverse strands, weaving portfolios into different material conditions, 'new directions' in both teaching and assessment" (Stygall, Black, Daiker, and Sommers 3-4).

The year 1992 sees Miami University as the "first institution of higher education in the United States to award entering students credit and advanced placement on the basis of a portfolio of high school writing. . . ." (Hamilton 159). Then, in 1993 portfolio is listed "as a separate and distinct area of study" by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (Huot 326). The significance of the rapid rate of acceptance cannot be ignored.

By 1994 the American Association of Higher Education began publishing a listing of institutions where writing portfolios had been implemented; additionally, the ERIC system Clearinghouse of Higher Education Assessment Instruments began to recognize portfolios as an independent assessment tool, and now it "also publishes a pamphlet listing articles and contacts for those exploring portfolios" (Stygall, Black, Daiker, Sommers 1). Also in 1994, a second book dealing with use of portfolios was published: *New Directions in Portfolio Assessment: Reflective Practice, Critical Theory, and Large-Scale Scoring*, edited by Laurel Black, Donald A. Daiker, Jeffrey Sommers, and Gail Stygall. Recognizing that portfolio pedagogy is beyond the infancy stage, this collection of essays focuses on examining the theory and pedagogy behind its applications and opens the door for fresh reflection.

The Theory and Pedagogy of Portfolio-Based Writing Instruction

Since the early discussions by Belanoff and Elbow in the late 1970's and early 1980's, much has been written about portfolio composition's theory and pedagogy, as well as its implementation. The theoretical foundation for portfolio composition is found in the paradigm shift away from current-traditional theory and its emphasis on product. The same concerns that prompted Elbow and Belanoff early on

to implement portfolios in their institution's proficiency testing (confronting the fact that despite the "process" talk, the writing was still being evaluated as "product") bring Yancey to promote portfolios in classroom instruction. Yancey worries that giving lip service to focusing on process falls apart in a traditional writing classroom as soon as individual product evaluation comes into play ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 105-107). First of all, she sees the "power and finality of the grade" on individual essays as shutting down "the interpretive transactions among writer and reader and text" (105), and secondly, she argues that in these classrooms, "essays are not ordinarily read in the context of the past . . . in the context of the student's own work" (106). How can any instructor claim to advance process theory when frequent grading on each piece of writing speaks volumes to students about product?

For Yancey, portfolio theory avoids tendencies to fall back on an emphasis on product:

The portfolio prevents these backward moves as it extends current practice. In portfolio-based writing classes, individual assignments may be submitted and graded comparatively and individually as in "regular" classes. But when student work is ultimately submitted within the

context of a portfolio, the same assignment is read relative to the context of each author's own development. In the final analysis--when the portfolio itself is graded--some assignments may not be included, may not even "count" for the grade. They do "count," however, in the formative sense, in the development of the writer, and that too is what the portfolio is about. ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 106)

In this manner, portfolios promote the strength of process theory: "the reader-writer-text transaction invoked by each piece is conducted within the larger context provided by all the pieces" (106).

Despite the variation among portfolio programs, many of the basic features they share were first implemented by Elbow and Belanoff at Stony Brook. Their program called for a collection of essays to be submitted by the student for a grade at the end of the semester after a pass/fail dry run at mid-term; the portfolio had to pass in order for the student to receive a C or higher in the course, the grade necessary for advancement; metacognitive introductory coversheets were to be included not only for the student's benefit, but so the team of teachers at the "calibration" meetings could get a sense of the developing process for each writer; although teachers could ask for second and

third readings of their students' papers when a discrepancy between the teacher's evaluation and the group's arose, Elbow and Belanoff's program called for the final assessment to come from outside readers ("State University" 6-7).

Such were the basics of their initial program, but because portfolio theory is process-based, its pedagogy continues to be rethought, reevaluated. For example, in Belanoff's "Addendum" to the second article in which she and Elbow chronicled their program at Stony Brook ("Using Portfolios to Increase Collaboration and Community in a Writing Program"), she examines their original intentions six years after implementation and comments on the adjustments made to the program, particularly in the rhetorical nature of the writing assignments (30-36).

Constantly examined and modified to suit individual program needs, portfolio pedagogy, nonetheless, shares essential characteristics, the first being a holistic view of a student's writing proficiency over a period of time. Speaking of the practices in traditional classrooms, Peter Elbow concludes that "we cannot trust the picture of someone's writing that emerges unless we see what he or she can do on various occasions on various pieces" (Preface xii). Writing teachers, Marjorie Roemer, Lucille M. Schultz, and Russell K. Durst argue that portfolios "put the emphasis, where it belong[s], on the writing students do

over time" (456). Thus, improved validity is basic to portfolios as was proposed early on by Elbow and Belanoff ("State University" 6) and others, among them Jeffrey Sommers (153-54).

Yancey emphasizes this same pedagogical approach by describing writing portfolios as "longitudinal in nature" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 102), proposing that an essay "initiated on Monday need not be submitted a week or two later for a final evaluation. Instead, it can be reseen and reshaped and revised in light of what is learned days or weeks or even a month or two later" (102-103).

Another characteristic of portfolio pedagogy is content diversity. Yancey sees portfolios as intended to invite the writer "to try new ways of seeing, new methods of development, new voices" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 104). Elbow and Belanoff, for example, set out varied rhetorical requirements for their students' writing ranging from "imaginative or expressive writing" to more "academic discourse," such as analytical writing ("State University" 7).³ While some questions have been raised about the validity or usefulness of imaginative or expressive writing at the university level, the beauty of portfolio is that each institution, each instructor espousing portfolio pedagogy can decide what rhetorical stances best suit the objectives of her writing course.

Also characteristic of most writing portfolio programs is their metacognitive nature, that is "some exploration by the writers of their own composing process and of their own development as writers" (Yancey, "Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 104). Agreeing with Yancey on the importance of the self-reflection whether in the form of a cover letter, an introduction, a writer's memo, and the like, Glenda Conway comments, "Teachers who assign these reflective documents generally consider them to be at least as valuable and meaningful as the other written materials submitted in portfolios" (83). But because she feels these writings carry more weight than teachers admit (particularly to students), Conway cautions that teachers need to use them more fairly, for example, "as an ongoing component of a course and if the teacher of that course openly discusses his or her reactions to the reflections with students" (92). This is a valid suggestion that recognizes the value of reflection. As Catharine Lucas proposes, "self-evaluation is essential to a writer's growth toward confidence and mastery, in fact is the very stuff of learning" ("Introduction: Writing" 2).

The writing collaboration element of portfolio pedagogy, an additional characteristic of most portfolio programs, involves the coming together of writer with teacher and peers as first level audiences and "as partners, who respond to and advise the writer, helping to evaluate

and rework and select pieces to be submitted for the institutional assessment that finally determines the grade" (Yancey, "Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 104). As in the case with a majority of portfolio composition instructors, Kathy McClelland particularly values collaboration in portfolio. She was reassured of its merits when privy to student comments that showed "they were thinking about their audience, thinking of their writing as their own, and wanting it to be good in and of itself--not for an A" (167). Yancey sees collaboration as a "pedagogical device" one that expands "the teacher-student dialogue throughout the course" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 114). Belanoff and Elbow see it "not just [as] sharing drafts and getting feedback from peers, teachers, and tutors in the Writing Center but also [as] a sense of a community of support. . . . [that] helps students learn better and with more pleasure" ("Using Portfolios" 18). Positing collaboration as "One of the most well-established principles of learning theory," Andrea Lunsford argues that "learning occurs as part of an interaction either between the learner and the environment or, more frequently, between the learners and peers" (348).

While most practitioners of portfolio pedagogy see the merits of its basic characteristics--the holistic view of writing proficiency, the diversity in writing it requires,

its metacognitive nature, and the collaborative component, they also address important concerns. Belanoff and Elbow as others, mostly critics of portfolio, raise the question of "cheating" as a result of the heavy emphasis on collaboration in portfolio. They admit, "This system will not catch a student who gets a roommate or a mother to do all his revising" ("Using Portfolios" 19). However, they point out that teachers try to avert this by requiring much drafting and revising in and out of class and do not allow last minute topic changes (19). Cheryl Armstrong Smith wonders at this kind of concern "from the perspective of a process-oriented course" (289). Like Belanoff and Elbow, she explains, "A teacher knows that her students wrote the essays they submit because she has seen them in draft and has responded to them herself" (289). Admittedly, "Traditional proficiency tests prevent this kind of cheating, but at a price of undermining a good writing process" (Belanoff and Elbow, "Using Portfolios" 19).

Closely related to the concern over "cheating" is the possibility of grade inflation as a result of the multiple revision opportunities after feedback from teacher and peers. Jeffrey Sommers challenges portfolio instructors to consider this issue seriously as they make decisions over maintaining or raising grading standards (157). But a direct correlation of grade inflation to portfolio pedagogy has not

been demonstrated since most teachers in this system evaluate in the context of the process through which the student has arrived at the final portfolio. Having examined the course grades after the first year of portfolio implementation at Middle Tennessee State University (1994-95), Ayne Cantrell, then Writing Program Administrator, reveals that

instead of grades becoming inflated as a result of the portfolio system, as some of my colleagues feared, the grade point average actually dropped 2/10 of a point in the portfolio classes taught by graduate students as compared to the year before, and the grade average of portfolio sections taught by all teachers was the same as that of the department as a whole: 2.3, slightly higher than a C. ("Writing Teachers" 5)

Two features of portfolio pedagogy that affect the relationship between teacher and students are deferred grading and norming of grades, practices that provoke another concern on the part of portfolio teachers and program administrators. The deferring of grades, while it causes anxiety in some students, eventually results in more attention paid and more value given to teacher comments. In Belanoff and Elbow's experience,

students often ignore comments when there is a grade; and teachers often write better comments when they're not having to justify a grade. Comments under the portfolio system are more likely to be experienced as real communication: something the teacher wants the student to act on and something the student has a need to understand. ("Using Portfolios" 25).

The relationship between teacher and student is dramatically changed in the Belanoff and Elbow program because the final decision as to whether a portfolio receives the critical C or not is left up to the decision of the norming group, despite the fact that all other grade decisions are the teacher's ("Using Portfolios" 24-25). They see the evolving relationship between teacher and student as "'collaborative leadership': the kind of collaboration one finds between player and coach. . . . both parties share the common goal of winning games" (24). McClelland comments that her students no longer saw her as an "expert" but, instead, as "just another reader for them" (167).

In other programs, such as the one implemented at Middle Tennessee State University, the teacher uses the group's advice in determining what portfolio grade to assess but is eventually not bound by it. Concerned others, like Smith, even question the giving of a grade in portfolio at

all (290), and Jeffrey Sommers argues that the system falls into "a grading environment lurking beneath the writing environment of the course" (156-57). However, despite this questioning of the eventual evaluation of the portfolio, recognized authority on writing assessment, Edward M. White points out that teachers who do not grade the portfolio lose a "powerful assessment tool" (122).

Regardless of how final evaluation is perceived, deferred grading is admittedly a more process-oriented pedagogical approach than grading individual essays. Lucas argues that portfolio is superior to traditional composition instruction because it "actually teaches rather than merely motivates through reward and punishment" ("Introduction: Writing" 2). Answering those that object to grading the portfolio, she cautions that the system "does not deny the students a summative evaluation of their work; it simply introduces formative evaluation and moves it to a new level of importance where the students' own evaluative activity is allowed to develop" (10). However, William H. Thelin worries that more harm than good is done to the students unless there is a close correlation between "response style," "evaluation criteria," and the "class structure" (114). Thelin concludes that "The purpose for using the portfolio cannot conflict with other pedagogical goals without . . . impeding students' development as writers and thinkers"

(125). As in all sound pedagogy, establishing realistic and relevant objectives and careful planning to meet those goals are critical in portfolio.

The norming of grades does not only affect the teacher/student relationship, but also that among the professionals themselves. To Belanoff and Elbow, evaluating portfolios together as a community of teachers is "an antidote to teacher isolation . . . [and] brings teachers together to work as colleagues" ("Using Portfolios" 20). Writing teachers came together at least twice during a semester, at mid-term and final portfolio submissions, to norm on assessment of writing. Belanoff and Elbow feel, portfolios helped their teachers "move toward community, toward some commonality of standards--but only over a period of semesters and years" (21). When teachers participate in norming sessions and then return to their classrooms, "they speak in their own voices but the voices of their colleagues play a role in how they speak" (22).

Nonetheless, the time consuming aspects of teacher involvement in portfolio practice have led to concern. Because of the emphasis on revision, supported by the collaboration from peers and teacher, as well as the requirements of norming sessions, there has been some concern over the potential overload for composition teachers adopting writing portfolios. Bishop admits that this system

is not intended to be "necessarily easier for teachers" (21) and offers some suggestions for coping with the load, such as collecting final portfolios up to two weeks before the semester's end to allow for the extra time necessary to read and evaluate them (24-25). In the case of portfolios that present revisions as well as final drafts, White comments that they do

leave teachers with a great heap of folders to get through at the end of the term. But no one demands that they reread every word of every draft of every paper in every portfolio. They must read selectively, and since they have come to know the students pretty well, they can decide where to invest their limited time. (123)

Jeffrey Sommers addresses this issue also and offers several suggestions, such as setting deadlines for individual drafts and reading final portfolios holistically (157-59). Most experienced portfolio teachers know that just as the multiple feedback opportunities aid in the controlling of "cheating" situations, so do they facilitate a holistic assessment at the end of the term by familiarizing the teacher not only with the students but with their writing as well.

Elbow surmises teachers espouse portfolio because the system "rewards rather than punishes the essential things we

try to place at the heart of our writing courses: exploratory writing . . . discussion with peers and with teacher; feedback on drafts from peers and teacher; and extensive, substantive revision" (Preface xv). But all portfolio proponents address the issues of careful planning and keeping a close eye on pedagogical decisions that support the process theory. This is particularly important with portfolio because each program is individually developed. Bishop predicts, "Teachers who design and utilize an evaluation procedure . . . that is consistent with the course goals and teaching pedagogy, will learn the pleasures of using evaluation to improve rather than to prove instruction" (25).

Portfolio-Based Writing Instruction at Middle Tennessee State University

The MTSU program was devised by members of the English Department's Lower Division English Committee, Ayne Cantrell and Sushil Oswal, after initial discussions in the Spring 1994. Their discussions grew out of teacher dissatisfaction with the English Department's freshman folder system which had been in use for at least thirty-six years (Cantrell, Interview). The folder system was linked to the *Harbrace College Handbook* for the purpose of enabling students in the production of error-free writing. In other words, the focus was primarily on product for most of the faculty.

Cantrell and Oswal's objectives were to propose an alternate teaching method that would 1) "complement process pedagogy and its focus on writing as revision"; 2) "allow for developmental aspect of acquiring writing skills without penalizing students with grades before these skills are acquired"; 3) "address problems of having TA's grade essays before they were ready"; and 4) "build a community of writing teachers" (Cantrell, Interview). A portfolio-based composition program was the answer. Because Oswal had been part of the portfolio program at the University of Cincinnati, the proposal to implement a portfolio pilot capitalized on his experience and Cantrell's long-standing focus on process (Cantrell, Interview).

In the program devised by Cantrell and Oswal, students write five essays, the first two from a personal rhetorical perspective, the other three from a more academic rhetorical stance. The writer then selects the best three essays of five--one from the first two writings, two from the last three. Having undergone multiple revisions (minimum of four each) after receiving feedback from peers and teacher, each essay in the portfolio exemplifies the writer's best work.

The assessment of this body of work, which is supported in norming sessions with other portfolio instructors at mid-term and semester's end, is the only grade for writing which is figured into the students' final course average and

counts for 75% of the course grade--all other drafts of the essays receive only feedback; although, an informational grade is given at mid-term on an essay selection from the first two. One difference between this program and some others, such as Elbow's and Belanoff at Stony Brook, is that the individual teacher has autonomy over grades on portfolios rather than relinquishing that duty to the norming group.

As with similar programs, the primary advantage of the MTSU Portfolio Program's delay of grading is that students are given time to develop writing skills *before* writing is assessed. Thus, the system recognizes that writing skills are developmental--not learned all at once--so why assess before students are ready? As Yancey argues, "the gift of time allows students to learn to become writers, rather than to learn to write papers" ("Teachers' Stories" 17). Additionally, because students select the pieces submitted themselves, the concept of student ownership of the writing is stressed. Thus, by designing a portfolio-based composition program that privileges revision and grounds assessment in process-based theory and that withholds the evaluation of student writing until fifteen weeks of writing instruction, Cantrell and Oswal met their initial two objectives for an alternative teaching method to replace product-based writing instruction at MTSU.

The other two objectives that gave rise to the program at MTSU focus on the training of graduate teaching assistants and the fostering of a sense of community among all participants. As the pilot got under way in the Fall 1994 semester, portfolio became "an integral part of our teacher training program" (Cantrell, "Training" 2). Cantrell disputes Yancey's contention that using portfolios as part of teacher training should be delayed to allow for acquisition of some experience ("Make Haste" 210-12). She proposes that "graduate students with no prior experience in teaching writing can utilize portfolio assessment successfully in their first attempts at teaching writing as process" (Cantrell, "Training" 2). Presenting a compelling argument, Cantrell asserts,

Just as the portfolio system appropriately defers evaluation until novice writers have time to develop their skills over fifteen weeks of the course, the portfolio system aptly postpones the act of grading for novice teachers until they have had time to adjust to their dual roles as students and teachers, and more importantly, to develop as writing instructors. ("Writing Teachers" 5)

The community of writing teachers that evolved out of the norming sessions was one that benefited all, the experienced and inexperienced alike. For the TA's new to the

teaching of writing, the meetings offered a platform to air concerns, voice questions and opinions, and "discuss composition theory, practice, research, and disciplinary lore" (Cantrell, Interview). For the more seasoned members of the group, the sessions offered fresh perspectives and a chance to "explore, comment, question, and critique the assumptions of the department's writing program, our teaching pedagogy, and our overall community" (Cantrell, Interview).

The initial concerns over the implementation of portfolio pedagogy at MTSU have not materialized after two pilots (Fall of 1994 and 1995 semesters), its adoption as the official teacher training methodology, and its use in 60% of the first-semester writing course (English 111) since Spring semester 1995. According to Cantrell, Portfolio Program Coordinator, anticipated incidents of student concern over withheld grades have not materialized, nor has the rate of grade appeals been any more significant than in the traditional classrooms (Interview). Instances of plagiarism have not increased, with the rate of occurrence being about the same as in non-portfolio classes (Interview). She also comments that the faculty concern over possible grade inflation has been dispelled as a result of a drop in grade point average of 2/10 of a point in portfolio classes taught by TA's. And finally, turning to issues that

affect teacher workload, Cantrell points out that the holistic approach to portfolio evaluation minimizes the threat of an overwhelming load and that the benefits of team assessment far outweigh any disadvantages incurred as a result of time invested.

A key aspect of MTSU's portfolio program is the constant rethinking, reevaluating of its pedagogy, the same focus on process it encourages in its students. The questioning process that results in continuously improving pedagogy is endorsed by many proponents of portfolios, among them Yancey: "teachers should expect to revise their approaches to portfolio continually on the basis of their experience with them" ("Portfolios in the Writing Classroom" 107). Belanoff and Elbow were certainly prepared for this as they presented their program to a nationwide audience: "What is most likely is that some other writing program, in adapting [portfolio] to their setting, will work out some deft but powerful transformation so that it comes out completely different and much better. We know it can be better. . . ." ("Using Portfolios" 29). In this vein, the faculty of MTSU who employ portfolios in their classrooms continue adapting their pedagogy to meet their objectives and their students' needs. Their diligence is reflected in changes in writing assignments and course activities as set

forth in *Portfolio Composition* (1998), the student's guide to Portfolio English 111 now in its third edition:

Each year we ask our teachers and students to evaluate the portfolio program, and many of their suggestions are adopted. Portfolio-based composition at MTSU is constantly evolving based on our experiences in the classroom. Each year we find much more that works well. (Cantrell, Interview).

The participants' commitment is commendable, indeed.

Chapter III

Computer-assisted Composition

The second influential pedagogy instrumental in the creating of CAI Portfolio English 111 is computer-assisted instruction. This chapter will offer a brief historical overview of the field, some of the theoretical and pedagogical approaches at the core of computers in composition, and an account of computer-assisted writing instruction now used in the English Department at Middle Tennessee State University.

Before launching into a discussion about computers in composition, a distinction must be made between the concepts of the computer and the word processing software. In my experience, the two are synonymous in the minds of many newcomers to the technology, but, of course, they are not. References to the computer in this discussion address the considerable benefits resulting from its word processing capabilities and also incorporate the bigger picture. This picture encompasses the contributions the computer makes as a result of its linking writers not only with each other through electronic conferencing--asynchronous (delayed-time, such as e-mail) and synchronous (real-time, such as chat rooms)--but also with the outside world, through the Internet and the World Wide Web.

One of the most vivid comparisons bringing into clear focus the uniquely rapid gains in magnitude and advancements made in computer technology is offered by Mark R. Lepper. Writing in 1985, Lepper points out that personal computers on the market costing under \$1,000.00 offered more computational power than the \$10 million machines the size of a living room used thirty years earlier (1). Comparing the computer and automobile industries, Lepper surmises that if cars had progressed at the same rate as computers, "each of us would be able to buy a Rolls-Royce today for roughly \$2.75; it would get nearly 3,000,000 miles to the gallon and would deliver enough power to tow an aircraft carrier" (1). Gail E. Hawisher and Paul LeBlanc surmise,

Compared to the adoption of other communication technologies and the time it took for their impact to be felt, writing and the printing press for example, the pace at which modern industrial culture is appropriating the microcomputer is breathtaking. (Introduction 152)

These eye-opening comments offer sobering news for education professionals attempting to stay abreast with the pace of technological advances. Marjorie Montague asks, "How can we possibly expect teachers to stay current with respect to the remarkable pace at which new devices are invented and become available to the public?" (5). Imbedded in this question

lies the concern voiced by many inside and outside the field of computers and composition. But before we explore some of the theory and pedagogy behind this phenomenon, a quick chronological perusal of the developments will help to add some perspective, particularly to readers not familiar with the history of computers in composition.

An Overview of the History of Computers in Composition

Gail E. Hawisher, one of the leading authorities writing about the use of computers to teach writing today, points out that the two major contributions brought to composition studies by the use of computers, word processing and electronic conferencing, were "uncommon to the writing instructor's life before the advent of the fully-assembled microcomputer in 1977 and each . . . entered our professional lives sometime during the eighties" ("Electronic Meetings" 81). Their emergence coincides with the rise of the process paradigm and social constructivist views of language respectively, so they did not grow in a vacuum (81). The academic atmosphere was ready for both.

Possibly the most in-depth historical account of the field of computers in composition is found in *Computers and the Teaching of Writing in American Higher Education, 1979-1994: A History*. Co-authored by Gail E. Hawisher, Paul LeBlanc, Charles Moran, and Cynthia L. Selfe.⁴ As is generally known, the use of computers did not begin with

educational applications, but with military ones. Joan Tornow points that the first uses were intended for the handling of data and then in the 1960's and 1970's, for use as a conferencing system (16). Also, in the 1970's the Department of Defense sponsored ARPANET, "a wide-area network that would allow communication, command, and control even in the midst of nuclear war" (16).

The importance of the linking capability was clearly evident. These two decades also saw the move of computers into the classroom--CAI programs--but they were primarily used for the purpose of drill and practice or tutoring aides (Hawisher, LeBianc, Moran, and Selfe 34).

One of the first revolutionary steps in the incorporation of the computer in writing courses came with the introduction of the microchip in 1970 (Montague 3). This milestone made the microcomputer possible and initiated the move of CAI from a drill and practice tool to an enabler of text production through word processing software. The machine's

relatively low cost put technology within the reach of writing programs and writing instructors. When the two came together, there was no looking back. Writing teachers discovered in the technology a delivery vehicle for the new process approaches that were taking hold in the field

generally. . . . So naturally did microcomputers and attendant word-processing software lend themselves to writing that this has come to be the primary use of microcomputers in most educational settings. By the end of this first period in the use of computers in composition, computer writing labs and classrooms were appearing around the country. (Hawisher, LeBlanc, Moran, and Selfe 41)

Clearly, the rhetorical focus of this stage in computer development is on the writer, a focus already indicated by the acronym PC, personal computer, as suggested by Myron C. Tuman (84).

In the 1980's the use of computers in the classroom moved from the concept of one individual at one machine to the revolutionary idea of many writers linked together through a network--whether a Limited Access Network (LAN) or a Wide-Area Network (WAN). Paul Taylor asserts that "With the introduction of personal computers and local area networks in the 1980's, educators began to consider possible classroom applications for electronic conferencing" (138). Tornow reaffirms the significance of this leap:

When computers became linked, or networked, the private composing screen suddenly had the potential to be a public space for sharing texts. Although collaboration and peer response was not

new, it now could be pursued with relative ease. Papers which had been stored in class files or sent as email did not have to be printed up, but could simply be "opened" on anyone's screen. (199)

Fittingly, the origin of networked computer classroom arises from student need. Most sources chronicling this portion of computers in composition's history point to the ENFI Project (Electronic Networks for Interaction). While the emergence of electronic conferencing in composition classes is found at the University of Texas in 1985, the precursor to this development is Trent Batson's work with deaf students at Gallaudet University in 1983 (Tornow 16). The results of Batson's use of computers to link deaf students was astounding:

People *typing* to each other over the wires in a room full of computers could simulate a spoken conversation and thus, for the first time ever, allow deaf people to directly experience and participate in a live group discussion in English. (qtd. in Tornow 17)

A group of University of Texas then graduate students--Fred Kemp, Paul Taylor, and Locke Carter--initiated a merger of Batson's application with the newly developing collaborative pedagogy; the results were the first ENFI computer classroom

"in which students could conduct synchronous online conversations" (Tornow 18).

As Tornow points out, one of the most significant aspects of the development of electronic conferencing is that it

evolved from grass-roots yearnings for more collaborative writing instruction. . . . It is noteworthy that this software was designed *by* students and *for* students. . . . it was a group of students in a basement who solved the electronic puzzles that would enable students at the University of Texas to converse and collaborate via computer about their lives, their ideas, and their writing. (18-19)

The student-centered aspect of computers in composition was deeply ingrained, indeed.

Tornow sees the early text-based form of computer networking as "the harbingers of change" (Tornow 23). She concludes, "From its inception, classroom networking was not simply a 'new tool' or a 'new technology' but a major breakthrough which teachers saw as enabling radical changes in classroom pedagogy" (23).

By the 1990's the next move in the progression of networked computer use in the classroom gained ground with the growing popularity of hypertext in the Internet and the

World Wide Web. In this case, the linking achieved does not simply bring the writer and reader(s)/collaborator(s) together but also integrates multiple texts, graphics, and sound. The implications are astronomical.

Many computers-in-composition instructors have made the leap not only into teaching writing completely online as students produce strictly electronic text but also into using hyperlinks to augment the depth of the students' work. The main concern, as with the other computer applications, lies in sound theory and pedagogy. As Henrietta Nickels Shirk maintains in "Hypertext and Composition Studies," it is critical "for hypertext authors to develop underlying structures--mental modes or metaphors--for their information" (182), an area which she regrettably admits, is "at present untapped by most hypertext authors" (183).

Although George P. Landow traces the origins of the concept of hypertext to Vannevar Bush's 1945 Memex machine, used for the cataloguing and linking of data, the term was first used in the 1960's by Theodor H. Nelson (3). To Nelson, the concept means "*nonsequential writing*--text that branches and allows choices to the reader, best read at an interactive screen. As popularly conceived, this is a series of text chunks connected by links which offer the reader different pathways" (qtd. in Landow 4). While the focus in this explanation is clearly on the reader or audience, the

writer or the creator of the text is a critical component as well.

Landow attempts to dispel the apprehension such a notion might bring to his readers, particularly composition teachers, by reminding all that this is really an extension of what writers do for their audiences when they compose documented scholarly papers:

one reads through what is conventionally known as the main text, encounters a number or symbol that indicates the presence of a foot- or endnote, and leaves the main text to read that note, which can contain a citation of passages . . . that supposedly support [sic] the argument in question or information about the scholarly author's indebtedness to other authors, disagreement with them, and so on. The note can also summon up information about sources, influences, and parallels in other literary texts. In each case, the reader can follow the link to another text indicated by the note and thus move entirely outside the scholarly article itself. Having completed reading the note or having decided that it does not warrant a careful reading at the moment, one returns to the main text and continues

reading until one encounters another note, at which point one again leaves the main text. (4-5)

To put it in less academic terms, an often used examples of linked text is the Bible with its varying degrees of correspondences, explanations, references, and other materials. The concept, then, is not new, but it places a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of writers who include hypertext into their texts. Hypertext has caused a stir in the area of composition studies as writing teachers attempt to incorporate it and the other aspects of computerized instruction into their own classrooms.

The Theory and Pedagogy of Computer-Assisted Writing Instruction

A critical mandate of any teaching approach to composition as the move is made into incorporating computers into a writing course is to have a clearly identified theory and corresponding pedagogy in place. In *Creating a Computer Supported Writing Facility: A Blueprint for Action*, respected computers-in-the-classroom expert Cynthia L. Selfe sounded the alarm in 1989. In her book, she questions the depth of thought given by many instructors as they make the transition towards incorporating technology in their composition courses:

The most reluctant among us now accept that there is some role for computers in the teaching of

written language, but not even the most enthusiastic claim to know just what that role should be. Indeed, if our current use of computers is marked by any common theme at all, it is experimentation at the most basic level. (xix)

She also voices concern over the lulling effect the miraculous nature of the computer's word processing capabilities might have on composition teachers; after all, these capabilities emerged about the time "the burden of the process paradigm was weighing heavily on our collective pedagogical conscience" ("The Electronic Pen" 55). Her advice is simple; she stresses what instructors should already know: writing teachers should "start with what they know about writing and teaching rather than what they know about technology. . . . [They should] concentrate on writing. . . . keeping attention on writers and the activity of writing" (*Creating a Computer* xxi, 7, 8). In other words, the curriculum should shape the use of the computer not the other way around (11). This advice is also given by countless others, among them Deborah H. Holdstein ("A Theory of One's Own? An Introduction to Theoretical and Critical Contexts for Composition and Computers") and Thomas T. Barker ("Computers and the Instructional Context"). Selfe's rationale in setting up the Michigan Technological University's Computer-Supported Writing Facility focused on

allowing students "to practice writing and to write for a variety of audiences and purposes if they hoped to become better writers" (*Creating a Computer* 27).

In *Re-Imagining Computers and Composition: Teaching and Research in the Virtual Age*, Gail Hawisher and Paul LeBlanc voice similar concerns. They reaffirm that "Analyzing our teaching carefully and bringing this sort of critical approach into our writing classes suggests sound pedagogy that we all benefit from" (Introduction 3). Patricia R. Webb cautions that

If we introduce technology without explaining to our students the ways it can be used. . . . If we do not bring their perceptions of technologies and writing to the foreground and make these perceptions part of class discussion, we make no headway. Once we engage their perceptions and assumptions, we can teach students to use the technology to collaborate with one another, to question their assumptions about writing, and to expand their concept of audience. (77)

Addressing the discipline as a whole, Holdstein argues in "A Theory of One's Own? An Introduction to Theoretical and Critical Contexts for Composition and Computers" that there is a clear hierarchy of value affixed to the different disciplines within English studies, a hierarchy suggested by

the order of fields in her title--with literature imbedded in the middle (31). She goes on to add that "There is little or no active theory unique to the field" of computers and composition and then proposes that "Theories that are process-based or that emphasize the social or interdisciplinary nature of discourse offer appropriate foundations for our work" (31, 33). The emphasis in the computer classroom is on "multiple drafts and multiple responses to drafts; on peer revision groups; on a concern with gender, race, and class in our writing and teaching; and on other process-based, theory-influenced goals with which we teach composition" (34). These important observations parallel the essence of the arguments in Mina P. Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing* and Peter Elbow's *Writing without Teachers*: one of the best ways to improve writing is to keep students producing and examining texts (whether print-based or, as in this case, electronic-based). Thus, the theory at the heart of computers in composition is akin to that espoused by portfolio-based instruction, grounded in sound rhetorical theory that emphasizes the writer, the audience, and the process which produces a text for a specific rhetorical situation.

Thinking about the pedagogy behind the use of technology Tuman prompts us to ask, "Why then should we

expect so much more from computers? Are computers really designed to do anything more than to facilitate our entering text? . . . Are computers really anything more than turbo-charged typewriters?" (2). Central to these questions lies what all writing teachers want to know: whether the capabilities afforded by the computer's, "ability either to manage different fonts and margins or to retrieve, search, merge, and save chunks of text . . . will necessarily lead to 'better' (more organized, more insightful) writing" (4). Holdstein replies that "though the computer cannot in itself make students write more effectively, it can be a tremendous enhancement tool for writing instruction. Its value will depend entirely on the ways in which faculty members choose to adapt it to their teaching style" (*On Composition* 6). Those who have carefully and thoughtfully integrated technology into their teaching methodology can respond with a resounding, "Yes!" Speaking of the contributors to *Computers and Community: Teaching Composition I the Twenty-first Century*, Richard A. Lanham asks, "Do the students write better prose when the text is electronic? The authors presented here argue that they do" (xiv).

Benefits of Student-Centered, Collaborative, and Hypertext Aspects of CAI

One of the most obvious pedagogical changes, and benefits, computers bring to the classroom lies in the shift

from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction, what Tuman calls a "revolutionary breakthrough in [the] pattern of control . . . removing the author/teacher from the middle, allowing readers/students to pursue their own interests" (83). The traditional, teacher-centered classroom "extends oppressive social forces, isolating individuals from one another and emphasizing the deficiencies in what they produce (their product)" (83). Barker agrees with Tuman claiming that teacher-centered instruction "often impedes . . . the recognition of self-discovery of knowledge by students, from books, from their experiences, and so on" (9). He also points out that the early effect of teacher-centered instruction on the use of computers was to relegate it to developmental writing matters such as drill and practice in areas of deficiency (9). Fortunately, as the technology has moved more and more into a position of importance in the area of composition studies, this "dismissal" is no longer the case; instead, the attitude prevails "that increased reliance upon the technology of computers will result in a diffusion of power to students and, presumably, to readers and to citizens at large--presumably for everyone's benefit" (Tuman 83).

A move from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction does not, should not, hint at an automation that will replace writing instructors. Barker argues, "This

notion is patently false, as any writing instructor will realize who considers the complexity of the subject of writing, the need for individualization, and the difficulty in understanding written discourse" (9). Instructors who have implemented computers into their pedagogy and into their classrooms know the heightened importance of careful planning of the merger of theory and practice and the critical nature of continued teacher support and feedback as students come into this setting for the purpose of learning composition. Lanham proposes that the result of student-centered pedagogy is to move the teacher's role to that of "learned coordinator" (xiv). The removal of the focus on the teacher simply serves to allow students to take the responsibility for their own learning.

Another positive pedagogical aspect of using computers in composition is the "connecting [of] people directly with each other" (Tuman 83). Whether through a networked classroom or through e-mail, computers allow a greater degree of collaboration with a potential for a broadening understanding of audience:

it is as a networking rather than a calculating tool that computers are transforming composition studies at the levels of practice and theory. . . . To the extent possible, students in networked classrooms are supposed to write

directly to each other regarding topics and material under discussion. . . . there are no isolated, no privileged texts, only actively engaged, co-equal readers and writers. (84)

Hawisher begins a discussion of the pro's and con's of electronic conferencing by stating one of its greatest contributions: "When participants in an electronic conference communicate with one another, be the conference synchronous or asynchronous, they are totally immersed in writing" ("Electronic Meetings" 84). She points out some drawbacks such as "flaming" (emotionally charged, improper behavior grounded on the freedom afforded by the medium), "communication anxiety" (based on the opposite reaction to the "freedom"), and sensory overload ("Electronic Meetings" 91-93). However, despite these drawbacks, she sees many more benefits: through electronic conferencing, networking capabilities "provide a real and expanded audience" (86); "encourage a sense of community" (87); "demonstrate a high degree of involvement on the part of participants" (87-88); "encourage equitable participation (88-89); and "encourage a decrease in leader-centered communication" (90-91).

Along the same line, Tornow builds on these positive aspects of networking by proposing that "The user may have the sensation of looking not at a machine but through a

machine to one's peers, or to information sources beyond the machine itself" (15).

Carolyn Handa proposes the collaboration resulting from networking and electronic conferencing as the new pedagogy for computers in composition. She sees collaboration as

a move outward from the writer to others who provide response and input. . . . [It] means much more than just organizing students in groups. . . . It involves getting students to realize consciously how much others--sometimes even those we haven't met--help develop our ideas. ("Politics" 162)

Thus, through electronic conferencing, computers serve a rhetorical end that emphasizes solid communication and the critical relationship between writer and audience.

Bringing these two pedagogical aspects together, student-centered and networked instruction, Montague surmises that "The educational community recognizes that learning is greatly enhanced when learners are actively involved in the learning process and given the opportunity for dialogue with teachers and peers" (17). Computers, as seen by Montague, promote writing by minimizing problems that impede the act of composing (i.e., organization, grammar, mechanics) and promote "the communicative aspect of writing by providing the context for interaction" (22).

Elizabeth A. Sommers posits four important points that must be observed if the student is to benefit from CAI; although appearing in 1985, her advice rings true today:

1. The writing teacher is indispensable as collaborator and audience, as facilitator and assignment-maker. Microcomputers alone cannot teach writers why revision is important, or how to bring a first draft to full meaning. Nor can currently available software read and respond to student writing on any satisfactory level. As technology evolves this will continue to be true.
2. Writers learn best when writing is taught as a process in decentralized classrooms. In doing so, the conference method of instruction is most valuable as a primary mode of instruction. CAI can help, but it can't take over the central roles played by writers and respondents.
3. The microcomputer is most valuable as a writing tool enhancing our writers' abilities to explore, to articulate, and to reshape. Whatever the part of the writing process emphasized, teachers should be aware that writers learn to write holistically, and microcomputer uses should enhance this holistic sense of discourse.⁵

4. Microcomputers are counter-productive when used in a theoretical vacuum. We need to employ great care when we integrate microcomputers into our classrooms. This means avoiding soft-ware which concentrates exclusively upon subskills or isolates them prematurely. Software which neglects or fragments the holistic process involved in writing is also unacceptable, and so is software which teaches grammar prescriptively while purporting to teach writing. We reject these unsound microcomputer uses for the same reasons we reject other unsound teaching practices: they don't teach writers how to write. (9-10)

Turning to the element of hypertext, its advantages over conventional text lie primarily in that

in print technology the referenced or linked materials lie spatially distant from the references to them. Electronic hypertext, in contrast makes individual references easy to follow and the entire field of interconnections obvious and easy to navigate. (Landow 5)

The result is a much richer text, "woven more tightly into its context than would a printed counterpart" (5), the rhetorical context emphasized by sound communication theory. Additionally, hypertext forces the reader/audience to become

a much more active participant, as Roland Barthes suggests, "a producer of the text" (qtd. in Landow 5).

All these rhetorically sound, multi-dimensional benefits afforded by the use of computers in the composition classroom are impossible to ignore. Much like its contemporary, portfolio-based composition, CAI at its best stresses rhetorical theory by focusing new attention on the writer, the audience, and the process of composing text.

Computer-Assisted Writing Instruction at Middle Tennessee State University

The heart of MTSU's English Department's computers in composition is Professor Larry Mapp whose total commitment to maintaining and upgrading the Ginanni Computer Classroom's capabilities is legendary among his colleagues. Mapp traces the inception of the program to 1993 and an "act of faith" on the part of then English Department Chair, Frank Ginanni. Ginanni had witnessed the impact of computers on the faculty and wanted to provide the same kind of "energizing" for the department's students. He was successful in securing funds for the purchasing of computers.

In the Spring of 1993, an *Ad Hoc* Committee made up of Larry Mapp, Ayne Cantrell (then Chair of the department's Lower Division English Committee), and others, assisted Acting Chair Jackie Jackson in purchasing twenty Gateway

computers and monitors and six laser printers (Cantrell, Interview). The equipment was stored for two years; not only was there no available classroom to place them in, but no available moneys for networking them (Mapp).

According to Mapp, before his retirement in 1992, Ginanni besieged the University's Vice President of Academic Affairs at every opportunity to set up a computer facility. During the 1993-94 academic year, as a result of the *Ad Hoc* Committee work, Peck Hall 327 was designated as the location, and the decision over the room's design was finalized (Cantrell, Interview). Various possibilities for the classroom's configuration were considered and rejected, among them a traditional, rows-facing-the-front arrangement; ultimately, a decentralized setting with computers arranged along three walls and a large conference table in the middle was adopted (Mapp).

In the Spring 1995 semester, the room was dedicated as the Frank Ginanni Computer Classroom, and fifteen writing courses were offered in the new classroom during that term ("New English"). Finally, "The combined efforts of the English Department, the Office of Information Technology, and the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration [had] made the lab a reality, providing the needed space, equipment, know-how, and support ("New English").

Early efforts to familiarize faculty with the workings of the computer classroom were conducted by Claudia Barnett, along with Mapp, who has been an invaluable resource of guidance and advice on the workings of Peck Hall 327. An orientation for teachers using CAI was held in the Spring of 1995, and a CAI Training Workshop was conducted in the Fall of 1995.

After undergoing an upgrading in the summer of 1997, the computer classroom now offers 20 Pentium 133MHZ machines, each with a 2Gigabyte hard drive and 32MB of RAM (Mapp). While Mapp points that the students are not yet enjoying the benefits of synchronous networking, primarily because of problems with the Daedalus software, all the computers are linked through a LAN and fiberoptically connected to the university Network providing Internet access. Additional hardware includes a Mustek 24 bit flatbed color scanner connected to the teacher's computer "for easy scanning and importing of text and graphics. It also connects to a flat panel display on an overhead projector which permits the teacher to display on a wall screen anything on the computer's monitor" (Mapp). Surveying the software, Mapp comments,

All computers run Windows 95 and Microsoft Office 95 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). We also have a site license for Hotdog Pro 4.0, a leading HTML

authoring software. All computers now run Netscape 4.0 and a version of Terminal so that students can access Pine email on the university UNIX server.

Mapp's next step is to "work out the bugs" in the application of Daedalus to add that next level of communication to students.

The objectives of the Ginanni Computer Classroom are much like those of its counterparts in other institutions of higher learning: 1) focusing on word processing capabilities, 2) moving towards de-centralizing the classroom (more student-centered where "students come to work"), and 3) improving the networking aspect, asynchronous and synchronous (Mapp). Mapp's pedagogy, as is that of the majority of the instructors who have followed him into the computer classroom at MTSU, is student-centered: "If you can get your students to work, get them to write, and you are an attentive observer and participant in the process, your students will teach you how to teach them." He believes in "writing classrooms where teachers don't talk very much." While this may not be problematic with the faculty who have espoused CAI, it seems obvious to him that many of the student teachers he trains have a hard time adjusting to this concept. In familiarizing them with pedagogically sound techniques to use in the computerized classroom, sometimes he feels the need to tell them to be quiet!

By mid-1998, the Ginanni Computer Classroom had been used for a variety of course offerings: first and second semester Freshman Composition, Technical Writing, Advanced Composition, Advanced Composition in Legal Writing, Honors English, Seminars in Composition, Bibliography and Research, Creative Writing, and others. Mapp proudly points out that the demand for Peck Hall 327 (the computer classroom's current location) has increased tremendously. His plans and projections for the future will be addressed in Chapter V.

As with any computers in composition program, one invaluable key to determining how all the technology enhances teaching and learning at MTSU is to review our practices constantly, continually shining the light on what we are doing. Thomas T. Barker and Fred O. Kemp advise that "Whatever uses the computer will be put to in the writing classroom, the effectiveness of such uses will depend more on a controlling pedagogy and its theoretical base than on the technical capabilities of the machines themselves" (26). In light of all the changes, Hawisher and LeBlanc suggest the question might arise as to what direction professionals involved with computers and composition should take: "The firm answer is forward, as teachers and researchers, equipped with effective methodologies and tools, navigating the virtual waters of the future" (Introduction 153). This

is the direction in which Mapp and his colleagues in the English Department plan to proceed.

Chapter IV

Merging the Two Pedagogies at MTSU:

CAI Portfolio English 111

Now that the abbreviated histories and the theoretical and pedagogical approaches of portfolio-based and computer-assisted pedagogies have been briefly chronicled and that the early stages of the programs at MTSU have been detailed, it is time to turn the attention to how the merger of pedagogies works. How is the theoretical emphasis on invention, audience, text, and writer ownership carried out in CAI Portfolio English 111? How are the elements of word processing and networking capabilities afforded by the computer integrated in the course? This chapter focuses on the answers to these questions and on many other issues as the benefits and limitations of the symbiotic relationship between portfolio-based and computer-assisted are analyzed.

Establishing CAI Portfolio English 111 as a Transitional Classroom

Based on the portfolio program at MTSU, devised by English Professors Ayne Cantrell and Sushil Oswal, CAI Portfolio English 111 implements portfolio pedagogy in the Ginanni Classroom in order to capitalize on the strengths of both approaches to composition. However, this is not an online composition course where all materials, drafts, and dialogue are handled only through a computer terminal. This

is not a course that teaches HTML or encourages hyper-text composition, nor is the objective of the course to produce "electronic portfolios" exclusively, where the technology available might overtake and dominate the composition process. In its innovation, CAI Portfolio English 111 is rather traditionally minded in that its focus is always composition-process oriented.

The specifics dealing with course description and requirements (for example, reading, outlining, and testing based on the primary course text, Elizabeth Cowan Neeld's *Writing*) are detailed through an accompanying web page (to be described later in this chapter); however, students in CAI Portfolio English 111 also receive all course information--syllabus, schedules, essay guidelines, and other materials--in hard copy (See Appendix A). Details involving the five writing assignments are spelled out on the site (See "Five Portfolio Writing Assignments," Appendix A, pp.148-50) but are also reinforced in one of the course's required texts, Ayne Cantrell and Sushil Oswal's *Portfolio Composition: A Student's Guide for English 111 Portfolio Sections* (5-6). Student drafts, too, may be submitted at different stages, not only electronically, but on paper as well. Thus, CAI Portfolio English 111 is like the "transitional classroom" Tim Mayers identifies as "classrooms where electronic (screen-oriented) literacy is

draped over, and supports, print (page-oriented) literacy" (147). Requiring students to be proficient with both literacies has advantages. Charles Moran proposes that since "we now live, and will likely continue to live for some time, in an amphibian condition, one where we function both in the 'elements' of print-text and on-line text," we should "help students manage the transition . . . in ways that take advantage of the special characteristics of the two media" (14).

Cynthia L. Selfe laments that many instructors have adopted the "transitional classroom" concept where we are attempting to blend our "first literacy" with a new one instead of completely shedding the print literacy paradigm ("Preparing" 27). I can only respond that those of us involved in incorporating computer use into our composition courses are trying to gain ground on the new technology cautiously while maintaining sound pedagogy and theory at the forefront. In *Link/Age: Composing in the Online Classroom*, Joan Tornow argues:

We are all mired in tradition to some extent, and change is worrisome and risky. One way to stay anchored in the turbulence of change is to recognize that at least some of the changes affecting us flow from streams that sprang up a long time ago. (223)

The streams of CAI Portfolio English 111 flow from rhetorical theories of effective communication that provide the basis for a compromise between tradition and innovation.

How, then, does our transitional classroom work? How does each of the portfolio program's components implemented at MTSU benefit in the computer-assisted classroom?

Getting Started in CAI Portfolio English 111

From the first day, in addition to becoming aware of the specifics involved in the portfolio system, students in CAI Portfolio English 111 were instructed on the protocols to be followed in order to complete their work successfully in the computer room (See "Requirements and Guidelines," Appendix A, pp. 161-64). Details included the type and number of disks required (one to turn in with all other course materials at the end of the semester and one to use as a back up), the organizational naming of documents for each essay and its components (i.e., essay 1 inventions, essay 1 rough draft, essay 1 peer draft, etc.), the required use of word processing programs compatible with the computers in the Ginanni Classroom, and a series of common sense *do's* and *don'ts*. Many of these practical concerns were adapted from suggestions offered in "Portfolio Assessment and Computerized Composition Instruction: Combining the Best of Both Worlds" by John H. Paddison of Yavapai College in Arizona (4-5).

Also because CAI Portfolio English 111 is not a beginning computer literacy course, introductory material presented early in the course cautioned that students needed to have at least rudimentary word processing knowledge; most problems along this line were averted because the course was listed as a computer-assisted offering in the University's scheduling booklet. Despite this advance notice, some students that enrolled in the course were not sufficiently familiar with computer use, and they required extra time and attention so they would not become what University of Minnesota Professor Donald Ross terms "'the double-bind effect'--that is, a frustration intensified by trying to learn both to write and to use word-processing software at the same time " (qtd. in Holdstein, *On Composition* 10). In CAI Portfolio English 111 these students were the exception rather than the rule.

Teaching Writing-as-Process in CAI Portfolio English 111:
Invention, Audience and Early Drafting

Sound rhetorical practices demand that in the early stages of composition, students should be required to engage in invention strategies--freewriting, brainstorming, cubing, reporter's formula, and the like--what Andrea Lunsford and Cheryl Glenn refer to as "systematic strategies that will aid students in discovering and generating ideas about which they might write" (325) and John R. Hayes and Linda S.

Flower call the generating subprocess of the prewriting stage(12). Erika Lindemann goes further and proposes that "Some prewriting activities enable writers to probe the subject matter from several perspectives; others help writers assess their relationship to an audience" (74).⁶

Whether onto paper or onto computer terminal, the exercise of ascertaining possible topics and what might be said about them is critical. In this way, writers allow themselves time to compile possible material necessary to present as insightful an essay as possible, for instance, details, points, issues, illustrations. In other words, they discover what they know. Portfolio requires this creative stage, and computers make the process easier and more inviting. They encourage students to participate in invention strategies (1) by making the putting down of ideas easy and (2) by reinforcing the student's process, allowing the otherwise messy activity to have a neat appearance. Lindemann stresses, "the more time students spend on a variety of prewriting activities, the more successful the paper will be" (75).

One traditional invention strategy enhanced by the computer is freewriting, brought to its place of prominence in composition studies by Peter Elbow (*Writing without Teachers*) and Ken Macrorie (*Telling Writing*). "Freewriting with a computer," James Strickland comments, "encourages a

free flow of words on the screen—words easily correctable, easily expendable, and easily rearranged if not in quite the right order" (*From Disk 14*). With this strategy, as well as with others like clustering and brainstorming, regrouping of material is made simple, as is making connections between points, through ready use of boldening, italicizing, selecting of different fonts, cutting and pasting to name a few of the tools.

Students in CAI Portfolio English 111 made use of the word processing capabilities the computers offered and found they had a tendency to jot down more ideas simply because it was easier and faster. They also made use of the network aspect of the course by sharing their inventions with peers and asking if any suggestions for additional points could be given.

Another way in which computers contribute to the prewriting stage of the composition process is in facilitating modeling. Because the instructor's computer in the Ginanni Classroom is linked to an overhead projection system, I was able to model different types of inventions as I carried them out. These modeling sessions turned into collaborative efforts much more efficient than their blackboard precursors. Actually, modeling of all aspects of the composition process--inventing, drafting, peer editing,

revising, editing--was presented much more frequently and effectively because of the computer.

Hand-in-hand with the initial emphasis on process and on an effective rhetorical stance afforded by invention strategies come the multiple feedback opportunities built into the course. Often overlooked by inexperienced writers (and teachers), audience is an ever-present concern in effective communication, hence, in the composition process of portfolio students. Lunsford and Glenn propose that "as a discipline, rhetoric has always been intensely interested in the effects a writer's intentions, words, texts have on people in varying situations" (330).

Since most writers come to a composition course thinking that the teacher is their sole audience, audience consideration is of particular importance. With portfolio's focus on writing as a rhetorical problem to solve ("I am writing about what, to whom, for what purpose?"), audience issues are crucial. From the moment they began their invention strategies, through the multiple drafts, audience issues were kept to the forefront for students in CAI Portfolio English 111. An essay coversheet (See "Coversheet Instructions," Appendix A, p.168), which accompanies every draft, forces students to designate their targets clearly and to determine what the piece's objectives are in terms of that audience; writers are also asked to anticipate the

desired response and possible benefits resulting from the audience's reading of the essay. Such a pervasive emphasis demands that writers who might have been oblivious to audience previously come to terms with making writing decisions in order to meet those needs and expectations as closely as possible. In this manner, one of the critical elements of rhetorical theory, audience, was effectively emphasized.

Taught in the computer classroom, the coversheet document can be copied from the web page to the student's documents as the opening page of each draft and becomes an easily adaptable, reflection tool that can accommodate commentary and inquiry from the writer's immediate audiences--peer and teacher. It is also easily revised for future drafts as revisions call for the re-thinking of audience and its needs.

Another way in which the computer-assisted classroom promotes audience lies in the public nature of materials that could be potentially read by anyone, which, of course, is made possible by the networking element of the technology. This realization brings with it a sobering impact on the decisions the writers make during the process. Gail E. Hawisher, among others, concurs with this appraisal of the conferencing features provided through the network ("Electronic Meetings" 86-91). In essence, what is achieved

is what Steve Watkins calls "authentic writing . . . composed primarily for an actual audience (in addition to the evaluator) and composed with the functional purpose of materially affecting that audience" (222). I found this emphasis on audience a welcomed and most useful dimension of CAI Portfolio English 111.

Of course, any discussion on audience and coversheets overlaps issues that involve the drafting process. Once the CAI Portfolio English 111 student had completed the invention strategies and had set down preliminary ideas on the coversheet, the drafting stage began to take shape. Lindemann worries that "One of the constraints on composing is the number of words or phrases we can hold in our short-term memory" (27); fortunately, the efficiency and speed contributed by the computer minimized this concern.

From the invention document, students proceeded to add, delete, move about information to form natural groups or chunks that eventually became the paragraphs in the essay. This was easily achieved on the computer, as writers were able to space-between, tab-over, cut-and-paste at will while grouping material in the most obvious arrangements. Without their having to start over on clean sheets of paper, unsatisfactory arrangements were easily undone.

However, the flexibility of drafting in CAI Portfolio English 111 posed some concern about the drafting process

because computers seemed to blur the lines between the stages in the writing process. This ambiguity could present a pedagogical drawback for many instructors concerned about emphasizing the recursive nature of the process. Strickland responds to that issue by saying that despite this potential problem, "word processing can make a significant contribution to having writers conceive of the writing process as fluid and ever-changing" (*From Disk 10*). Using the portfolio system in conjunction with computers further minimizes this anxiety because portfolio emphasizes the different stages of the writing process, and, thus, allows for the maximizing of the computer's strengths without the nagging worry.

Some students in the course preferred composing the first drafts of their essays by hand, only using the computer's capabilities after initial, large segments of text were ready for "typing" and, later, for revision purposes. This was a preference I could identify with from my early days of composing on the computer since I had experienced the same type of hesitation. However, the majority of the class used the computers for this first draft.

Computer-assisted instruction enhanced the early drafting process in another important way, too. Using the overhead projection system in the Ginanni Classroom, I

presented a volunteer's invention strategies and, while dialoguing with the student about issues, such as audience and purpose, modeled for students the process of bringing ideas together in groups that would evolve into the paragraphs supporting the tentative thesis. Once the groupings were established, I demonstrated the efficiency of inserting text for clarity, readability, and vital details. As we worked, I highlighted the ease the computer affords, trying to set aside some of the fears or hesitation on the part of students who preferred paper and pen.

Facilitating Feedback in CAI Portfolio English 111: Peer and Teacher Response to Student Writing

Since I began my involvement in the portfolio system, one of the components that interested me the most was peer response, that part of drafting in which students respond to each other's writing. This is an area of interest and concern for many in composition studies. Marjorie Montague points to the value of collaboration among teachers and peers within a writing community and concludes that students "develop evaluative skills as well as a sense of audience" (40). Lunsford and Glenn bemoan the fact that students have "for too long, been writing in a vacuum" (332). They go on to suggest that

In the rhetorical writing classroom, students will broaden their intended audience from teacher-

evaluator to include their peers, carefully considering the responses and evaluations of these peers, perhaps more than they did those of their teachers. (332-33)

While I found Lunsford and Glenn's comments somewhat optimistic, at least for the early stages of the peer response process, my interests centered on devising a system that would promote the use of our informative, productive guidelines presented in Cantrell and Oswal's *Portfolio* (10-12) and facilitate this important component of the process in the computer classroom (See "The Peer Process," Appendix A, pp. 140-42).

What first came to my mind was to make it easier for students to have access to each other's work and to each other as a source of feedback. As in the case with most other programs that teach writing via computer-assisted instruction, the networking aspect of computers provided a rich avenue, and e-mail connections were the first, logical response. But e-mail alone would not satisfy the needs of portfolio. In our peer method, writers received feedback from first-line audiences in two venues--the first from an oral reading of the essay by the writer, the second, from a silent re-reading by the respondent (Cantrell and Oswal 10-12); it was important that both aspects of the process be maintained (See "The Peer Process," Appendix A, pp. 140-42).

As CAI Portfolio English 111 progressed, my students and I implemented a variety of feedback methods in order to accommodate portfolio requirements and to move students gradually into the use of computers for this step of the process. For each writing assignment, the essay was read orally from the writer's terminal as respondents listened or looked on. Next, following guidelines set up by Cantrell and Oswal (95, 83), respondents made comments on the "Notes for Peer's Oral Response" (See Appendix A, p. 144) and gave feedback orally to the "Writers Questions for Peer Group Response" (See Appendix B, p.187). After the initial round of responses, the peer group process took on more clearly online features as students shared their drafts via e-mail in order to complete the second portion of the process (Cantrell and Oswal 127), individually reading and responding to the writer's essay, "Peer Feedback Sheet" (See Appendix A, pp. 145-47). Even after the two-step, in-class process of response was completed, the feedback scenario could continue outside of class as changes and adjustments were made, or as further questions arose from participants. This method follows through on Elbow's suggestion that students take peer drafts home to offer more carefully thought out comments (*Writing* 82). Purdue University English Professor Mark Mabrito demonstrates the effectiveness of e-mail particularly for what he calls "high-apprehensive

writers"; he concludes from his study that "the e-mail environment provided a more effective delivery system for peer evaluation than the face-to-face meetings . . . as both writers and evaluators of writing" (528).

Because of the potential for so much interaction among writers in CAI Portfolio English 111, I decided to limit peer groups to two students on a rotating basis, rather than grouping three to four students who stay together as is often done in regular portfolio classes. This more personal arrangement proved to be of great benefit for students, particularly because of time constraints. However, because they were linked to each other via an e-mail list-serve, they could contribute comments not only on each other's writing, but on their process of responding to each other--whether they were a part of the writer's peer group or not. This made for an expanded audience. Lunsford and Glenn effectively summarize the positive aspects of this type of response:

When students are involved in one another's writings, serving as senders and receivers of communication, as questioners of purpose, as judges of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*, as refiners of style and tone, when they are respectfully attentive of one another's *author-ity*, when students have the opportunity to question

responses to their drafts *as they draft*, when they coach as they are being coached, then they are indeed sharing the responsibility for their own learning and incorporating in their learning the dynamics of rhetorical theory. (333)

This effect of peer response is the goal we strove for in CAI Portfolio English 111, but how effective were peers in giving substantive feedback to fellow student writers?

Concerns regarding the effectiveness of the peer response system are voiced clearly by Sue V. Lape and Cheryl Glenn: "'How,' the teacher wonders, 'can students who don't even know questions to ask about their own texts query another's?'" The answer is simple. Show them" (439). In CAI Portfolio English 111, I began the process of modeling prior to the peer group session for the first essay. As before, I used the overhead projector, this time to show copies of selected introductory essays students wrote on the second class meeting. I praised clear examples and particularly interesting diction and asked questions when additional clarity or details were required. I highlighted effectively constructed introductions, thesis statements, topic sentences, transitions, and other examples of sound composition elements, making the type of constructive commentary I expected them to contribute to each other's writing. I then selected a student at random and had her

read an anonymous student essay as if it were her writing. Afterwards, I offered oral commentary, stressing strengths and questioning weaknesses; in this manner, I modeled another element of the peer feedback required in our process. Finally, using the overhead again, I demonstrated the technique for responding during the on-line phase; this time I commented on an early draft of the first essay submitted to me via e-mail.

After the peer group session for the first essay, I shared with the class three examples of particularly effective peer responses, one from each of the three phases of the process. While this did not insure "expert" responses to peer drafts, it did offer a departure point for all students that they would not have had otherwise until well into the course. Interestingly enough, I noticed the students modeling each others' response techniques when they came across a type of comment they thought effective. Just as Beverly C. Wall and Robert F. Peltier of Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, I find that peer feedback, serving as the front line response, takes on as much importance to improve writing as meeting all requirements for completing writing assignments, particularly when the feedback is of a positive nature (216). During the rest of the semester, I continued to highlight particularly insightful or constructive peer comments from the students' own peers or

from those in my other 111 section; once I even shared a well written e-mail peer response a colleague had passed along.

Another component of the feedback sequence comes from the instructor and can be received at all points of the composition process. Teacher's feedback, too, is made simpler by the use of the computer, particularly in the early stages of the composition process; timely response contributes significantly to the individualization of instruction. CAI Portfolio English 111 students were required to share with their instructor via e-mail writing process components, such as invention strategies, preliminary drafts, revised versions for submissions prepared for peer response. Even their exchanges with each other were copied to the instructor, so comments could be offered on the nature of their feedback, if needed. This hands-on approach need not be overwhelming; responses were primarily reader-based, formative in nature, and intended to offer direction and suggestions rather than evaluative assessment.

In response to the ease of giving feedback, I very quickly overcame the tendency to include myself in all transmissions. In "Electronic Mail and the Writing Instructor," Gail Hawisher and Charles Moran address the concern over the use of e-mail becoming daunting or ungainly

as students feel more free to approach an instructor who is accessible twenty-four hours a day; they suggest laying some ground rules (636). For example, for this course, I asked that students only use e-mail for concerns over course matters. Any other issues they wished to address were to be dealt with in person or over the phone. This eliminated the potential problem of arriving home to find countless messages from students on side issues.

Yet another dimension afforded by the computerized classroom involves the students' saving drafts to the teacher's computer for immediate instructor feedback during class while they are working or for retrieval the next time they log on in the Ginanni Classroom. The use of the limited access network (LAN), as well as e-mail, lent itself to sharing all or portions of any student's writing for the purpose of class instruction on all important issues in composition--for example, invention, effective thesis and topic sentences, sentence structure. Documents viewed on the instructor's terminal could be displayed as an overhead presentation in which all students could participate--expanded audience, indeed. For this purpose, the LAN is more useful when issues of format--MLA headings, margins, pagination, Works Cited entries, and the like--are important; it allows the presentation of papers in the exact

format required without the distortion that occurs on some e-mail transmissions.

The carefully thought out sequence that forces students to solicit, receive and provide feedback is a marvelous exercise in consciousness raising about the writing process for students and instructors alike, one that emphasizes the four essential aspects of rhetorical theory--writer, audience, text, context. The sequence makes it impossible for students to fall back into the old cradle of composition and pull over themselves the worn and tattered security blanket of writing as a one-step-process. It makes it impossible for instructors to rely solely on the outdated, in-class writing assignment. Marjorie Roemer, Lucille M. Schultz, and Russell K. Durst argue, "Grading students' work in pieces, product by product, or making significant judgments of students' writing based on one writing sample produced under timed circumstance, has come to seem a violation of the very things we teach about writing" (455).

In portfolio, students and instructors are forced to face and accept the recursive nature of solid, valid writing. As Kathleen Blake Yancey puts it, "in this pedagogy, teachers are also learners. They learn with their students how we all become (better) writers, how we help each other in that quest, and how we can create an environment that supports that learning" ("Teachers'

Stories" 16). The computer format brings this realization about writing into a more tangible, physical dimension, thus facilitating the process further.

But this method of giving feedback and teacher emphasis on process is not praised universally. In "How to Make Mulligan Stew: Process and Product Again," Robert M. Gorrell cautions against overemphasizing process and becoming

so narrow that we . . . fail to take advantage of analysis of the product for its value in illuminating the process. . . . You can't learn to make a stew just by examining or even eating one, but neither can you learn to make one if you don't know what you're trying to make. . . . (103)

Clever as the comparison is, it seems to ignore the heavy emphasis placed on re-considering, re-evaluating, revising of *product* that goes on in portfolio-based writing instruction. Portfolio does not ignore product; it simply displaces it from its previous position of centrality in the teaching of writing. Computers help to demystify its handling.

The opportunity for more formal instructor feedback comes when the teacher's draft of each essay (third draft) is submitted in hard copy. Students receive teacher commentary on the essay and on a "Teacher's Feedback Sheet" (Cantrell and Oswal 151) that addresses rhetorical issues

such as audience, purpose (context), text, and the writer's credibility in handling that text (See Appendix B, pp. 188-89). The carefully thought out pedagogy implemented by Cantrell and Oswal provides for close mirroring of these issues from the student's essay coversheets to the teacher feedback sheets.

At this stage of the feedback process, some of the marginal comments on the essay's draft, as well as those provided on the feedback sheet, are reader-based in nature, much like that afforded in the earlier, preliminary feedback opportunities; however, the greatest portion of comments now become criterion-based offered in part in the form of section numbers from the *Harbrace College Handbook* (Hodges, et al.). Since no grade is assessed, the teacher-as-coach's remarks are still intended as formative, constructive guides for revision.

Just as in the non-CAI portfolio courses, the final step in evaluating the student's composition process came with the submission of the Final Portfolio during the fifteenth week of the semester. As explained in the "Introduction to CAI Portfolio English 111" (See Appendix A, pp. 127-29), the student's best efforts are submitted for a grade--one essay from essay 1 and 2, and two essays from essays 3, 4, and 5 (Cantrell and Oswal 3-4). The decisions

over which pieces to submit are the student's, reinforcing the writer's ownership of the compositions.

Since the essays had been read and feedback given at different stages of completion, in Final Portfolio evaluation, the essays are read and evaluated holistically. This criterion-based evaluation was provided on the "Final Portfolio Evaluation" Sheet (Cantrell and Oswal 167) and primarily focused on reflecting the level of competency achieved by the student in each of the rhetorical concerns also emphasized on the "Essay Coversheets" and "Teacher Feedback Sheets": for example, purpose, audience, focus, organization, and mechanical correctness of text (See "Final Portfolio Evaluation," Appendix B, p. 191).

Enhancing Revision and Editing in CAI Portfolio English 111

Nowhere is the contribution of the computer classroom felt more dramatically in the composition process than in the finishing stages--revision and editing. Strickland comments, "the combination of the technology of the computer and the strategies for moving words, sentence, and paragraphs, and adding and deleting text helps writers see global revision in action" (*From Disk* 49). His *From Disk to Hard Copy* is a valuable resource for suggestions on incorporating "the computer as an instructional tool rather than just a production tool" (35). He offers a wide range of suggestions, many of which were adopted in CAI Portfolio

English 111: for example, deleting all text in an essay except for paragraph topic sentences (easily achieved on the computer) to ascertain that, in fact, there are topic sentences and to facilitate determining whether the essay's organization is sound (39-40). Another useful revision Strickland suggests is the insertion of extra spaces between the essay's sentences to allow for further elaboration, not at the end of paragraphs or the entire essay as students are prone to do, but within the points in the paragraph themselves (Strickland, *From Disk* 41-42). Of all his recommendations, these are the two my students have felt the most comfortable implementing.

As the course progressed, I introduced "Windowing [which] allows the writer to compare two versions of the same assignment . . ." (Strickland, *From Disk* 40). Whether to compare a sentence outline and draft, an early draft to a revised version, peer comments and a draft, the possibilities of windowing are numerous and all potential enrichments for sound revision efforts. Of course, one obvious benefit the computer brings to revision is the time-saving element of not having to copy over any changes such as segments that are moved about or expanded. This is of particular importance to portfolio students because of the multiple draft requirement of the program.

In "Revising and Computing," Gail W. Womble details the progress in three of her students' writing as a result of using the computer's word processing capabilities. Like Strickland, she highlights the efficiency and time-saving attributes, "interdependent, all working under the umbrella of easier" (78). Because of this, one of Womble's students found he did more of it and that because the draft was clearer to the eye, he was able to have an enhanced awareness of what he was trying to convey to his audience (78). Another student found it less disruptive (79).

While there was not time in the first semester of implementing the merger of portfolio-based and computer-assisted to conduct any detailed studies like Womble's, my preliminary findings and impressions lead me to concur that the use of computers invites revision and, thereby, enhances the portfolio approach to writing instruction.

Editing efforts, too, were facilitated through the implementation of the computer. Because of the heavy emphasis on audience in portfolio composition, "a correctly edited piece of writing [that] helps a writer express thoughts clearly and in a way that is 'reader friendly'" (Strickland, *From Disk* 70) is critical to the essay's success. Despite composition studies' shifting away from a focus on correctness in favor of the rhetorical content,

freedom from errors is not an element of composition that should be ignored. Robert J. Connors suggests,

helping students overcome their own unintentional sabotage of the process of communicating their thoughts is certainly an important part of [the instructor's] work. Striking a balance in our teaching between formal and rhetorical considerations is the problem we now face, and it is a delicate one. We cannot escape the fact that in a written text any question of mechanics is also a rhetorical question. . . . ("Mechanical Correctness" 387)

Andrea Lunsford agrees and points out that "While the theorists clearly recognize the importance of error and recognize the writing teacher's obligation to deal directly with error, they argue for treating it in the context of the student's own whole pieces of discourse" (348). Therein lies the balance, a balance CAI Portfolio English 111 sought to emphasize.

Editing suggestions may come from peers and, of course, from the teacher, but ultimately, the writer faces the draft alone for final decisions. The fact that the computer allows the viewing of a "clean" copy is regarded by some as a danger in lulling the writer to feel all is correct with the piece, what has been called "smokescreen revision" (Womble

79). However, more likely, the cleanliness of the page makes it simpler for the writer to find errors in diction, punctuation, general clarity, among others than when faced with a hand-written page full of markings, arrows, write-overs, and other techniques that might be used to make corrections. Womble finds the clean copy aids in clarifying student thinking and reports that one of her students "admitted she made corrections on the processor she would not have bothered with on paper" (80).

Tools like spell checkers allow writers to focus on the composition process rather than be concerned with the mechanics of spelling; spell checkers do not teach spelling rules, but they do reinforce the proper spelling of words as the writer makes choices from the options provided. By the way, as Strickland points out, "Dictionaries are less than helpful for spelling, unless you already know how to spell a word" (*From Disk* 71). And Thomas T. Barker suggests that spell checkers "improve spelling because they encourage students to use the dictionary" (10). My students made use of this tool in preparing the drafts of their essays.

I did not encourage my students to use other tools such as grammar checkers and style checkers because I feel they have not reached state-of-the-art status; however, once they do, they should not be viewed as "tools to take over revision skills but to strengthen them. . . . Their

commentary and suggestions only supplement the analysis a writer needs to do when revising" (Barker 10). In deciding whether to use them or not, instructors should not be misguided by "the misconception that style-analysis programs will take over revision [and be blinded to] the productive use of those programs in the classroom" (10). Ultimately the decision to use them will be up to the individual instructor.

I did make my students aware of other means for improving the readability of the essays, such as search features. Whether to replace every instance of a word with a corrected version or simply to find multiple uses of the same word to avoid excessive and ineffective repetition, search features help the writer envision the process of editing for the purpose of strengthening diction.

Technically not a part of revision or editing, the cover letters students write to introduce the Mid-term and Final Portfolios do continue the re-seeing or re-thinking of the writing process. These letters are directly addressed to the portfolio readers and require that writers detail and evaluate their own composition process, their perceived short-comings, achieved gains, remaining concerns. In addition to emphasizing the writer's ownership of the selections submitted (because selection process has taken place), the letters require reflection on the choices made--

one essay from Essay 1 and 2, two essays from Essays 3, 4, and 5. Catharine D'Aoust sees reflection as "the act of pausing to see oneself as a writer," thus creating an "awareness, a sort of self-consciousness about oneself as a writer" (43). She proposes that to do it well, students need structure (44); portfolio clearly provides this structure through the "Introduction to Mid-term Portfolio" and "Introduction to Final Portfolio" directions provided for the students (See Appendix B, pp. 192-93). As a result of this reflection, students "are required to be active learners, [sic] they must make choices that will affect and direct learning, and they will learn more or less in part according to the choices they make" (Yancey, "Teachers' Stories" 16).

In composing these reflective letters, students in CAI Portfolio English 111 had the option of writing them by hand or using the word processors; in either case, this task was completed in the classroom. It was interesting to note that at the time of the Mid-term Portfolio submission, fewer than half of the students opted to use the computer for this exercise (9 out of 21), but for the final submission, slightly more did (11 out of 19). Although I was disappointed that the rate was not higher, particularly on the last letter, I surmised that the choice to write longhand was made by several because there was little or no

opportunity for revision, which would have been the greatest benefit of using the computer. I must also acknowledge that one semester might not be sufficient time to win all students, particularly those new to using computers in composition, to the exclusive use of the technology.

Supporting CAI Portfolio English 111: The Web Page

Having discussed how each component of portfolio-based composition can be enhanced through implementation in the computer-assisted classroom, I would like to comment on the accompanying web page that supports and expands the course. A hard copy is provided in Appendix A.

Based in great part on Cantrell and Oswal's *Portfolio* because it is the department standard for this pedagogy, the web page offers links to detailed discussions on the portfolio system, syllabus, schedule, peer process, general guidelines, writing tools, list-serves (which are not yet accessible through the web site), and the writing assignments.⁷ Material is available for study, clarification, refresher and may be printed or copied as it suits the student's needs. The arrangement of materials avoids what Roy Tennant calls "linear thinking," thus allowing each document to "be capable of standing on its own, without any context provided by documents before or after it" (49).⁸

Particularly helpful in revision and editing are sub-links available from the "General Guidelines" that offer instruction on using secondary sources, grammar handbook chapters and sections for the twenty-one most common errors, and more (See Appendix A, p. 166). Additionally, the "Writing Tools" offers links outside the site to Online Writing Labs (OWL's) at Purdue University, Wisconsin University, Virginia Tech, and the University of Texas. There, students can obtain remediation, whether on their own volition or as directed by me, on problem areas ranging from comma use to getting started writing (See Appendix A, pp. 177-79). These features allow for further individualizing of the writing instruction. The site <<http://www.mtsu.edu/~mclayton>> proved to be a rich resource for CAI Portfolio English 111 and is yet another illustration of how computer-assisted instruction can expand the limitation of portfolio pedagogy taught in the traditional classroom.

Assessing the CAI Portfolio English 111 Experience

Assessment of the effectiveness of this unofficial pilot for CAI Portfolio English 111 is difficult and incomplete at best after just one semester of implementation; however, I can offer my own impressions and those of my students--in their words--at semester's end (See Appendix D). Among the areas I can comment on without a

formal evaluation plan are concerns and preliminary findings dealing with the nuts and bolts, student/teacher and student/student relationships, student performance, and limitations as they all pertain to CAI Portfolio English 111.

My situation in developing the nuts and bolts of CAI Portfolio English 111 was reassuringly similar to that encountered by Roemer as she implemented a portfolio system for her group of practicum students: "Our problems were . . . that we were hammering out the system as we went along, so it was hard to signal all the rules and regulations to students early enough and clearly enough" (Roemer, Schultz, and Durst 458). Thankfully, the portfolio process for our institution was expertly and carefully laid out already, so the only tenuous ground lay in tailoring it to the Ginanni Classroom. A helpful source in that respect was Judith V. Boettcher's article "Internet Pitfalls: What *Not* to Do When Communicating with Students on the Internet"; in it she offers invaluable, common sense advice that newcomers to the medium can appreciate. For example, she suggests to avoid expecting students' proficiency in any discussion platform right away (in my case, for peer feedback); to be specific about how students are to label documents for clarity and consistency; to set parameters on instructor availability over e-mail in order to diminish

frustration for all parties concerned; to avoid being the "gateway for all communication" (46, 50). Despite incorporating Boettcher's advice in my course practice, some minor problems emerged such as students' failing to save documents in formats readable by our computers. Thankfully, these types of minor issues were relatively rare.

Also in executing the nuts and bolts of the course, I discovered a need to compromise between departmental tradition and my own innovations. The compromise resulted in duplication of some course requirements since students had to submit at the end of the course a portion of materials on disk and yet others in the departmentally required Freshman Folder to receive course credit.⁹ However, any duplication that occurred was minimal and arose primarily as a result of students' printing out optional hard copies of some of their writing; the materials submitted on disk included components of the writing process not required by the department as part of Freshman Folder--invention strategies, multiple drafts, and the like the Freshman Folder included peer process materials, the hard copies submitted for reader-based and criterion-based teacher feedback, coversheets, teachers feedback sheets. As CAI Portfolio English 111 becomes more broadly used, departmental policy adaptations could be made to eliminate any duplication of effort by students.

One of the first areas of concern as CAI Portfolio English 111 was implemented revolved around the changes in teacher/student and student/student relationships mandated by the technology. Despite the fact that I had read extensively about the de-centralizing of the CAI classroom from teacher to students in the works of Tuman, Selfe, Hawisher, and countless others, the magnitude of the shift's reality was sobering. Selfe points out, "Teachers in traditional classrooms are familiar with an environment that minimizes distractions and maximizes focus on the teacher, but computer-supported environments are seldom amenable to such teacher-centered approaches" (*Creating* 65). She describes the typical computer classroom as one "without a real 'front,' with no podium or teacher's desk . . ." (66).

While I was not prone to lecturing in my regular portfolio composition classes, I underwent a period of adjustment when students came into the computer room and focused on *something* other than me. Because their eyes were turned to the screen, it was even difficult to maintain eye contact! Once I overcame that minor sense of loss, I began to see the powerful benefits, theoretically and pedagogically, of having the focus shifted from me to the writer and his/her process.

Addressing comments to the entire class was difficult at first, so I set up a period of time at the beginning of

each day's meeting expressly for this purpose and to serve as a platform for students to voice/share concerns on anything dealing with the course and their work in it. I also availed myself of e-mail as a distributor of general information, such as additions, omissions, reminders, cautions, in other words, as an orchestrating medium. Thus, my fears over "lack of control" were significantly eased.

Another initially bothersome concern as the focus shifts from teacher-centered to student-centered classroom is the notion that using computers for writing involves the tendency to promote student isolation as he or she faces the computer monitor. The answer to this problem is simple; it is up to the teacher to implement a pedagogy that will bring the sense of community back (Strickland, *From Disk 11*). Portfolio's collaborative features and the linking of students through e-mail and the LAN accomplished exactly this. Additionally, the Ginanni Classroom is particularly well designed to promote interaction among writers, readers, and instructor. Creating and fostering a sense of community was promoted by the large conference table located in the center of the room, where students and teachers often met to discuss group concerns, and by the low enrollment dictated by the small number of terminals available (CAI Portfolio English 111's enrollment was 18 students per section

compared to non-computer portfolio sections of 25 students each).

Turning to my preliminary impressions about the students' performance, I can attest to an increased amount of revision from the majority of the students, an estimated average of one additional, fully revised draft per essay. A detailed study devoted to tracking this type of data was not possible at the same time the course was initiated, but it will be a worthwhile project when the course is taught again. Like Hawisher and others who have done research investigating the qualitative results of computers in composition ("The Effects" 145-47), I cannot say that overall, the quality of my students' essays in CAI Portfolio English 111 were significantly higher from first to last draft than in previous, non-CAI portfolio sections I taught. Reluctantly (primarily because she would have preferred more reliable support), Hawisher acknowledges that one reason may stem from higher quality first drafts as a result of the computer use (158). Despite the probable unreliability of anecdotal evaluation, it is my belief that while additional revisions may not improve the quality of the writing as a rule, it does dramatically change the students' concept of what the process of composition is all about. By any standards, this is a significant gain in the teaching of composition: writing is rewriting.

One obvious limitation resulting from the lack of software availability was the limited nature of student networking. The Ginanni Computer Classroom did not offer synchronous ("real-time") conferencing capabilities, so we were forced to rely exclusively on asynchronous communication (e-mail). Despite this limitation, feedback from peers and instructor were markedly facilitated in contrast to what is available in the non-computer-assisted classroom. Additionally, it was our experience, that the delayed-time nature of e-mail allowed for more reflection on the part of responders and writers alike.

Another obvious limitation relates to the area of MTSU's portfolio program to which the computer classroom has not been an asset to yet, the collaborative norming of grades. Non CAI portfolio teachers meet in teams to read essays they have selected from their students' submissions--one sample each of A, B, C portfolios and all failures (no D's are awarded in Freshman Composition at MTSU). In an enriching spirit of collaboration, teachers help each other ascertain the validity of their assessments. Much is learned and shared during these sessions, all of it enhancing each instructor's assessment ability. Although I have no other CAI Portfolio teacher with whom to confer, once other portfolio teachers utilize CAI, I can see how the exchange of student essays for the purposes of norming will be

facilitated through the use of e-mail. Participants could avoid the difficulties of scheduling constraints for norming sessions and could extend the impact and usefulness of the sessions by continuing to dialogue electronically.

At the end of the semester, I turned to my students and elicited brief, anonymous responses to two issues regarding the structure and delivery of the course: 1) "Briefly describe how you feel the portfolio aspect of the course has helped or hindered your composition process"; and 2) "Briefly describe how you feel the computer-assisted aspect of the course has helped or hindered your composition process" (See "Student Comments," Appendix D). While they followed the "briefly" directions expertly, only two heeded the request for anonymity. Although this affects the validity of their responses, it is interesting to note that the few, less-than-favorable remarks did have student names attached.

Of 18 students responding (volunteer basis), 16 viewed portfolio as a positive force (89%), 1 viewed it negatively (5.5%), and 1 offered a mixed reaction (5.5%). The negative evaluation was given by a student concerned with all the requirements of portfolio; a rather strong writer, he saw the multiple drafts and peer response aspects, in particular, as a waste of time. The positive assessments focused on extra time for revision and delayed grading. One

student commented, portfolio "gave me a chance to revise my essays and correct them without being punished through my grade." Another mentioned portfolio "helped me out by guiding me through the whole writing process and shifting the focus to revision."

In terms of the computer-assisted format, 13 responded positively (72%), 2 responded negatively (11%), and 3 offered a mixed reaction (17%). The negative comments came primarily from students with limited computer access outside the class (although there are many computer labs throughout campus with generous hours) and from students with only very basic computer skills. But here again, the resounding majority of students offered positive feedback primarily focusing on the ease/speed of revision and editing, as well as on the improvement of personal computer skills. One student put it, "I really enjoyed being able to edit my papers without endless use of paper and ink." A student commenting on the networking capabilities said the computer-assisted format gave "a chance to connect with my professor. . . ." Another offered, "This method of using e-mail to correspond with my peer gave another outlook into my writing skills." However, I was disappointed in the markedly few remarks focusing on audience (2), peers/instructor feedback (6), and the use of the web site (1). The absence of comments on these issues may have resulted in part because I

offered no prompts in my questions to elicit that type of specific commentary. A more detailed response sheet--a combination reflection and questionnaire format--will provide the basis for a more credible assessment plan in the future.

Overall, I am encouraged by and pleased with this first semester of CAI Portfolio English 111. I can offer no quantitative support for my favorable impressions, only positive, anecdotal evidence of my experience as a result of the merger of portfolio-based, computer-assisted composition. My recommendations and projections as I look to the future are offered in Chapter V.

Chapter V

The Road Ahead

Looking towards the future in academia requires not only examining the status of individual faculty members' proposals for innovation and departmental programs, but also ascertaining a clear picture of the extent of commitment to growth and forward movement by the institution of higher education itself. Sylvia Bedwell Brace, manager of instructional technologies and micro-computer applications, and Gina Roberts, instructional technology specialist, both at the Office of Information Technology (OIT) at Middle Tennessee State University, shed light on the University's stance on innovative approaches to education via technology. In their article "When Payup Becomes Payback: A University's Return on Instructional Technology Investment," they chronicle MTSU's initial commitment in this area and trace its origin to the overall mission:

to assist its students in becoming educated men and women by broadening their interest; helping them think logically, critically, and imaginatively; allowing them to communicate more effectively; and letting them acquire a basic understanding of a discipline. (30)

To help meet these objectives, the University has identified "instructional technology needs as important components in

planning for MTSU's future" (30). However, once the technology is in place, it is up to the faculty members to use it as a means of enhancing the students' educational experience. Brace and Roberts believe that "When MTSU evaluates its instructional technology investment, it is with the student that the university finds the best return" (37). This, too, is how the departments and individual instructors should look at their investments of funds, time, and energy.

As of now, despite the University's stance, the English Department at MTSU is not a front line recipient of university technology funds. In part, this is the result of a paradigm which inhibits administration from regarding the technology needs of language arts (primarily composition studies) at par with the needs of departments more traditionally connected with technology uses (Math, Business, Science, for example). One of the problems is that it is difficult to document those needs quantitatively, since the discipline is subjective-evaluation based, rather than objective. The responsibility for initiating a paradigm shift falls to the English Department as it continues to present its case for improved writing instruction.

One area that might be reconsidered is the fact that the English Department does not have an official curricular division for computers in composition nor for composition

studies; although, there are many instructors interested in the development of one or the other or both. Is this lack of division within English studies a strength or a weakness? Certainly, it seems a democratic characteristic of the department that all faculty are eligible and have the opportunity to teach both literature and writing, even in the computer classroom if they so desire (there are some availability restrictions). It also seems a benefit to our students that they might have a seasoned, published professor as their first-semester, English 111 teacher just as easily as they might encounter a first-year professor, full-time temporary instructor, part-timer, or GTA. However, the reality of our system is that most of the 111 sections are taught by the last three groups so that this rationale does not serve the argument against departmental divisions well.

On the other hand, implementing a separation between literary and composition studies (to include computers in composition), as many other large universities do, might work to focus more attention on the valid needs of the discipline and maybe even draw new faculty with more training and/or expertise in the teaching of writing. A move toward divisions would work to enhance the department's resources which, in turn, would benefit the students. However, if the end result were to fragment the department,

the separation would not be beneficial. The question of departmental divisions at MTSU's English Department requires much more critical investigation than I can devote to it here, but such a move might provide the missing catalyst for instigating the administrative paradigm shift.

English Professors Larry Mapp and Ayne Cantrell are each, respectively, at the forefront of the two most forward-thinking writing pedagogies to be implemented in the department in the past five years, portfolio-based composition and computer-assisted composition. If, as mentioned in Chapter III, Mapp is the heart of the computer program, Cantrell is portfolio. Both are totally committed to their approach to composition and work diligently to hone and refine them. Both enjoy the support of a small but loyal, devoted, and highly professional faculty members who share their vision for composition studies. Both want to see the department move towards more serious involvement in improving the composition program, an involvement that capitalizes on the pedagogy each espouses. Mapp's goal before retirement is to have all first-semester composition courses taught in computer-assisted classrooms; Cantrell's is to have portfolio adopted as the department's standard for composition studies (Mapp, Cantrell, Interview).

But what is the atmosphere among the department's faculty at large regarding both pedagogies? The results of

an informal questionnaire administered in the Fall 1997 semester serves to shed some light on their attitudes, concerns, and interests (See Appendix C). Out of 79 full-time and part-time faculty members polled, 36 responded to the questionnaire (46%), not an overwhelming majority, but sufficient for a credible sampling.

One of the most interesting findings yielded by the questionnaire is that a great majority of faculty members who have used portfolio-based or CAI composition in their classrooms indicate they would use the pedagogies again. Of the 29 respondents, 13 (45%) have used writing portfolios in their composition courses. However, not all of them were part of the program at MTSU. Of those 13 teachers, 10 participated in MTSU's portfolio program (teaching assistants were excluded from the sampling), and 8 (80%) of them will continue to teach portfolio; the other 2 (20%) commented they will use a modified version that allows more autonomy. Of the 8 faculty members who have incorporated CAI in 111, all 8 (100%) will continue with this approach. It seems clear that MTSU English instructors interested in trying new approaches in the teaching of writing are satisfied with the results of their efforts.

A summary of the findings in terms of perceived strengths and weaknesses of both pedagogies is detailed in Appendix C, but I would like to address some concerns

regarding portfolio because the questionnaire results indicate that, while the overwhelming majority of instructors not currently using CAI would be interested in learning more about it (86%), only 25% of those who have not used portfolio want to find out more. This points to a high degree of hesitation most likely stemming from misconceptions.

Among the most prevalent concerns regarding portfolios are issues dealing with overload of student papers and extra time involved in norming sessions, both teaching workload issues. But it seems clear that if we are to follow the advice of some of the most respected contributors to the discussion of writing pedagogy, such as Peter Elbow who claims that the best way to improve student writing is "Just write and keep writing" (*Writing* 61), a high number of student drafts is a logical expectation. Pat Belanoff and Marcia Dickson promise their readers interested in portfolio "no miracles" in the area of immediate improvements in their students' writing, but they do promise "a lot of hard work, with a few side benefits" (Introduction xx).

The commitment to devote more time to students in our writing courses, whether in reading more drafts or in norming grades with colleagues, is certainly not new. Cynthia L. Selfe reminds us of times (thankfully) past when, not only were English teachers famous for marking only in

their favorite color (red), but "Not much time was spent thinking about writing as a process. Revision often consisted of having students do 'corrections'" (*Computer-Assisted 1*). Most of us have left those days behind in more ways than simply replacing those scarlet-writing tools with their purple, green, or orange counterparts. "Our increased awareness of process," Selfe reminds us, "has influenced not only the way we teach composition but the way we teach any class that involves writing. The result has been an increased work load for all of us" (1). This increase, then, is not a direct result of portfolio-based composition but of the emphasis on process and instructors' commitment to teaching writing in a way that will benefit their students as much as possible.

As demonstrated in Chapter IV, the merger of portfolio-based and computer-assisted pedagogies provides a practical resolution to faculty concerns about paper overload and time constraint by facilitating feedback opportunities and potentially linking norming faculty over email. Other issues such as a perceived tendency towards grade inflation have also been addressed primarily as not materializing during portfolio system's use at MTSU.

One concern that surfaced in a couple of the respondents' written comments is directed at the question of

classroom autonomy and academic freedom. Our faculty are not the first to raise this issue. As Marcia Dickson points out, one of the recurring objections to the portfolio system does involve the question of academic freedom. . . . even when a department designs and implements a portfolio system with the consent of the majority of its faculty, a rather vocal minority tends to remain fearful that somehow portfolio assessment will limit the autonomy that has been guaranteed instructors under academic freedom rulings. ("The WPA" 271-72)

But Dickson views this as an objection used by some to continue less-than-effective classroom practices unabated and unquestioned:

To institute a portfolio system indicates a willingness to participate in the business of learning on all levels. To explore the givens about good writing can be a risky and exhilarating enterprise. It calls into question what in many cases has been left unexamined since our own graduations. But this examination process is not completely alien to our experience as English teachers and critics. Most of us in the profession have long since accepted that there is no one true way to read a text; why then not admit to the

possibility that there is no one true way to grade or to approach a student essay?

Reading portfolios together, determining standards, and arguing for or against various criteria for grading student writing embody the spirit of academic freedom. (276)

Most of the concerns and objections to portfolio-based composition are unfounded.

As I reflect on this semester of teaching CAI Portfolio English 111 in order to look towards the future, I am satisfied that the initial questions I raised in Chapter I regarding the feasibility of the merger between portfolio-based and computer-assisted pedagogies have been successfully addressed in Chapter IV. The merger does work, but there are several changes I would implement and/or propose for the improvement of the course, a work in process.

Leaning towards a more pervasive utilization of technology in the composition process, I will incorporate a higher incidence of online features. For example, I will finalize integrating portfolio materials into the web site, such as the instructor feedback instruments (see Appendix B). This move will result in eliminating the purchasing of the *Portfolio* text which is now a course requirement. I would adopt an online teacher feedback method at all stages

of the writing process, not just in the preliminary stages, thus saving instructor time and increasing the speed of draft "turn around" to the student. I will request department permission to by-pass the "physical" freshman folder and portfolio requirements in favor of submissions on disk. In addition to saving student time and departmental resources (printer paper, for example), the resulting electronic student folder and accompanying portfolio submitted on disk will be the solution to the ungainly storing of student materials in faculty offices and the department's store room.

Additionally, I would like to take an active part in software previewing and recommendation for acquisition. I am particularly interested in evaluating what is available for improving students' invention strategies, an area of the composition that James Strickland also sees as benefiting from prompts outside the student. He proposes that a good CAI program for prewriting strategies should "offer individuality through branching capabilities, uniqueness through options not available with traditional pen and paper, and interactivity through responses to the user, which simulate human dialogue" ("Prewriting and Computing" 70). At the time he made these suggestions, Strickland admitted there were not many credible programs on the market, but by 1997 and the publishing of *From Disk to Hard*

Copy, he offers eight software programs he considers valid (107-110). In previewing these materials and deciding whether to recommend department purchasing, pedagogy and theory will play a key role as Strickland suggests (74).

My reflection has led me to realize that I have left many issues related to both portfolio-based and computer-assisted composition untouched, issues dealing with the post-modern re-interpretation of both pedagogies and how this new perspective affects their implementation in the classroom. I have also not dealt with some of the implications of technology in the writing classroom, such as the changes in the nature of reading and writing, "publishing" and access to that material, and the wealth of political, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of computers. My focus in this study is much more limited; it deals with using the computer in the portfolio classroom not only as a writing tool, but also as a rhetorical guide in order to help my composition students rethink, strengthen, and improve the way in which they write. In this vein, I echo Strickland's hope:

If English teachers keep their eyes on learning rather than on information acquisition, we will have a better sense of what to do with computers. Teachers will be able to use computers to support writing, offering strategies that would be

impossible or unlikely without the technology. My hope is that we, as teachers and researchers who understand composition theory, will apply our best practice to the use of computers in the writing classroom. (*From Disk 99-100*)

It is a valid conclusion to assert that because computer-assisted instruction facilitates the immediacy and frequency of peer and teacher-as-coach feedback during the inventing, drafting, revising, and editing stages, thus inviting cooperative learning through technology, the computer-assisted classroom is an obvious and ready ally for the often rigorous, multiple-draft requirements of the portfolio-based composition system. Any time the concept of audience is broadened and emphasized for students, the composition process benefits. Any time the dialogue between teacher and student or between peers is enhanced, the composition process benefits. Anytime the focus in composition instruction is shifted from teacher to student (where it belongs), the composition process benefits. Any time the recursive nature of drafting and revising is facilitated, the composition process benefits. Tim Mayers, from the University of Rhode Island, sees the blending of portfolio and computer classrooms as a valuable mix that emphasizes "writing assignments not as discrete tasks to be completed and moved beyond but as a series of ongoing and

related tasks that are only 'finished' (by necessity) at the semester's end" (149). I agree.

Mayers also argues that "Composition courses that focus exclusively on print or on electronic literacies . . . do students a disservice" (148). After implementing CAI Portfolio English 111, I conclude that the marriage of these literacies--print and electronic, portfolio and CAI--enhances the strengths of each, what Kathleen Blake Yancey calls "a kind of cross-fertilization and collaboration, with the online and off-line leading to experimentation, to new texts, to new understandings" ("The Electronic Portfolio" 259). This is exactly the position where instructors, particularly composition instructors, should take their place, and many English Department faculty at MTSU are ready. By capitalizing on the advantageous dimensions of both pedagogies, creating a symbiotic relationship between the two, CAI Portfolio English 111 provides the only scenario in which both Cantrell's and Mapp's visions can materialize. CAI Portfolio English 111 points towards new and meaningful directions in composition studies at MTSU.

Notes

¹Yancey offers a summary of Catharine K. Lucas' thorough treatment of the shift in the teaching of writing. Lucas' discussion is found in "Toward Ecological Evaluation," printed in the January 1988 issue of *The Quarterly of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing*, pp. 1-3,12-17.

²A detailed account of Middle Tennessee's State University English Department's Portfolio Program and Computer-Assisted Classroom can be found in Chapter II and III of this study respectively.

³Details of the writing assignments for Peter Elbow's and Pat Belanoff's program at Stony Brook can be found in "State University of New York at Stony Brook Portfolio-based Evaluation Program" in Pat Belanoff's and Marcia Dickson's "*Portfolios: Process and Product*, pp. 7-9.

⁴*Computers and the Teaching of Writing in American Higher Education, 1979-1994: A History* is appropriately written in a collaborative and polyvocal manner by Gail E. Hawisher, Paul LeBlanc, Charles Moran, and Cynthia L. Selfe, who request in their dedication of the volume that "all future citations to this book acknowledge all four authors." Their purpose is to chronicle how "computers entered and changed the field of composition. . . . [resulting in] a community that sees itself as different from composition

studies-- which, of course, in its turn, sees itself as different from English" (1, 2). That this community is committed to a collaborative effort devoted to ascertaining how best to implement computer technology's considerable capabilities into the teaching of writing is clearly evidenced in this history. The teacher accounts it chronicles, the collaborative feel, the page layout--all contribute to this end. This source is highly recommended by Joan Tornow for its in depth treatment of the progress in the field and for its accounts from professionals in the field (20). I add my recommendation to Tornow's for those interested in a detailed account of the use of computers in composition.

⁵The sum is greater than its parts. The recursive nature of prewriting, writing, rewriting are emphasized as we teach the stages, but tell students that the stages overlap. We break the process down in parts to discuss, but writers experience the process holistically.

⁶A useful and thorough discussion on prewriting strategies can be found in Erika Lindemann's *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*, pp. 74-92.

⁷Designing the site was made possible by a multitude of sources on web page construction, primary among them, Larry Mapp, "chief cook and bottle washer" in the Ginanni Classroom. His invaluable guidance and advice were

reinforced by sources like Roy Tennant's article, "Web Sites By Design: How to Avoid a 'Pile of Pages.'" "

⁸Tennant's admonitions to avoid linear thinking (49), reinforced Mapp's instructions for maintaining the integrity and autonomy of each component making up the site. Additionally, "chunkitis . . . in which the sufferer treats every little thing as something worthy of a link" (Tennant 49) is decried as one of the most distracting ailments that plague novice web site developers. In avoiding this condition, I have prevented distracting students from the task at hand and provided a more efficient experience.

⁹MTSU English Department policy mandates students enrolled in the four general studies English courses submit all the semester's work in individual folders that remain on file in the department for at least one semester.

Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix A

CAI Portfolio English 111: The Web Page

The web page created for this course is intended as a resource for the students enrolled in CAI Portfolio English 111. It serves as a repository of all the information they need pertaining to course policy, requirements, guidelines, writing assignments, schedule, and also as a set of originals from which forms (coversheet peer response, and the like) can be copied onto their disks or in hard copy for use in completing their work. Additionally, through the "Writing Tools" section, students can obtain help in a variety of areas from invention strategies to comma use.

Although the "pages" are presented in linear fashion here, that is only a limitation imposed by the print medium to facilitate viewing them in this format. Online, these sites are hyperlinked to each other to enable students to move about freely in order to obtain the information or help they seek. Additionally, the material displayed per page is governed by the server and does not reflect how it is viewed on the Internet.

The site can be accessed through the Middle Tennessee State University web site or through its URL:

<<http://www.mtsu.edu/~mclayton>>



English 111--CAI Portfolio English 111
English 211--The Experience of Literature
English 221--Major Themes in American Literature

Instructor: Maria A. Clayton
English Department
P.O. Box 70
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132





Welcome to CAI Portfolio English 111

The composition experience at Middle Tennessee State University is comprised of **English 111** and **English 112**. Both courses are designed to help students hone already established writing skills and to provide instruction on learning to adapt the composition processes to a variety of rhetorical situations. CAI Portfolio English 111 combines portfolio-based composition with computer-assisted composition, providing for its students the strengths of both. Assumptions are made about capabilities in basic areas of paragraph and essay organization and development, in grammar and mechanics, as well as in basic word processing skills. If the student does not possess the prerequisite competencies for the courses, he or she should assume responsibility for remediating those areas. The [web site](#) is designed to assist students in **Instructor Maria A. Clayton's CAI Portfolio English 111** composition sections. In addition to enrichment avenues provided through links accessing supplementary help on elements of style, grammar, mechanics, and MLA documentation among many others, the site offers on-line opportunities for peer response and instructor feedback. These resources are geared to facilitate the composition process and to encourage multiple drafts for each effort. Additionally, the site provides necessary information on what a student can expect in terms of the scope, requirements, etc. of the course.

The web site is adapted from and owes a great debt to *Portfolio Composition: A Student's Guide and Reader for English 111 Portfolio Sections* by Ayne Cantrell and Sushil Oswal (2nd ed. McGraw-Hill/Primus Custom Publishing, 1997), the English Department's standard for portfolio sections.

Intro to CAI Portfolio	Sample Schedule	Requirements & Guidelines	List-Serves
Course Syllabus	The Peer Process	Writing Tools	Writing Assignments



Introduction to CAI Portfolio English 111

Welcome to CAI Portfolio English 111

In other first year writing courses at the university level, the student receives a grade on each individual assignment with little or no opportunity to revise the writing. In CAI Portfolio English 111, your teacher will ask you to revise each of your major writing assignments, and your writing will not be graded until near the end of the semester--after you have had ample opportunity to collect the best of your revised work in a **WRITER'S PORTFOLIO** for evaluation. This goal is facilitated by the availability of the computers for each step of the writing process.

The Portfolio System aims at helping you become mature writers capable of attaining both professional and personal purposes through writing. It encourages you to go beyond merely writing for your teacher by requiring you to address and communicate to a variety of real, flesh-and-blood audiences. Employing this state-of-the-art Portfolio System of Assessment, your English 111 teacher will provide you with the best writing instruction available. The English Department is using this system because it offers a number of advantages to students:

- The Portfolio System recognizes that becoming mature writers requires prewriting, writing, and rewriting your essays. It involves going through multiple drafts until you have achieved your purpose. This system will allow you to revise your essays throughout the semester because your teacher will assign a final grade to your Portfolio only at the end of the semester.
- Your teacher will provide you with constructive feedback throughout the semester on your essays, and you will also have the opportunity to implement this feedback to further improve your final grade.
- You will be able to focus on your writing without worrying constantly about your grades. Researchers have found that students make greater improvement in their writing when their focus is shifted from punitive feedback through letter grades to constructive feedback in the form of suggestions for further revision.

Of course, after you submit your Mid-term Portfolio, your teacher will let you know about your pass/fail status up to that point and assign an informational letter grade.

- Above all, you will have the opportunity to offer only the best of your work for final assessment. Out of the five essays you will compose in CAI Portfolio English 111, your teacher will ask you to choose your top three essays for the Final Portfolio.

How Does This System Work?

In this system, you will develop a portfolio of your writing over the semester. All students will write five major essays (see "Five Portfolio Writing Assignments") in addition to any other homework or in-class assignments. Your teacher will provide you with a schedule of deadlines for completing both the rough and final drafts of these essays. After you receive your second essay back from your teacher, you will revise Essay 1 and 2 using your teacher's feedback. You will choose one essay for the Mid-term Portfolio out of these first two revised essays. On the deadline listed in your syllabus, your teacher will collect the Mid-term Portfolio for evaluation.

If your teacher informs you that your Mid-term Portfolio did not pass, you must have a conference with your teacher immediately. In this meeting, your teacher will explain to you how you can improve your chances of passing the Final Portfolio.

During week fifteen of the semester, you will prepare your Final Portfolio, which will consist of a total of three pieces of writing: Three essays of your choice selected from the five essays assigned by your teacher (one essay out of Essay 1 and 2, and two essays out of Essay 3, 4, 5). You will make sure that you select only those three essays that you have carefully revised and edited using all the feedback provided by your teacher.

At this stage your teacher will also assign a letter grade to your portfolio. Your portfolio will be judged by the "Standards or Judging Student Portfolios, English 111" (see Freshman Folder insert). To earn a grade of C or better, your writing must meet all five of the following criteria for effective writing:

- Achieves its specific purpose.
- Considers and adapts to its intended audience.
- Adequately develops ideas through the use of specific details.
- Carefully constructs and organizes ideas, paragraphs, and sentences.
- Effectively uses language, including correct grammar and mechanics.

Your final course grade will consist of:

- Your Final Portfolio grade (70%)
- Your grade for all other work (30%)

What Are Your Responsibilities as a Student in CAI Portfolio English 111

Your teacher will coach you throughout the semester on how to prepare all materials--the disk (and back-up) and the Freshman Folder and the Mid-term and Final Portfolios for evaluation. Your teacher will also request you to evaluate your own writing, at least twice during the semester--once before the submission of the Mid-term Portfolio and again before the submission of the Final Portfolio. You will follow these guidelines to ensure success in the course:

- You must complete all essay assignments in sequence and on time.
- You must set up and maintain two disks for your essay writing, a primary and back-up per the "Basic Requirements."
- You must write at least four drafts of each essay assignment.
- You must present all teacher drafts in hard copy.
- You will keep all materials not on disk in the Freshman English Folder and submit it and the primary disk at the end of the semester.
- You will submit your Portfolio to your teacher in a two-pocket folder.
- You must complete all the work assigned by your teacher and meet the teacher's attendance policy. (Passing the Final Portfolio does not automatically pass you in CAI Portfolio English 111.)
- If at any time during the semester you have questions regarding the CAI Portfolio System or your status in the class, you will immediately discuss them with your teacher.
- You must attend the MTSU Writing Center (Peck Hall 326) if your instructor requires it.



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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CAI Portfolio English 111

Spring 1998

Eng 111-01
PH 327
MWF 7:00-7:50

Eng 111-02
PH 327
MWF 8:00-8:50

Instructor:

Maria A. Clayton

KOM 100A (MTSU Box 70); faculty mailbox located in PH 303
e-mail address: mclayton@frank.mtsu.edu
898-5153 (office); 849-8369 (home; no calls after
10:00 p.m., please) ☎

You may leave a message on my answering machines, but
you must try to catch me at another time to insure I
receive the information. As a rule, I will not return
student calls.

Office Hours:

MWF 10:00-12:00; TTH 10:00-2:30; other times

by appointment Be sure to let me know you need to see me,
so your trip is not wasted.

Please Note: Students who miss the first day of class
must make an appointment with the instructor for the purpose of
course orientation and to obtain course syllabus. Students
who miss the second day of class must make an appointment with
the instructor for the purpose of completing the in-class writing.
Students with disabilities that affect classroom performance must
inform the instructor and provide certification form the
Office of Disabled Student Services, so arrangements
can be made as soon as possible to accommodate their difficulties.

Syllabus Contents

Texts & Materials	Course Requirements	Course Policies
Course Objectives	Grades	Writing Center



Texts and Materials:

Neeld, Elizabeth Cowan. *Writing*. 3rd edition. Harper Collins, 1990.
 Cantrell, Ayne, and Sushil Oswal. *Portfolio Composition: A Student's Guide and Reader for English III Portfolio Sections*. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill/Primus Custom Publishing, 1997.
 Hodges, John C., et al., eds. *Harbrace College Handbook*. 13th ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1997.
Random House College Dictionary (Dept. Standard)
 Freshman Theme Folder
 Two 3-1/2", formatted, high density floppy disks
 One two-pocket folder for your Writing Portfolio
 e-mail account on frank--obtainable at the Office of Information Technology in Cope Admin. Bldg. (**account must be checked daily**).

Be sure to have all necessary materials for each class (refer to the schedule for each day's activities); you should have the Student Guide with you every day.



Course Objectives:

English III will introduce you to the writing process and give you much practice in writing. You will become a better, more confident writer, and the skills you acquire will benefit you in college and throughout life. More specifically, you will learn

1. To use vocabulary associated with writing for the purpose of communicating about the writing process and the forms of academic writing,
2. To generate ideas for writing through prewriting strategies and to explore and limit subjects for writing,
3. To demonstrate an awareness of purpose and audience in your writing, particularly the extended audience created by the use of e-mail list-serves and computer network in the classroom,

4. To draw content for your writing not only from your imagination and experience, but from library and interview sources as well and to summarize, paraphrase, analyze, quote from, and document these sources in your writing,
5. To adapt the structures of sentences and paragraphs to the purposes of a given piece of writing,
6. To become aware of the strengths and weaknesses in your writing and to become a critical reader of your own writing,
7. To revise your writing to create interesting, unified, coherent essays that are adequately developed,
8. To edit your writing (a) to ensure that you have used specific, appropriate language and varied sentence types and (b) to eliminate serious grammatical and mechanical errors, and
9. To become a critical reader of your classmates' writing so that you can help them write effectively,
10. To become adept at maximizing the computer's capabilities for every step in the composition process mentioned above.



Course Requirements:

Reading--The more you know about the composing process, the more effective your writing. For this purpose, you will read (1) chapters from *Writing* that will introduce you to strategies for writing, (2) sections from *Harbrace College Handbook* on matters of language usage, and (3) essays written by others, including the writing of your classmates. In addition, occasionally you may need to read books, newspapers, and magazine articles to gain information about topics for writing.

Essay Writing & Revising--Effective writing, of course, is the major goal of English 111, so you can expect to write a good deal. In addition to an early in-class introductory writing, you will write five essays (500-650 words each).

You will learn that effective writing is a matter of rewriting, a process that is made efficient by the use of the computers. Both your peers and I will respond to your writing via e-mail or hard copy with suggestions for revisions. These suggestions will ask you to rethink and reshape content and organization (not just to correct errors in grammar and mechanics). Then you will have an opportunity to rewrite before you submit the essays for grading.

The writing and rewriting activity in CAI Portfolio English 111 is designed to help you produce a body of work, called a **Writing Portfolio**. Like the artist's portfolio (paintings that best present the artist's vision, style, and achievement), the writing portfolio will represent you as a writer. From Essays 1-5 you will choose three fully revised essays for your portfolio (one essay selected from assignments 1 & 2 and two essays from assignments 3, 4, & 5) and submit them for a grade at the end of the fifteenth week of the term. Each assignment, however, must be taken seriously and adhere to all requirements as if each were to be submitted for the final portfolio. An essay could be returned without comment if not deemed a credible effort and counted as a late draft, which will prohibit subsequent assignments from being accepted; this situation could lead to

course failure.

As practice in portfolio selection, you will submit a Mid-Term portfolio consisting of one essay (a revision of either Essay 1 or 2) at the start of the term's week eight. The Mid-Term portfolio is a vital course component, and failure to submit it following all the guidelines and on time, results in course failure.

Objective tests and outlines of reading assignments--You will be responsible for outlining selected chapters in our text *Writing* and then for follow-up objective tests over the material. For each assignment the test will count 50% of the grade, outlines 50%. You will be able to use your outlines during the tests. One suggestion for outlining might be to highlight or underline main points in the book first and then go back through the text and outline for submission only the most important points and definitions. Outlines **must** be turned in with tests to receive full credit and should follow the conventional format for indentation and use of Roman numerals (*Harbrace* 369). As a rule, omit the Application sections unless otherwise directed.

Student/teacher conferences--Students often tell me that they learn best how to improve their writing in student/teacher conferences. I ask that you schedule one conference with me in my office to discuss your writing. Because the conference is mandatory (see week 12 of schedule), missing it will result in course failure unless a rescheduled appointment is kept. Of course, I invite you to set up additional conferences as you need them. If you have questions, if you need help, please see me during my regular office hours by making an appointment. Seeking assistance before portfolio submission is far smarter than doing a post mortem after your work has been turned in for a grade.



Grades

To pass the course and earn three credit hours, you must earn a course grade of C or better. **D is not a passing grade in the freshman writing courses. You cannot turn in F work for the Final Portfolio and pass the course.**

To be eligible to earn course credit, you must (1) complete at least four drafts of all five essays, (2) meet all attendance requirements for classes, the conference, and peer groups, (3) submit Mid-Term and Final Portfolios following all guidelines and requirements, and (4) submit your Freshman Folder with all required work completed.* Then your course grade will be determined as follows based on a ten point scale:

- 70% Final Writing Portfolio (three fully revised essays, either 1 or 2 and two from 3, 4, & 5)
- 20% Objective Tests with Outlines
- 10% Daily Work and Class Participation

At mid-term you will receive an informational letter grade (A, B, C, or F). The mid-term grade will reflect the quality of your work at that point, but it will not determine the final course grade.

* (The Freshman English Folder complete with all drafts, peer comments,

test and with the front and back covers filled out must be turned in on the day scheduled for your final exam in order to receive a grade for the course. Your disk will be inserted in a plastic holder; it should include the appropriate "folders" for each essay which include all the documents outlined in the requirements. Your hard copy portfolio will be loosely inserted into the Freshman English Folder once you have had an opportunity to read the comments and final grade. All these remain on file in the English Dept.)



Course Policies

Attendance--Class attendance is extremely important to you and your classmates' success in this course because unlike the lecture course where your class absence affects no one but yourself, CAI Portfolio English 111 is structured around your participation in class. Your writing is our subject matter, and most days we will be prewriting, writing, or rewriting in class. Often classes will be conducted as writing workshops where your classmates and I will confer with you about your writing and where you will respond to your classmates about their writing. Although the feedback process should continue over e-mail after you leave the classroom, class attendance is a must.

Therefore, you are expected to attend all classes. I will take roll daily, and if you (1) miss more than four of the required classes, (2) participate in fewer than three of the required five peer response groups, or (3) do not attend the mandatory out-of-class teacher/student conference, you will fail the course. Only university sponsored functions (for instance, trips relating to sports, chorus events, livestock judging) are excused. In such cases you are responsible for notifying me of the absence well in advance, and you are responsible for getting your work in early--before you have to be absent. Absences due to illness, death in the family, and the like must be covered by the four allowable absences. Exceptions will be made to this policy only under extraordinary circumstances. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with all assigned work, either reading or writing. **Being prepared for class is expected, even after any absence.** For backup, look around the room, select two or three reliable looking classmates and exchange phone numbers to use as support in keeping informed.

Tardiness--Two late arrivals/departures will equal an absence. If you arrive after I call roll, it is your responsibility to alert me to your attendance.

Late Work--It is important that you submit your work on time. Ordinarily, I do not accept late work. Even though each essay does not receive a grade, I will keep track of late drafts (preliminary or revised) and adjust your portfolio grade accordingly--1/2 a letter grade per late submission; this will affect the grade dramatically rather quickly.

Plagiarism

You know that using another's work as your own is wrong. The most flagrant instances of plagiarism are submitting

an essay that is copied from another's writing or having someone dictate what is written (such as having a typist rewrite a paper, substituting his/her language for the student's). Often such violations are very easy for writing teachers to spot because we get very familiar with the student's prose style (and you should know that writing teachers at MTSU often read the writing completed in each other's classes). We do not hesitate to fail students in English 111 when we find students misrepresenting someone else's work as their own.

 [Syllabus Menu](#)

Writing Center

The English Department offers tutoring to students enrolled at MTSU. If I find that you have writing problems, in addition to offering links to on-line sites that will help eliminate those errors from your writing, I may recommend that you take advantage of this service.

Students must sign up for tutoring in Peck Hall 326 and present a sample of their writing at the first tutoring session. Students may get tutoring on their own, without recommendations from teachers. However, you must sign up for the service. Tutors do not take walk-in clients; neither do they provide proofreading services.

 [Syllabus Menu](#)



Intro to CAI Portfolio	Syllabus	Schedule	The Peer Process	Requirements & Guidelines	Writing Tools	List-Serves	Five Writing Assignments
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CAI Portfolio English 111
Freshman Composition
Tentative Schedule of Assignments

All assignments refer to the Writing text unless otherwise specified.

**Follow these procedures for every Peer Group date.

***Follow these procedures for every Essay due date.

- Jan 7 Welcome to class! Introduction to Course.
- Jan 9 Syllabus review; familiarization with computers and course protocol.
- Jan 12 Bring Freshman English Folder and discs to class; read Freshman Folder insert and **Portfolio** pp. 3-7 carefully:
"Introduction to CAI Portfolio English 111,"
"Five Portfolio Writing Assignments," and
"Basic Requirements for Portfolio Assignments."
 Clarification of questions on syllabus and FF insert.
 Writing Sample in class using the computer; continue familiarization process.
Last day to add a class.
- Jan 14 Begin reading and outlining Chapter 1, "Building an Essay" pp. 1-10 and Chapter 2, "The Creating Stage" pp.12-27 (see Syllabus; remember to omit application sections). Note test on Jan. 21. Continue familiarization process.
- Jan 16 Continue work on chapters 1 and 2.
 Read Chapter 6, "The Personal Experience Essay," pp. 111-122
 Assign **Essay 1**. Prepare two invention strategies--listing, looping, or reporter's formula. Begin writing in class. (Review "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")
- Jan 19 **Martin Luther King's Birthday--Have a safe holiday!!**
- Jan 20 **Last day for students to withdraw from class and receive 75% refund.**
- Jan 21 **Test #1** and outlines chapters 1 & 2. **Portfolio** pp. 8-14.
 Return Introductory Writing; work on sentence-level corrections (**Portfolio** p. 49). Continue work on **Essay 1** in class.
- Jan 23 Begin reading and outlining Chapter 3, "The Shaping Stage" pp. 30-52 and Chapter 4, "The Completing Stage" pp. 53-84.
 Continue work on **Essay 1** in class.
- Jan 26 Peer Group Essay 1.
 Refer to Individual Essay Check List (**Portfolio** p. 20).
 Have Peer draft, coversheet (**Portfolio** p. 51),
 rough draft, invention strategies on both disks plus hard copy of
 Writer's Questions for Peer Group Response (**Portfolio** p. 83).
 Use the corresponding Peer Response Sheets (**Portfolio** pp. 95, 127).**

- Jan 28 Workshop on Essay 1.
- Jan 30 **Essay 1 due:** Teacher's revised copy and cover sheet in hard copy and corresponding Teacher's Feedback Sheet **Portfolio** p.151.***
Final proofreading in class.
- Feb 2 **Test #2** and outlines chapters 3 & 4.
Read Chapter 7, "The Personal Perspective Essay," pp. 123-132.
Assign **Essay 2**. Prepare two invention strategies.
Begin writing in class. (Review "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")
- Feb 4 Continue work on Essay 2 in class.
Prepare for Peer Group Feb 6.
Last day to drop the course over TRAM without a grade.
- Feb 5 **Last day to drop the course over TRAM and receive a 25% refund.**
- Feb 6 Begin reading and outlining Chapter 20, "Polishing Sentences" pp. 419-427 and Chapter 21, "Style: Words and Images" pp. 438-453.
Peer Group Essay 2. .**see above, Jan. 26).
- Feb 9 Workshop Essay 2.
- Feb 11 Return Essay. Workshop on sentence-level corrections (**Portfolio** pp. 15, 16, 18, 49).
Discuss Mid-Term Portfolio submission.
- Feb 13 **Essay 2 due:** .***see above, Jan 30).
Final proofreading in class.
- Feb 16 **Test #3** and outlines on chapters 20 & 21.
Discuss **Mid-term Portfolio** submission.
Work on Essay 1 revision in class.
- Feb 18 Begin reading and outlining Chapter 15, "Quick Thoughts on Audience, Talk, and Writing" pp. 308-313 and Chapter 17, "Form & Pattern" pp. 346-358.
- Feb 20 Return Essay 2; Workshop on sentence-level corrections.
Mid-term Portfolio Workshop (**Portfolio** pp.15, 16, 21, 49).
- Feb 23 The typed, double-spaced **Mid-term Portfolio** consisting of either revised Essay 1 or 2 **due**. Final proofreading in class.
Introduction to the Mid-term Portfolio written in class.
- Feb 25 Read Chapter 10, "The Information Essay," pp. 160-175.
Assign **Essay 3**. Begin working in class--select topic, person to be interviewed date of interview, and at least five interview questions. (Review "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")
- Feb 27 Workshop on Essay 3.
- Mar 2 **Test #4** and outlines on chapters 15 & 17.
Bring interview questions and/or notes and rough draft.
- Mar 4 Begin reading and outlining pp. 265-276 and 297-301 in Chapter 14;

Portfolio p.19.

Introduce using sources in academic writing.
 Workshop on Essay 3. Prepare draft for Mar 6 Peer Group.
Last day to withdraw from class and receive a W.

- Mar 6 Peer Group Essay 3. (**see above, Jan 26).
- Mar 9 **Test #5** and outlines on pp. 265-276 and 297-301 in Chapter 14.
 Workshop on using sources in academic writing.
 Begin reading and outlining Chapter 18, "Promise & Delivery"
 pp. 361-366 and Chapter 19, "Making Paragraphs Work"
 pp. 384-417 (read the applications).
- Mar 11 **Essay 3 due**: (**see above, Jan.30).
 Final proofreading in class.
- Mar 13 Mid-term Portfolio returned.
 Read Chapter 9, "The Problem-Solution Essay," pp. 145-159.
 Assign Essay 4. Prepare invention
 strategies. Begin writing in class. (Review "Basic
 Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")
- Mar 16-21 Spring Break--Have a safe holiday!!!**
- Mar 23 **Test #6** and outlines on chapters 18 & 19.
- Mar 25 Workshop on Essay 4. Prepare draft for Mar. 27 Peer Group.
 Return Essay 3; work on sentence-level corrections.
- Mar 27 Peer Group Essay 4 (**see above, Jan. 26).

NO CLASSES DURING WEEK 12 (March 30-April 3)--CONFERENCE WEEK

Students meet with teacher for office appointments. Bring **Essay 4**
 with you (**see above, Jan. 30). We will discuss your progress
 on your writing, whether on this essay, a previous one, ones
 to come, or all of the above as time allows. You will receive the
Essay 5 assignment at this time.

Begin work on it outside of class in addition to reading
Portfolio pp. 189-210; make marginal notes
 on all the essays and respond to "Questions on Content" for the
 essay you select to respond to. (Review "Basic
 Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")

- Apr 6 Return Essay 4. Workshop on sentence-level corrections.
 Work on Essay 5 in class. Discuss essay in reader and submit
 responses to "Questions on Content" for homework credit.
 Prepare draft for Apr. 8 Peer Group.
- Apr 8 Peer Group Essay 5 (**see above, Jan. 26).
- Apr 10 **Good Friday--Have a safe holiday!!**
- Apr 13 Workshop Essay 5.
- Apr 15 **Essay 5 due** (**see above, Jan. 30).
 Final proofreading in class.
- Apr 17 Revision workshop on essays 1-4.

- Apr 20 Return Essay 5. Workshop on sentence-level corrections.
Portfolio pp. 27, 29-46 (the sample portfolio).
- Apr 22 Progress reports on revisions and decisions on essays selected for final portfolios.
Workshop on portfolio submissions.
- Apr 24 **Final Portfolio Due** (one essay from 1 & 2; two essays from 3, 4, & 5) *Portfolio* p. 22. Introduction to Portfolio written in class. Student Permission form *Portfolio* p. 169).
- Apr 27 No Class. Use this time to organize and complete your Freshman Folder for submission (*Portfolio* p. 23).

Final Exam Period:

Your final portfolio will be returned. Bring Freshman English Folder with all required materials included and front and back covers completed. Place one of your disks in back pocket; disk must contain electronic folders for each essay with the appropriate documents in each. None of this material be returned to you, so all copies of essays and the back up disk for your personal records must be made by this time. You will not receive a grade for the course without this folder.

111-01 Mon., May 4, 7:00-9:00 a.m.

111-02 Fri., May 1, 7:00-9:00

****Follow these procedures for every Peer Group date.**

*****Follow these procedures for every Essay due date.**



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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The Peer Process

<u>Tasks for Peer Response Groups</u>	<u>Tips for Success</u>	<u>How to Complete a Peer Response Sheet</u>	<u>Notes for Peer Response</u>	<u>Sample Peer Response Sheet</u>
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Tasks for Peer Response Groups

Review this information prior to each peer response group.

The General Rules:

- Each writer should bring the coversheet and draft #2 of the essay for peer group response.
- Each writer should bring three questions in writing about his/her essay (see *Portfolio* p. 83).
- Groups should start as soon as all members are present. Don't wait for your teacher to ask you to start. Class roll will be taken as groups work.
- Groups must sit at adjacent terminals.
- Groups must quickly come to order and get down to business.
- Groups must give equal time to all members' work.
- Everyone must participate.

TASK ONE--Oral Response

(approximate time 30 minutes)

- Group members introduce themselves.
- The first writer reads her/his own coversheet and essay aloud.
- Peers listen carefully.
- When the writer finishes reading, the group observes at least two minutes of silence while peers jot down reactions to the coversheet and essay. See form for note taking,

"Notes for Peer's Oral Response" (see Portfolio p. 95).

- After time for note taking lapses, the writer asks her/his questions about the essay.
- Peers answer the writer's questions and give the writer their own reactions.
- Complete steps 2-6 for each remaining writers.

TASK TWO--Written Response

(approximate time 15 minutes)

- Group members exchange essays (on terminals, e-mail, or hard copy).
- Each member reads silently the essay of one of his/her peers and completes a "Peer Response Sheet" (see Portfolio p. 127).
- Respondents sign "Peer Response Sheet" and return it to writers.
- Writers quickly read responses to see if anything needs clarification.

IMPORTANT: When draft 3 of the essay is due, writers turn in peers' response sheets with their essays.

TASK THREE--Group Evaluation and Closure

(approximate time 5 minutes)

- Students evaluate the session by completing "Evaluation of the Peer Group Process" (see Portfolio p. 139).
- Students submit "Notes for Peer's Oral Response" to the teacher for daily credit.
- Students submit "Writer's Questions" for daily credit.

TASK FOUR--E-Mail Response

(outside of class)

- Students share drafts via e-mail with peer(s) and instructor for further comment or after revisions are made for new consideration and feedback.
- Group members can continue this exchange at each step of the composition process.
- Students may also chose to send their drafts or portions of drafts to the entire class for feedback.

 Peer Process Menu

Peer Response Groups--Tips for Success

Tips for Writers:

- Read your piece and allow at least two minutes of silence after the reading for impressions to become clearer in the minds of your peers and to give them time to jot down reaction notes for oral response.
- Do not rush the reading of your piece.
- Ask the group questions about the content of your writing:
"What other examples could I use to appeal to my teenage audience? Two

sentences are not enough for paragraph three? What else could I say?"
(see "Writer's Questions," *Portfolio* p. 83)

- Avoid defensiveness. Let the writing stand for itself and listen openly to the responses of the group members. This will help you revise later.
- Do not quarrel with your group's reactions. Maybe what you see is truly there, and others do not see it. But maybe what they see is there, too--even if it contradicts what you see. Just listen, take it all in, and then make your own decision about what the writing needs.

Tips for Respondents:

- Use active listening. Do not concentrate on your next comments; concentrate instead on what the speaker is saying. Tell what you think the writer is trying to say by either paraphrasing or summarizing the gist of what has been written. Have the writers read back some of their own words.
- As the piece is being read, jot down words or phrases that catch your attention. What is it about those words that make them stand out? What parts of the piece do you like best? How do those parts work for you?
- Take advantage of the note taking time after each essay reading and complete Notes for Peer's Oral Response (see *Portfolio* p. 95): What works? What doesn't? What questions do you have?
 1. Respond to specific sections of the writing. A general response, such as "I like it" or "That's good," does not help the writer find ways to improve the writing.
 2. Let the writer know if there is anything in the writing that seems confusing, out of place, or unclear. Explain why you are bothered by that particular section or item.
 3. Ask the writer, "What part of the paper do you like best?" "What part was most difficult to write?" "How can the group help you?"

 Peer Process Menu



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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How to Complete a Peer Response Sheet

When it comes to writing improvement, working in Peer Groups can be one of the most useful activities in Portfolio Composition, second only to receiving teacher feedback. The responses generated by you as a listener are the first tools available to student writers to help determine the need for revision in their writing on major issues such as audience, purpose, thesis, development, and organization. Your serious participation in peer group and especially your thoughtful comments on Peer Response Sheets are very important to the writers in your group.

Before coming to class to participate in the peer group experience, re-read "Tasks for Peer Response Groups" (Portfolio p.10) and "Peer Response Groups--Tips for Success" (Portfolio p.11) to maximize the usefulness of your comments. A "Sample Peer Response Sheet" (Portfolio p.13) is provided to give an idea of the type and depth of responses that could lead the writer to revise weak areas and capitalize on strengths. The Sample Peer Response Sheet responds to an earlier draft of the Personal Perspective Essay in the Sample Portfolio (Portfolio p.25). Read it and the Portfolio Essay (Portfolio pp.29-32) and note how the writer addressed some, but not all, of the peer's responses.



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CAI Portfolio English 111 Notes for Peer Response

Notes for Peer's Oral Response

Essay # _____

Writer _____

Peer Respondent _____

Instructions: Listen to the essay carefully. Take at least two minutes after the reading to complete the following notes, and then share your reactions orally with the writer. Submit the completed form to your teacher at the end of the Peer Response activity.

(+) WHAT WORKS?
(praise)

(-) WHAT DOESN'T?
(polish)

(?) QUESTIONS?
(question)



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ESSAY 1 PEER RESPONSE SHEET: THE PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ESSAY

Essay writer's name _____ Reader's name _____

Instructions: Respond to the asterisked items first on both sides of the page. If you have time, respond to the rest in numerical order.

*1. What were your reactions when first reading this draft? List some of them here.

The subject of college roommates appealed to me. I don't think the title "Just Friends" fits. I think you overstate your case--don't you think some friends might make good roommates?

2. Does the essay have a purpose beyond fulfilling the requirements of the assignment? YES NO
What do you see as that purpose?

You seem to want to convince the reader to think twice before choosing a best friend as a roommate.

*3. To what audience is the essay directed and is this audience an appropriate one for the subject?

College students, I think. Yes, this is the right audience. But it could be anyone who might choose to live with a best friend.

4. List two examples from the essay that indicate the writer's awareness of the needs of this specific audience. Refer to the essay's tone, word choice, details selected, and so forth.

- a. *"whenever we need the space"--word choice appropriate for college students*
- b. *"let her boyfriend kick back on my bed"--word choice appropriate*

*5. What is main point or thesis of the essay? Write the thesis sentence down here.

"No matter how wonderful it first may seem, choosing a best friend as a roommate is disastrous."

6. Does the organization of essay material logically follow from the purpose and thesis of the essay?

YES NO Comment:

You use your own experience of having problems with your roommate to show how disastrous choosing your roommate as a best friend can be, but I don't understand what happened first, next, etc.

*7. Does the essay keep you interested? YES NO
UP TO A POINT Comment:

I never got bored!!

8. List three details or examples that interested you.

- a. *How she woke you up every morning and asked how she should wear her hair*
- b. *How you didn't want her boyfriend around all the time*
- c. *How looking back on your mistakes and how you would handle it differently today*

9. Can you follow the time order of the events or situations easily?

Not really, I didn't get a sense of how long you were friends and roommates or how long you had been roommates before you blew up at her.

Are all other details clear?

I'm not sure what you mean when you say that you "tackled her." Did you really "tackie" her?

10. Add further suggestions and comments below.

a. Circle paragraphs that confused you. Par. 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10

b. What, if anything, should the writer throw out or revise?

I think you ought to recognize that some best friends could be good roommates, but only if they have similar habits. Also add details--what's your friend's name?

c. What should the writer definitely keep?

the different sleeping habits

d. Quote or note your favorite sentence, point, or idea from the essay.

"She got up every morning at six with enough noise to wake the dead."

*11. Does the essay fulfill the requirements for the assignment?

- a. Is there a coversheet? YES NO
- b. Is the essay titled? YES NO
- c. Is the essay handwritten in blue or black ink on wide-lined paper, or typed/printed, on one side only? YES NO
Purple ink!!!!

- d. Is the first page set up as in the example in *Harbrace Handbook*, 34b? YES NO
- e. Are subsequent pages numbered as in *Harbrace* example, 34b? YES NO
- f. Does the essay meet the 550-650 word count? YES NO
Your last name plus page # needed on each page
Too short? Can you give more examples of how you two didn't get along?



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Five Portfolio Writing Assignments

<u>Essay</u>	<u>Essay</u>	<u>Essay</u>	<u>Essay</u>	<u>Essay</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

Skills/Abilities: The successful completion of each of the following five essay assignments requires that the writer

- Defines purpose and audience and adapts material to the audience
- Explores and limits a subject
- Develops a distinctive and appropriate writer's voice
- Focuses on and develops a thesis
- Derives organization of material from purpose and thesis
- Provides adequate transitions among ideas
- Uses effective paragraphing
- Uses specific and appropriate language
- Uses a variety of sentence types
- Revises, edits, and proofreads

Reminder: Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines." After completing the first draft of the essay, the writer needs to review these requirements to insure all guidelines have been met.

ESSAY 1: THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ESSAY

Description: An expressive essay that focuses on the writer's experience for the purpose of telling a story and reflecting on its meaning. The emphasis of the personal experience essay is on the insight the writer gained from the incident.

Topic Choices: Needl's assignments #1, 2, 3, 5, & 6 (Writing 112-113)

Suggested Invention Strategies: Listing, Looping, Reporter's Formula

Additional Skills/Abilities:

- Uses memory recall to gather material for writing
- Develops ideas with vivid details, examples, and illustrations
- Arranges the narrative in climactic chronological order

Essay Menu

ESSAY #2: THE PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ESSAY

Description: An expressive essay that focuses on the writer's opinion or point of view and is written from personal experience. Although the writer stakes out her/his own position, the writer wants to be understood more than supported or followed.

Topic Choices: Needl's assignments # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 (*Writing* 124-25)

Suggested Invention Strategies: Looping, Listing, Cubing

Additional Skills/Abilities:

- Uses memory recall to gather material for writing
- Develops ideas with vivid details, examples, and illustrations
- Adopts an informal, personal tone and emphatic writer's voice

 [Essay Menu](#)

ESSAY #3: THE INFORMATION ESSAY

Description: An essay that provides readers with new information or enlarges readers' knowledge about something they might already appreciate

Topic Choices: The profile of a profession, profile of an interesting and unusual hobby or sport, or profile of a campus or community club, organization, program, or place

Suggested Invention Strategies: Looping, Reporter's Formula, Reading and Researching, Classical Invention

Additional Skills/Abilities:

- Uses interview and observation to gather material for writing
- Presents lively and interesting detail that engages the reader's interest
- Uses appropriate MLA documentation

 [Essay Menu](#)

ESSAY #4: THE PROBLEM-SOLUTION ESSAY

Description: An essay that details a problem, proposes a solution, and proves logically and clearly that the solution is the best course of action.

Suggested Topic Choices: Needl's assignments #1, 3, & 4 (*Writing* 147-48) or as assigned by instructor

Suggested Invention Strategies: Brainstorming, Looping, Reporter's Formula, Cubing, Track Switching

Additional Skills/Abilities:

- Uses memory recall, observation, and/or interview to gather material for writing
- Thinks critically and logically to analyze the problem and to arrive at a feasible solution
- Arranges the discussion appropriately to focus on the problem, the solution, or both
- Defines the problem carefully and states the solution clearly
- Uses appropriate MLA documentation

 [Essay Menu](#)

ESSAY #5: THE SUMMARY AND RESPONSE ESSAY

Description: An essay that summarizes and responds to a position in a selected reading

Topic Choices: Readings in Part Four (*Portfolio Composition*, 173).

Suggested Invention Strategies: Looping, Classical Invention, Cubing, Reporter's Formula

Skills/Abilities:

- Reads selected reading critically by questioning and understanding
- Analyzes, interprets, and evaluates another's position
- Quotes, paraphrases, and summarizes another's position accurately
- Presents a logical and well thought out response
- Uses appropriate MLA documentation

Essay Menu

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Eng 111 The Personal Experience Essay Essay 1 Requirements

Topic:

Choose one of the assignments from *Writing*, pages 112-113 from among #1, 2, 3, 5, & 6. The experience you write about and the feelings you express must be real sincere and should capture your audience's interest.

Length:

500-650 words.

Creating, Shaping and Completing Essay 1:

Read Chapter 6, "The Personal Experience Essay," *Writing* 111-122, for specific instructions on how to complete this assignment. Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")

Due Dates and Submission Requirements:

See schedule.

Expected Skills/Abilities:

This assignment will require that you

- define purpose and audience and that you adapt your writing to the audience,
- Explore and limit a subject appropriately,
- Use memory recall to gather material for writing,
- Focus on and develop a thesis,
- Use narration, description and summary developing ideas with vivid details, examples, and illustrations,
- Organize paragraphs coherently and in chronological order,
- Provide adequate transitions and reminder signs,
- Use specific and appropriate language,
- Use a variety of sentence types and
- Revise, edit and proofread.



<u>Intro</u> <u>to</u> <u>CAI</u> <u>Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The</u> <u>Peer</u> <u>Process</u>	<u>Requirements</u> <u>&</u> <u>Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing</u> <u>Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five</u> <u>Writing</u> <u>Assignments</u>
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English 111

The Personal Perspective Essay

Essay 2 Requirements

Topic:

Choose one of the six assignments from *Writing*, pages 124-25.

Although you may choose one of the assignments that introduces the topic with a hypothetical situation, the experience you write about and the feelings you express must be real and sincere. For example, if you elect to respond to #4 and write about harassment at work, make sure that you are experiencing such a problem on the job.

Length:

500-650 words.

Creating, Shaping and Completing Essay 1:

Read Chapter 7, "The Personal Perspective Essay," *Writing* 123-32,

for specific instructions on how to complete this assignment.

Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")

Due Dates and Submission Requirements:

See schedule.

Expected Skills/Abilities:

In addition to the skills and abilities listed in the general description, this assignment will require that you

- Define purpose and audience and that you adapt your writing to the audience,
- Explore and limit a subject appropriately,
- Use memory recall to gather material for writing,
- Focus on and develop a thesis,
- Use narration, description and summary developing ideas with vivid details, examples, and illustrations,
- Organize paragraphs coherently and provide adequate transitions and reminder signs,
- Use specific and appropriate language,
- Use a variety of sentence types and
- Revise, edit and proofread.

Reminder:

Re-read the assignment instructions after you have written a draft of the essay. Make your own checklist of requirements and

apply them to your essay.



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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English 111 The Information Essay Essay 3 Requirements

Topic:

Write an information essay about a campus or community program, service club, or place that a specifically defined audience should know about. Possible subjects include

On-campus academic programs

Women's Studies
African American Studies
The Honors Program
The Debate Program

On-campus clubs

Women's Political Action Group
Biology Club
Drama Club
Chinese Student Association
Lambda Association
Dance Club
Flying Raiders

On-campus services

June Anderson Women's Center
Disabled Students Services
The Day Care Center
JSA Foundation Scholarships
The University Writing Center
Computer Labs
The escort service

More on-campus services

The Adult Services Center
Married Student Housing
The Wellness Center
Multi-Cultural Affairs
International Programs & Services

On-campus places

Center for Popular Music
Center of Historic Preservation
Art gallery in LRC
A campus eatery
Phillips Bookstore
Tennessee Room, Todd Library

Program & services in your community

Planned Parenthood
 Domestic Violence Shelter
 Adult Literacy Program
 A nursing home facility
 "Meals on Wheels" Program
 A day care center

Places in your community

A local tourist attraction
 A state park
 A unique and popular restaurant
 The community theatre
 An historic site
 An art gallery

Length:

500-650 words.

Research Requirements:

- Interview a knowledgeable individual and collect descriptive materials, such as pamphlets or newsletters, to gather information about the program, service, or place and use the information, appropriately documented, in the essay.
- Quote the interviewee at least once in the essay.
- Acknowledge the interview (and other material used in the essay) on a separate page (numbered as your last page) entitled *Work (or Works) Cited* (see *Harbrace* p. 463 for a sample *Works Cited* page using the MLA documentation style).

Creating, Shaping and Completing Essay 3:

Read Chapter 10, "The Information Essay," *Writing* 160-175, for specific instructions on how to complete this assignment. Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")

Due Dates and Submission Requirements:

See schedule.

Expected Skills/Abilities:

In addition to the skills and abilities listed in the general description, this assignment will require that you use interview and observation skills to gather material for writing. Follow these points for conducting the interview:

- Using the reporter's formula to generate questions, write out your interview questions in advance.
- Ask specific questions, for the most part.
- If you receive a "yes" or "no" answer, follow with a question seeking more information.
- Be flexible--if you think of a good question during the interview, ask it.
- If the interviewee wanders from the topic, steer his/her back.
- Listen carefully.
- Take only the notes you will need to jog your memory.

- Use a tape recorder if your interviewee does not object and the recorder does not distract.
- End the interview with a general invitation: "Can you think of anything else to tell me?"
- Immediately after the interview, make a complete record of it based on your notes and include physical descriptions, if appropriate.

Essay 3 also requires that you quote and paraphrase your sources appropriately and that you document them correctly. See p. 438 of *Harbrace* for how to cite an interview on the Works Cited page.

Then, too, do not refer to the interview in the essay and keep yourself as the interviewer out of the essay.

Reminder:

Re-read the assignment instructions after you have written a draft of the essay. Make your own checklist of requirements and apply them to your essay.



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English 111 The Problem-Solution Essay Essay 4 Requirements

Topic:

Choose one of the five writing assignments from *Writing* 147.

Length:

500-650 words.

Creating, Shaping and Completing Essay 3:

Read Chapter 9, "The Problem-Solution Essay," *Writing* 145-159, for specific instructions on how to complete this assignment. Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")

Due Dates and Submission Requirements:

See schedule.

Expected Skills/Abilities:

Especially important to your success as a writer is that you make a promise to your readers (the explicit or implied thesis) and that you deliver that promise. To be sure that you do so, apply the internal and external checks (*Writing* 146) to all drafts.

The "problem-solution" essay will require that you establish your authority; as Neeld says, "Give readers good reasons for regarding you as an expert on the subject. Establish your credentials" (*Writing* 150). See the checklist for writing "problem-solution" essay on p. 146. As in the case of Essays 1 and 2, in addition to the skills and abilities listed in the general description, this assignment will require that you

- Define purpose and audience and that you adapt your writing to the audience,
- Explore and limit a subject appropriately,
- Use memory recall to gather material for writing,
- Focus on and develop a thesis,
- Use analysis, description and summary,
- Organize paragraphs coherently and provide adequate transitions and reminder signs,
- Use specific and appropriate language,
- Use a variety of sentence types
- Revise, edit and proofread.

Reminder:

Re-read the assignment instructions after you have written a draft of the essay. Make your own checklist of requirements and apply them to your essay.



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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English 111

The Summary and Response Essay

Essay 5

In preparation for this essay, read carefully the following sections in your *Portfolio Composition* book: "Writing the Summary and Response Essay" (173-76) and "How to be an Active Reader" (181-88). Pay particular attention to the sample student essay (177-180) and the sample reading with annotations (186-88).

Purpose and Audience:

Have you read a newspaper editorial or magazine article recently that made you angry, touched you deeply, or introduced you to a subject that you would like to tell others about? This assignment gives you the opportunity to write about something you will read, thereby, allowing you to practice a common purpose of academic writing--to summarize and respond.

In this writing you will comment on another piece of writing by focusing on its content and indicating how your own experience and knowledge agrees or disagrees with the writer's. To accomplish this goal, you will summarize and respond to the most important points of your source; your writing will include summary, analysis, and evaluation. Actually the best way to look at the dual purpose of this writing is that you are summarizing for the reader's sake and in order to respond accurately and well. Write from the assumption that your reader has not read the essay.

As always, you should select a specific audience and arrive at a specific purpose. Who will benefit the most from reading your essay and what is the purpose of your summary and response?

Topic:

What piece of writing will you summarize and respond to? To save you time and effort, I have selected five readings and included them in the "Reader with Assignment" section of your *Portfolio Composition* book. You may choose one of these whose subject matter has sparked interest in you:

1. Barry Glazer, "The Right to Be Let Alone" (Student Essay)
2. Bernard Goldberg, "Television Insults Men, Too"
3. Luis Nizer, "How About Low-Cost Drugs for Addicts?"
4. Ciara Spotted Elk, "Skeletons in the Attic"
5. Michael Venture, "On Kids and Slasher Movies"

Exploring the topic:

Outline the text selection that you will be responding to in the essay, and then use clustering to explore your own responses to the subject. Additionally, write out your answers to the "Questions on Content" and "Questions on Technique" which follow the reading.

Length:

500-650 words

Due Dates and Submission Requirements:See schedule.**Expected Skills/Abilities:**

In addition to the skills and abilities listed in the general description, this assignment will require that you

- Accurately and clearly summarize your source.
- Present a clear and logical response in agreement or disagreement.
- Show why you agree or disagree with the author.
- Point out strengths and weaknesses in the author's argument.
- Present your position so that readers can hear your distinctive voice.
- Organize the paper well, providing adequate transitions among ideas and balancing the summary and response appropriately. Remember that you are summarizing in order to respond. You must give enough information in the summary to make the author's position clear and you must show how and why you agree or disagree.
- Make sure you distinguish your ideas from those of your source.
- Introduce, quote, and paraphrase your sources for development.
- Identify the source (author and title) in the opening paragraph.
- Also in the opening paragraph provide a summary statement of the source's message.
- Quote the source at least once in the writing,
- Cite page numbers parenthetically for quotations and paraphrases if the source is more than one page in length.
- Include a Work Cited page, paginated consecutively with the rest of your essay.

Reminder:

Re-read the assignment instructions after you have written a draft of the essay. Make your own checklist of requirements and apply them to your essay.
Review "Computer Classroom Protocol," "Basic Requirements," "12 Steps," and "General Guidelines.")



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CAI Portfolio English 111 Requirements & Guidelines

Knowing exactly what is expected of you as you begin a writing assignment relieves a good deal of the pressure off the composition process. Read the following general guidelines and basic requirements, so you are thoroughly familiarized with what is expected from each of your writing efforts.

<u>Basic Requirements</u>	<u>12 Steps in Completing Assignment</u>	<u>General Guidelines</u>	<u>Computer Classroom Protocol</u>	<u>Using Secondary Sources</u>
<u>Improving Prose Style</u>	<u>21 Most Common Errors</u>	<u>Sentence Level Corrections</u>	<u>The Revision Process</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>

General Guidelines

- After familiarizing yourself with all the requirements and beginning the composition process, devise an appropriate and meaningful title for your essay. Do not underline or place quotation marks around your paper's title.
- Remember you must develop a clear thesis and support it from your observations or your reading with quotations, paraphrase or summary that is appropriate and convincing.
- Develop your introduction and conclusion with care. Your introduction should include the thesis statement and a general idea of the scope of your discussion (the points you will offer), but avoid the deadly and boring announcement of purpose: "In this essay I will discuss. . . ." When writing about another piece of writing, the title of the piece(s), the author's name must be included also and all comments are made in the present tense. Your conclusion should provide closure for your readers by bringing your points to a satisfactory end; do not introduce any new topics or ideas.
- Every sentence in your essay must contribute to developing your thesis and hold your reader's attention. Carefully organize and arrange your material so your ideas are presented in logical order (ideally following the general statement of scope offered in the intro). The five paragraph, three point essay, although basic, works wonders (except in the research paper), if you have difficulty organizing your thoughts. Don't forget to make use of transitional words and phrases--these aid the reader in following your reasoning.
- In submitting essays, fold final and rough drafts together lengthwise and write (1) your name, (2) date, and

(3) section on the outside. When your essay is returned, place all materials in folder, including the rough draft, with the final draft on top. Fill in the inside cover with the appropriate information. Submit a neat, legible, presentation that you have taken great pains to revise and proofread. It would be a waste to lose merit over minor errors.

- Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in your paper being returned ungraded, hence, treated as late and subject to the appropriate penalties (see "Syllabus--Course Policies"). It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with all these requirements.

Requirements & Guidelines Menu

Basic Requirements for CAI Portfolio Assignments

General Requirements:

- Four drafts should be written for each essay: #1--discovery draft, #2--reading draft for peer group response, #3--teacher's reading draft, and #4--revised draft for portfolio consideration.
- All reading drafts of the essays, including portfolio submissions, should be 550-650 words in length (all words count in the tally!).
- For each essay, you will create a folder named for each assignment--essay 1, essay 2, etc.
- In each folder, you will create and save separate documents (minimum of five) for each component of the composition process and name them accordingly per essay (remember to back up these files on your second disk!):
 - **essayinvent**--for invention strategies (share with instructor via e-mail)
 - **essayldraft1**--for the discovery draft (share with instructor via e-mail)
 - **essayldraft2**--for the peer draft (share with instructor and peer (s) via e-mail)
 - **essayldraft3**--for the teacher draft **also submitted in hard copy**
 - **essayldraft4a** (b,c, etc.)--for subsequent revisions
- You will also set up a folder for the Mid-term and Final Portfolios which will include the appropriate revisions.
- All drafts, except the discovery draft, must have a title (unless the writing takes the form of a letter).
- Beginning with draft #2, all drafts must have a coversheet (see Portfolio, p. 9, 51). Coversheets should be revised if essentials change in works in progress.
- All drafts submitted for teacher feedback, including the Mid-term and Final Portfolios must be turned on hard copy.
- Sentence-level corrections will be made on the teacher draft hard copy and bound in the Freshman Folder, along with any other hard copies of the composition process
- All writing, creating through completing, should be saved on both the primary and back up disks, and hard copies of material not on disk must be bound in the Freshman English Folder. The disk and folder are submitted at the end of the semester for course credit. These materials will not be returned to you.
- Disk and Freshman Folder contents will be checked by instructor for homework credit periodically; all materials must be in place and labeled properly by the essay due date (see Schedule)

- Provide some protection for your disks in the form of plastic sleeves, etc.
- All writing must be the student's original work.

Format Matters for all documents on disk and hard copy:

- The computers in the classroom use Word 95; the program you use outside of class **must** be compatible.
- With a new document open, drop "File" menu and select "Page set up."
- In "Page set up," set top margin at .5" and all others at 1" for "whole document."
- Open "Format" menu and select "Paragraph"; set spacing to double. **Do not stray from double spacing at anytime.**
- Essays submitted to the teacher must follow the conventions for setting up the first page and numbering subsequent pages. See the example in the *Harbrace Handbook*, 34b.
- To insert page numbers, with document at the top margin (.5"), select "right-hand justify" and insert appropriate page number (last name followed by the digit).
- In top right corner, identify each draft appropriately: Draft #1 (discovery draft), Draft #2 (peer group response draft), Draft #3 (teacher's submission draft), or Draft #4 (a revised draft for portfolio consideration).
- To begin the MLA style heading for the first page, return to "left-hand justify"; include all items shown in *Harbrace Handbook*, 34b.
- Center your title, and then begin drafting.

Use of Secondary Sources

- When secondary sources (library materials, interviews, or nonprint sources) are used (paraphrased or quoted), you must cite the sources parenthetically and include a Works Cited page, following the Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines for documentation (*Harbrace Handbook* 34a, b; *Writing*, pp. 265-291).
- When secondary sources are used, photocopies of pages cited must be submitted along with the teacher's reading draft.

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CAI Portfolio English 111 Computer Classroom Protocols

Welcome to PH 327, the Frank Ginanni Computer Classroom. The following is a set of guidelines to insure your success while using this facility. Many are common sense practices, but be sure to familiarize yourself with all of them to avoid any unnecessary problems. Remember that either I or a computer lab assistant must be present at all times.

1. There is no eating, drinking or smoking allowed.
2. Computers are to be used for English 111 work only.
3. Do not rely on our computers for your sole means of printing, particularly on due dates.
4. If you need to log on, the password is English.
5. Do not install any programs.
6. Save documents onto a format readable by our computers and onto your own disk (drive a:) rather than the hard drive (drive c:). Remember to save documents onto your back-up disk also.
7. Before you leave work station, exit all programs and recon the area for all belongings.
8. NEVER CLOSE OR EXIT THE PRINT MANAGER.
9. Do not turn off the computer.
10. Notify your instructor or lab monitor (if working outside class time) if you need help.
11. Language used in the essays and in peer comments are of a public nature; therefore, it needs to be suitable for academic viewing. Any violation of basic rules of politeness and decorum could result in the student being asked to leave the course.
12. Peer response means just that, comments and suggestions, not changing the writer's text.

Organizing your work on the disc should help you in fulfilling all course requirements and in meeting your deadlines.



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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Creating, Shaping, Completing 12 Steps in Completing Essay Assignments

- Get writing assignment in class.
- Read Neeld's chapter on the type of essay assigned.
- On your disk, open a new document, write at least two creating techniques as assigned (see "Five Portfolio Writing Assignments," and share with instructor through e-mail.
- Write statement of
 1. purpose
 2. short description of audience
 3. general idea you want to communicate
- Open a new document and write draft #1 (discovery draft).
- Reread the Writing Assignment (both Neeld and "Five Portfolio Assignments"), revise draft to meet all requirements, and share draft #1 with instructor and peer(s) through e-mail.
- Get e-mail feedback from teacher on discovery draft and revise draft #1: with draft #1 open, do a "save-as" and re-name it as draft #2 before you begin revision. This allows you a basis of comparison between the two.
- Complete coversheet (Portfolio p. 51) after you write draft #2.
- Get feedback from peer group on draft #2 and revise draft #2 following the same procedure for revising draft #1.
- Revise coversheet after you write draft #3.
- Get feedback from teacher on hard copy of draft #3 and revise draft #3 following the same procedure for revising draft #1.
- Revise coversheet after you write draft #4 for portfolio consideration.

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**The Twenty-One Most Common
Grammatical/Mechanical Errors
with Corresponding *Harbrace Handbook* Sections**

Common Error	Harbrace section
• Comma splice	3a, b, c
• Fused sentence	3a, b
• Lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent	6a
• Lack of subject-verb agreement	7a
• Missing or misplaced possessive apostrophe	19a, b
• Sentence fragment	2a, b
• Wrong or missing verb ending, wrong tense or verb form	7a, b, c, d
• Faulty Predication	8d
• Misspellings	22
• Its/It's confusion	19b, d, 22b
• Misplaced or dangling modifier	5a, b
• Missing comma after an introductory element	17b
• Missing comma in a compound sentence	17a
• Missing comma in a series	17c
• Missing comma(s) with non-restrictive element	17d
• Unnecessary comma(s) with a restrictive clause	17f
• Unnecessary shift in pronoun	8e
• Unnecessary shift in tense	7e
• Vague pronoun reference	6b
• Wrong or missing preposition	10, 6.
• Wrong word	14a

*The MTSU English Department recognizes these errors as the most serious. Failure to learn to edit out these errors in your writing will result in a failed portfolio and failure in the course. Your English 111 instructor will mark examples of these errors in your writing early in the course so that you will have time to learn to avoid them. Students who write with these errors should attend the MTSU Writing Center (Peck Hall 324) for special instruction and make use of the additional help provided through the Writing Tools segment (whether assigned by the teacher or on their own).

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Intro to CAI Portfolio	Syllabus	Schedule	The Peer Process	Requirements & Guidelines	Writing Tools	List-Serves	Five Writing Assignments
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Using Secondary Sources in Your Writing English 111

When you write using secondary sources, you will need these:

SKILLS

1. How to use the appropriate stylesheet as an aid to writing the works cited entries.
2. How to cite and punctuate sources parenthetically in the text of the paper.
3. How to paraphrase sources.
4. How to integrate and punctuate quotations from sources.

REMINDERS

Use MLA for English papers.
Harbrace 34a, b

Cite your source at the sentence level. *Harbrace 34a*

Except for blocked off quotations, citations appear just before the punctuation in the sentence.

Paraphrase sources more often than quoting. *Harbrace 33g, 34a*

An adequate paraphrase accurately reflects the content of the original passage and is written in your own words.

Don't PLOP quotations into your text. Prepare the reader for the quotation by introducing it with an attribution or integrating it some way.
Harbrace 33h, g, 34a

Be accurate in every detail when you quote, paying close attention to punctuation and capitalization of letters.

Don't quote too often because "Too many quotations in a paper can convey the impression that you have little to say for yourself" (*Harbrace, 13th ed., 414*).

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The Portfolio System	Syllabus	Schedule	Intro to CAI Peer	Requirements & Guidelines	Writing Tools	List-Serves	Five Writing Assignments
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CAI Portfolio English 111 Coversheet Instructions

How to Complete The Essay Coversheet

Completing each Essay Coversheet is an important component of the writing process. It is the step where you formally state what your intentions are in terms of audience, purpose and thesis--the three major considerations of all writing situations. Additionally, you re-examine your (the writer's) role in the essay, an important aid for establishing your tone. In essence, the coversheet is a contract in which you make certain promises to your reader(s). Do not mistakenly regard this task as merely superficial or as window dressing for your paper; the coversheet should be a thoughtfully composed set of responses that will assist the readers (peer group members, your instructor, norming-group faculty members) in evaluating the result of your efforts. The degree of correspondence between the information provided in the essay coversheet and the finished essay carries a great deal of weight, particularly in the Mid-term Portfolio and Final Portfolio evaluations.

For each essay, complete a coversheet after you have written a discovery draft and then submit the coversheet with all subsequent drafts of the essay, revising the coversheet as needed if your approach to the essay changes. A sample coversheet has been provided for you on this web site and others with the Sample Student Portfolio included in Part Two of *Portfolio* (p. 25). These should give some suggestions of the types of responses that have proven effective.



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111 Sample Coversheet

Student's Name _____ English 111 Essay Number _____

ESSAY COVERSHEET

Instructions: For each essay, complete a coversheet after you have written a discovery draft and then submit the coversheet with all subsequent drafts of the essay, revising the coversheet as needed if your approach to the essay changes. Refresh your memory on the purpose of the coversheet before you start.

1. In a word or phrase, describe your topic.

College roommates

2. In a word or phrase, give your working title.

Best Friend Dilemma

3. In a sentence tell why you are an insider on this subject.

Because I had first-hand experience living with my best friend, which turned out to be one of the worst decisions I ever made.

4. In two to four sentences, describe your target audience as specifically as you can.

My audience is graduating seniors or freshman who can still change roommates. It includes all people who might choose to live with their best friends.

5. In one to two sentences, state (a) the purpose that you want to achieve in writing this essay for this specific audience and (b) the response you expect from this audience.

(a) I want my audience to understand why I think choosing a friend as a roommate is a problem, and I would like to keep them from making the same mistakes I did when I first started college.

(b) I expect them to enjoy my examples.

6. In one sentence tell what value your essay holds for its readers.

It teaches you how not to choose a roommate, and it emphasizes the value of keeping your best friend.

7. In a word or phrase, identify the role you are playing as the author of this essay (that is, the persona you are

assuming as the author).

I am playing the role of an advisor who has experienced a problem.

8. In a complete sentence, state your thesis.

Do not choose your best friend as a roommate for college.



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Improving your Prose Style for Portfolio Submissions

It's important to have something significant to say and to say it well; that is, be sure to clothe your ideas in memorable, emphatic language that is also dressed in a style appropriate for college-level writing. Therefore, the last step in revision before proofreading your writing for correctness is polishing your prose style. These six questions should help you know what to look for as you go about improving your prose style.

ARE YOU

1. AVOIDING UTILITY WORDS LIKE "THING"?

See the list of words to avoid in *Writing*, p. 450 and *Harbrace Handbook* 14a.

2. AVOIDING TRITE EXPRESSIONS LIKE "EASY AS PIE"?

See list in *Writing*, p. 451 and *Harbrace Handbook* 14c.

3. AVOIDING PASSIVE VOICE?

Passive voice

The peace treaty ending World War II in the Pacific was signed by General Douglas MacArthur on the deck of the USS Missouri.

Active voice

On the deck of the USS Missouri, General Douglas MacArthur signed the peace treaty ending World War II in the Pacific.

Harbrace Handbook 11d.

4. AVOIDING WEAK VERBS, THOSE FORMED FROM "BE," "DO," AND "HAVE"?

Weak The traffic downtown today was bad.

Revised Heavy traffic clogged downtown streets today.

5. USING COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION APPROPRIATELY TO SHOW RELATIONSHIP OF IDEAS IN SENTENCES?

See *Writing* for lists of conjunctions (p. 425) and subordinate conjunctions (p. 426).

6. WRITING WITH SENTENCE VARIETY? Be sure to

- Vary sentence length.
- Vary sentence openings by occasionally

Beginning with single-word transitions:

Afterward, we discussed the difficulties of being a single parent. (See *Harbrace Handbook*, 3b, c, for lists of words.)

Beginning with prepositional, verbal, or absolute phrases:

Before dawn, the mountain etches its silhouette against the sky. Talking around the clock, negotiators finally reached a settlement. Our business concluded, we decided to go out to lunch.

Beginning with a dependent clause:

Once Valerie had become a vegetarian, the thought of a medium-rare steak no longer tempted her.

● Vary sentence types.

Use an occasional question, command, and exclamation.

Use all the sentence types: simple, compound, complex, compound-complex. (See *Harbrace Handbook*, 1f.)

Use the periodic sentence (which saves its main idea for the end of the sentence, using phrases or dependent clauses to build up to the independent clause):

For job training, for fostering an understanding of values and beliefs, for meeting other people with similar interests, for drama or forestry or philosophy, for waking yourself up--a college campus is the place.

Use the cumulative sentence (which begins with the main idea followed by several phrases or dependent clauses):

A college campus is a place for job training, for fostering an understanding of values and beliefs, for meeting others with similar interests, for drama or forestry or philosophy, for waking yourself up.

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The Revision Process Incorporating Instructor Comments

"My writing is a process of rewriting, of going back and changing and filling in"--Joan Didion.

"Because the best part of all, the absolutely most delicious part, is finishing it and then doing it over. . . . I rewrite a lot, over and over again, so that it looks like I never did"--Toni Morrison.

". . . the best reason for putting anything down on paper is that one may then change it"--Bernard DeVoto

Successful writers always revise their work, so revision will be an important activity in CAI Portfolio English 111. In fact, the portfolio system of writing assessment rewards you for substantial and effective revision.

As you perhaps already know, the word revise comes from the French *revoir*, which means to see again. When your teacher asks you to revise your writing, your teacher wants you to reconsider it from a fresh perspective and to make significant changes that will involve re-seeing and re-thinking "global" issues like purpose, thesis, audience, development, organization, and writer's tone and voice. Though important, simply cleaning up surface errors (misspellings, for example) is not revising (see "21 Most Common Errors"). Also, improving the effectiveness of your style, in terms of diction and sentence structure, while helping your overall presentation, does not address global issues. Your teacher will always ask that you do more than just correct mistakes. Your revision tasks may include rewriting entire sections of your essay, reordering paragraphs, or selecting another audience, which will also mean choosing different supporting material and language throughout the essay. Of course, you will also deal with sentence-level corrections, but remember this alone does not constitute revision.

Your teacher will respond to your writing with an eye to its strengths and weaknesses. Once you receive your instructor's comments, whether on the individual essay's Teacher Feedback Sheet (see *Portfolio* p. 151) or on the Mid-term Portfolio Evaluation Form (see *Portfolio* p. 165), read them carefully to help you determine how to proceed to revise and, thus, improve your efforts for the Final Portfolio submission. The best way to read the Teacher's Feedback Sheet is to

- (1) read the teacher's general response first,
- (2) next, read the teacher's specific response to issues of purpose, audience, development, organization, and language usage, and
- (3) finally, read the teacher's comments on the margins of your paper. Be sure to ask your teacher about comments you do not understand.

Much of your success as a writer in CAI Portfolio English 111 will be determined by your ability to revise your writing effectively over the course of fifteen weeks of writing. Using the computer is particularly helpful because it simplifies moving around words, sentences, and even whole paragraphs with the "cut and paste" options in the "Edit" menu. You can also use the split screen option to view an existing draft in one portion of the screen as you make revisions on the draft in the other. Additionally, revision of organization is made easy by deleting all text except topic sentences to see 1) if, in fact, effective topic sentences are used and 2) if they are arranged in the most logical sequence possible. The Portfolio System recognizes that you are a developing writer who must learn the craft of revision; your teacher will guide you through these and other exercises to improve your revision skills. Think of your teacher as your writing coach, take your teacher's suggestions for revision to heart, and remember that your best writing will always be a product of rewriting.

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Sentence Level Corrections

An English Folder Requirement and *Harbrace Handbook* Assignment

Instructions: Bind this sheet in your Freshman Folder and refer to it often.

Requirements: Beginning with the in-class introductory essay, you are required to correct sentence-level errors that your teacher marks in your essays. Following the instructions below, make these corrections soon after your writing is returned and include the corrections in your folder. When corrections are done in class, have your teacher check your work before you leave class.

Purpose: The purpose of these sentence-level corrections is to help you identify the most common grammatical and mechanical errors you are likely to write so that you will not make these mistakes in the essays you submit for the portfolio. To pass CAI Portfolio English III, you must be able to write Standard American English, which in part means writing free of the following errors: sentence fragments (*Harbrace 2*), comma spliced or run-on sentences (*Harbrace 3*), subject/verb and pronoun/antecedent disagreements (*Harbrace 7a and 6a*), verb errors (*Harbrace 7*), the misuse or omission of the apostrophe (*Harbrace 19*), and misspellings (*Harbrace 22*).

Procedure for Making Corrections: When your work is returned, it will be in the order that it should appear in the folder. Place a blank sheet of paper on top of the marked essay and bind it with the earlier drafts in the folder. Then correct all Harbrace-numbered errors by following these steps (revisions done incorrectly must be redone):

- Record title, assigned length, and dates due and corrected on inside front cover of folder under "Contents."
- Record list of numbered errors on back inside cover of folder under "Summary of Corrections." Here you record the actual number (such as 17a) in the appropriate column the number of times you have made the error. For example, if you have three 17a errors in your essay, you write, 17a, 17a, 17a in the appropriate column ("Punctuation 17-21").
- For misspellings, make a makeshift column far right margin on the back inside cover and title it "Spelling." Here write the word you misspelled, but spell it correctly, of course!
- To revise the numbered errors, follow these steps:
 1. Look up the section in the *Harbrace Handbook*. Read the rule and all other pertinent information (especially look at examples), and ask your teacher questions about anything you don't understand.

2. When you believe you know what is in error, on the page opposite your error (this will be either the back of your top sheet, if the error is on your first page, or on the back of subsequent pages of your essay), write (1) the number of the error and the rule that applies (the rule must be a complete sentence), and (2) and your sentence (the entire sentence) corrected. For example:

Rule 17a: A comma ordinarily precedes a coordinating conjunction that links main clauses.

Correction: They are hopeless and humble, so he loves them.

Important Notes: (1) If you have several errors of the same number, there is no need to write the rule more than once, but do correct all sentences that contain these errors. (2) If you have a sentence with multiple errors, write all the rules and then rewrite the sentence one time, correcting all errors.

Reminder: Keeping your English folder up to date is your responsibility; you can't pass the course without a completed folder.



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CAI Portfolio English 111 Writing Tools

This portion of the English 111 Portfolio Composition site is devoted to providing you with useful links to information or to help in areas where problems have arisen in your composition process. If you already know of weaknesses, you may opt to visit these locations on your own. If problems surface in your writing that I feel dictate the use of these resources, in addition to receiving a referral to the University Writing Center, you will be given instructions on which sites to visit and which exercises to do. Remember that these are to be used as a supplement to your assignments and that you are working under time constraints in terms of due dates for your essay's drafts. Use your time wisely. We owe a great thanks to all the on-line sources which make this process possible: Purdue University On-Line Writing Lab, University of Wisconsin, Columbia University, and the University of South Florida.

WRITING TOOLS

<u>General Reference</u>	<u>Drafting</u>	<u>Writing Assignments</u>	<u>Mechanics</u>
<u>Prewriting</u>	<u>Revising and Proofreading</u>	<u>Grammar</u>	<u>Spelling</u>

General Reference:

[Webster's Hypertext Interface Dictionary](#)
[Thesaurus](#)
[Bartlett's Quotations](#)
[Strunk's Elements of Style](#)
[Using Sources: MLA](#)
[Documentation for Electronic Materials](#)

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Prewriting:

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Punctuation (Quotation Marks)

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 Writing Tools Menu

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 Writing Tools Menu



<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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List-Serves

In the future, from this location on the web site, you will be able to share completed drafts or portions of drafts with me, the whole class, or your peer group. This is one of the most beneficial aspects of our course because it will facilitate the feedback process and aid immensely with revision and editing. You are required to share a completed draft with your peer group on the assigned dates on the schedule and to follow the procedures as spelled out in our *Portfolio* handbook and in "Requirements & Guidelines," but you may use the list-serves as many times as you wish in order to refine your essay. Until this feature is available through the web site, we will rely on traditional e-mail access for this purpose

As part of the course requirements, you should check your e-mail first thing each day to see if any comments have been left about your writing or if a peer has requested some feedback from you. A word of caution about the use of the list-serves--remember this is an academic setting, and all users must conduct themselves accordingly. Any breach in polite or acceptable communication will result in lost privileges and jeopardize course completion. Remember also to be aware of your intended recipient(s); you may send drafts/feedback/general messages to one individual, your peer group of 2-3 classmates, or the entire class.



List-Serves Options

Class-wide List-Serve	Peer Group List-Serve
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<u>Intro to CAI Portfolio</u>	<u>Syllabus</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>The Peer Process</u>	<u>Requirements & Guidelines</u>	<u>Writing Tools</u>	<u>List-Serves</u>	<u>Five Writing Assignments</u>
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Appendix B

Appendix B

Additional CAI Portfolio English 111 Materials

This appendix offers additional materials used in CAI Portfolio English 111 that are not included in the web page yet. They include the Writer's Questions, a sample teacher feedback sheet for individual essays, Mid-term and Final Portfolio evaluation sheets, and the instruction sheets for the introductory letters students include in the Mid-term and Final Portfolios.

Essay # _____

Student _____

Writer's Questions for Peer Group Response

Instructions: *In the space provided below, write at least three questions that you would like your peer group to respond to. Avoid the obvious questions ("Do you think my essay is good?" or "Is my grammar correct?") and ask clear, open-ended questions that will incite your peers to offer helpful feedback about your essay. You will probably want to ask them questions related to what YOU think are the potential problem areas in your essay. Please complete the form before coming to class, bring it to peer group, and then submit it to your teacher at the end of class.*

1.

2.

3.

English 111

Student _____

TEACHER'S FEEDBACK TO ESSAY 1: THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ESSAY

Instructions: This form must be bound in your English Folder on top of all materials for Essay 1 collected here and in the order returned to you.

_____ Your essay submission is being returned to you unread because you fail to meet the format and submission requirements noted below.

_____ Your essay submission has been read. You are ready (1) to complete sentence-level corrections as required by the Harbrace English Folder assignment and (2) to revise the essay as instructed for matters of purpose, audience, thesis, organization, development, and language usage.

FORMAT

- _____ Titled and stated topically without underlining or placing inside quotation marks
- _____ Handwritten in blue or black ink on wide-lined paper, front side only
- _____ Typed/printed on one side only and on a good grade of white 8 1/2 x 11" paper with 1" margins, double spacing throughout, and right margin not justified; word processed using a standard font such as Courier or Times Roman 10 or 12
- _____ Typed/printed with fresh ribbon
- _____ First page set up as example in Harbrace Handbook, 34b
- _____ Subsequent pages numbered as Harbrace example, 34b

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- _____ Drafts 1, 2, & 3 numbered at top of the first page of each draft
- _____ 550-650 word count met
- _____ Draft 3 and coversheet
- _____ Draft 2 and coversheet
- _____ Peer Response Form
- _____ Draft 1 with statements of purpose, audience, general idea
- _____ Two invention strategies

Mid-term Portfolio Evaluation
English 111

Student _____

Essay 1 or 2

1. Does the writer follow through on the requirements of the writing assignment and achieve the purpose of the essay as defined by the assignment?

<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

2. Does the writer define an appropriate audience for the essay and then meet the needs of the specific audience?

<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

3. Does the writer provide sufficient and appropriate materials (details, descriptions, illustrations) to develop all ideas?

<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

4. Does the writer produce a well-focused essay and organize the material appropriately?

<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

5. Does the writer come through as a dependable and credible person in the overall presentation of ideas, in the tone of the writing and the attitude towards the audience, and in the professional attitude towards revision and editing out of sentence and phrase-level errors, including faulty grammar and mechanics?

<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

Other Comments: An unsatisfactory in any one of the areas above results in a failed portfolio.

Grade: _____

**Final Portfolio Evaluation
English 111**

Student _____ **Essays 1 2 3 4 5**

1. Does the writer follow through on the requirements of the writing assignments and achieve the purposes of the essays as defined by the assignments?

___ Exceptional achievement ___ Above average
___ Average ___ Unsatisfactory

2. Does the writer define appropriate audiences for the essays and then meet the needs of the audiences?

___ Exceptional achievement ___ Above average
___ Average ___ Unsatisfactory

3. Does the writer provide sufficient and appropriate materials (details, descriptions, illustrations) to develop all ideas?

___ Exceptional achievement ___ Above average
___ Average ___ Unsatisfactory

4. Does the writer produce well-focused, unified essays and organize material appropriately?

___ Exceptional achievement ___ Above average
___ Average ___ Unsatisfactory

5. Does the writer come through as a dependable and credible person in the overall presentation of ideas, in the tone of the writing and the attitude towards the audience, and in the professional attitude towards revision and editing out of sentence and phrase-level errors, including faulty grammar and mechanics.

___ Exceptional achievement ___ Above average
___ Average ___ Unsatisfactory

Other Comments: **An unsatisfactory in any one of the areas above results in a failed portfolio.**

Grade: _____

CAI Portfolio English 111
Mid-term Portfolio Introduction

An In-class Writing

As an introduction to your mid-term portfolio, write a letter of at least 250 words to your portfolio teacher. Please write in ink on the wide-lined paper you took from your Freshman Folder or word process it on the computer.

In the letter you will (a) describe how you went about preparing the portfolio submission (the choices you made and why) and (b) reflect on your development as a writer at this point in the course. Be sure to answer the following questions in your letter, but do NOT number your responses as if you were taking a test.

REMEMBER YOU ARE WRITING A LETTER, SO BE SURE TO SET UP YOUR PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION AS A LETTER WITH A SALUTATION (Dear Portfolio Reader:) AND A CLOSING (Sincerely, Yours truly,). ALSO DATE AND SIGN YOUR LETTER.

1. What was the assignment that your portfolio essay addresses? Describe its topic and requirements as completely as you can, considering matters of purpose, length, audience, and the like.
2. How was the assignment for the essay you are submitting for your portfolio different from the one you chose not to submit?
3. Why did you elect to submit this essay instead of the other essay?
4. How did you go about completing the assignment you are submitting? In other words, describe your writing process from beginning (arriving at a topic) to end (revising for final draft). Be sure to talk about how you revised the piece: What major changes did you make and why?
5. Assess yourself as a writer at this point in your development: What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are your goals for the remainder of the course?

Don't forget to write your portfolio introduction as a letter with a salutation and a closing. Date and sign it, too.

CAI Portfolio English 111
Final Portfolio Introduction

An In-class Writing

As an introduction to your final portfolio, write a letter of at least 250 words to your portfolio teacher. Please write in ink on the wide-lined paper you took from your Freshman Folder or word process it on the computer.

In the letter you will want to comment on (a) how your portfolio reflects your achievements and your moments of discovery and satisfaction as a writer, (b) how you utilized the opportunity to revise your essays to produce the portfolio, and (c) how you exercised your freedom to select the pieces for the portfolio. Be sure to answer the following questions in your letter, but do NOT number your responses as if you taking a test.

REMEMBER YOU ARE WRITING A LETTER, SO BE SURE TO SET UP YOUR PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION AS A LETTER WITH A SALUTATION (Dear Portfolio Reader:) AND A CLOSING (Sincerely, Yours truly,). ALSO DATE AND SIGN YOUR LETTER.

1. How did you think of yourself as a writer at the beginning of the semester? How do you feel about yourself as a writer now? How does your portfolio reflect what you have learned about the writing process during CAI Portfolio English 111?
2. Why did you select these particular pieces for the portfolio? What global changes did you make to revise these portfolio pieces? How does your portfolio present your strengths and weaknesses as a writer?
3. What do you want the reader to keep in mind as the portfolio is read and evaluated?

Remember that the purpose of the letter is not to evaluate your teacher or the Portfolio System. Focus on how the portfolio represents you as a developing writer. I look forward to reading your portfolio.

Appendix C

Appendix C

English Department Faculty Questionnaire

In the Fall 1997 semester, English Department faculty at Middle Tennessee State University were asked to respond to a questionnaire soliciting their impressions, concerns, and interest in portfolio-based and computer-assisted opportunities for teaching the first semester requirement, English 111. The following data and text of written comments are the results of the response received. Of 79 questionnaires distributed, 36 (46%) were returned.

Faculty Standings

Ranking	Number of Respondents
Full Professor	6 (17%)
Associate Professor	4 (11%)
Assistant Professor	11 (30%)
Instructor	15 (42%)

These figures reflect 86% full time and 14% part-time faculty. The great majority of respondents--29--teach English 111 with 17 (59%) teaching two sections per semester. The following percentages are based on the 29 participants:

Faculty Profile

Portfolio-based and Computer-assisted Instruction

	Portfolio in		CAI in	
	English 111		English 111	
Current use in the classroom	YES	13 (45%)	YES	8 (28%)
	NO	16 (55%)	NO	21 (72%)
Continued use in the classroom	YES	10 (77%)	YES	8 (100%)
	NO	3 (23%)	NO	0 (0%)
Interest in Training and Participation	YES	4 (25%)	YES	18 (86%)
	NO	12 (75%)	NO	2 (9%)
			MAYBE	1 (5%)

Of the strengths of portfolio-based composition listed on the questionnaire, the most often selected dealt with students' reflection on the writing process and on their own development as writers. Other strengths listed followed in this order: emphasis on feedback and revision before grades are assessed, increased awareness and familiarity with concept of audience, and norming of instructor grades. Additional comments were offered:

"Student control of work, that they choose the papers being assessed."
"Confidence"

"The portfolio system is excellent, especially. As set up in our dept. I would use it if I taught 111, but I do not teach it often."

Of the concerns about portfolio-based composition listed on the questionnaire, the most often selected dealt with excessive paper handling. Other concerns listed followed in this order: extra time involved, grade norming sessions, and perceived tendency towards grade inflation. Additional comments were offered:

"An anonymous grader may not recognize effort or improvement in as important a light as I would."

"Can encourage students to put off serious effort until last weeks of class."

"I found the topics too limited and the book too rigid. I would use the method adopted to my own approach and with better reading."

"Students have indicated to me in 112 that they find it difficult to work without the structured multiple drafts of portfolio. They are unable to manage time on their own w/out artificial deadlines. Lack independence."

"I find students have a difficult time w/the concept and profit more from revising specific graded work."

"I need to teach a course I design myself."

"Students' complaints in 112."

"I prefer to use a theme based approach."

"I simply don't agree w/how the portfolio grading was developed and implemented, or that TA's are required to use it."

"My method is 'better' in that I introduce them to many writing strategies, broadly prescriptive."

Of the strengths of computer-assisted composition listed on the questionnaire, the most often selected dealt with enhanced student/teacher and peer communication. Other strengths listed followed in this order: facilitation and promotion of the revision process, facilitation and

promotion of the invention process, and reduced class size.

Other comments were offered:

"Sometimes this is the only opportunity students have to familiarize themselves w/technology they will have to use in their professional lives."

Of the concerns about computer-assisted composition listed on the questionnaire, the most often selected dealt with time involved in learning the new methodology. Other concerns listed followed in this order: perceived shift in focus off the composition process and onto word processing and gaps in instructor familiarity with equipment and programs. Interestingly, none of the respondents selected the fourth potential concern, equipment failure. Other comments were offered:

"Not given the classroom when requested in past--
'limited availability.'"

"Computer classes are 'claimed,' aren't they?"

"Well, I *would* have to team up."

"I thought one course in there was all a teacher should have to allow more teachers to use it."

"Haven't had opportunity but would like to."

"Or too lazy or too *busy* so far to 'set up' the course."

At the end of the questionnaire, faculty members were asked to make suggestions that might pique or increase their interest in either the portfolio-based, or the computer-assisted approaches to teaching composition, or a combination of both:

"Maria, I am not much help since I have not taught in PH 327, and I have not used the portfolio based approach. I know studies are being conducted to compare

the different approaches and am quite interested in the outcome."

"Revision work and in-class written work would be greatly improved, I believe, in a computer-assisted class."

"We need more CAI & we need more classrooms set up that way. Maria: Your focus & ideas have other implications that are far reaching. We can change our approaches to the process of teaching writing (add computers & other teachers, sharing information more, etc.), but another area for all of us to consider is 'What are some other systems we can develop to accomplish our mission'"

"I'd like evidence that either or both actually improved writing itself."

"Computer classroom is great--we should have more of them & encourage teachers to use them."

"I'm quite interested in both--the only reason I don't use portfolios is that I missed the training in '95-'96 & don't do CAI because it's not available to me. I need some practice on the PC's."

"Be sure to explain how 'portfolio-based' approach differs from 'regular' rhetorical methods approach."

"Re: computer-assisted classes; you could invite faculty (one or two per class) to *participate* as students, a type of on-the-job training exercise. Many people fear the 'unknown.'"

"Observation of classes?"

"*Portfolio*: I use a modified approach--reduces overwork of instructor and places more emphasis on *responsibility* to process. *Computer*: more computer rooms, workshops on best use of room."

"I am happy that I have had both experiences. Neither is crucial to me as a teacher, but I would [be] willing take the opportunity to teach in PH 327 or to use portfolio in my own way, w/o grade norming."

"My interest in combining the approaches is considerable. I think the computer-assisted classroom would solve many of the paper-handling problems of the conventional portfolio system. If a workshop were offered, I'd attend."

"I am interested in the Portfolio-based, computer-assisted approach because, from what I surmise, it would prove to be less cumbersome, i.e., less paper handling. Also, students can make corrections while their peer groups are assessing their essays; efficiency would be at a maximum because most students can't remember suggested corrections once they leave the classroom."

"Computer-assisted—series of workshops (I thought the dept. was supposed to offer these but, alas, none have occurred)."

"I have taught 112 in the lab, and I don't think I did a very good job with it. I really want better training before I go in there again."

Appendix D

Appendix D

Student Comments on CAI Portfolio English 111

On the last class meeting for CAI Portfolio English 111 students were asked to respond anonymously to two issues:

1) "Briefly describe how you feel the portfolio aspect of the course has helped or hindered your composition process," and 2) "Briefly describe how you feel the computer-assisted aspect of the course has helped or hindered your composition process." The following tables show the results of their responses; the unedited text of their comments were typed as they appeared in the students' own words.

Rate of Student Response:

	Positive Reaction	Negative Reaction	Mixed Reaction
Portfolio- based Format	16 (89%)	1 (5.5%)	1 (5.5%)
Computer- assisted Format	13 (72%)	2 (11%)	3 (17%)

Rate of Student Response on Specific Course Aspects:

Course Aspect	Number of Students
Focus on Audience	2
Peer/Instructor Feedback	6
Delayed Grading	7
Emphasis on Revision	15
Improved Computer Skills	8
Use of email	1
Use of web site	1

Text of Students' Comments:

Student #1

1. Yes, I do because the opportunity for revisions is great. Many times you write a paper, turn it in and that's it. But the times you can smooth out the kinks is just fantastic.
2. The computers help and hurt because its easier to type than it is to write, for me. But with the compatibility of programs on the computers on campus posed a small problem, but other than that, a big benefit.

Student #2

1. The Portfolio project is very beneficial. I enjoy the process of making a better paper and having a book of writings collected by me. It inspires me to write in my free time and that is good.
2. Working with the computers is very logically thought up. Modern day is computer-based, so it is important to learn how to use them.

Student #3

1. I do feel I benefitted from the portfolio format because it gave better examples of what my essay's needed to be like. It also showed me how to correct my mistakes better and see what I was doing wrong.
2. The computer assisted format was a little different. I did and did not like it. The reasons I did like it was because it made my papers neat and made it easier to correct my mistakes, but since I do not know much about computers and do not own one I had a hard time sometimes. I felt I had to rush a little more because I have a hard time getting to the computer labs also.

Student #4

1. Yes. I feel I have benefitted because I have, improved my writing process.

2. Yes. The computers have allowed me to go back immediately and make changes, that I probably would not have changed if I were writing by hand.

Student #5

1. I feel I have really benefited from the portfolio course. I think it has made me a much better writer and has given me confidence about the work I turn in.
2. Having computers readily available to the students is a great idea. Not all students have access to them, and this helps them get their work done easier without the hassle of trying to hunt one down. It has also taught me a little bit about computers.

Student #6

1. Yes, I feel I have benefitted from the portfolio because of the interaction with my peers. Also it has a slower grading process.
2. I do not believe I benefitted the computer assisted format because my peer didn't have a computer and we didn't get to interact well.

Student #7

1. I have benefitted from the Portfolio system because of the requirements in the area of revision.
2. I have benefitted from the computer format because revision and the drafting process was made easier and quicker.

Student #8

1. I feel I have benefitted from the portfolio format of the course because it gave me an opportunity to revise as I learned the techniques that make a good essay. I think it gives me the best chance at getting a good grade and encouraged me to learn.
2. I feel I have benefitted from the computer assisted format because I feel it was easier to revise my work

continually and it also taught me better use of the computer in doing papers in my other classes as well.

Student #9

1. This class has been a challenge for me. The material that we have covered has presented many obstacles, some that I have overcome and others that continue to elude me. On the positive side, I have learned a great deal this semester. I have learned how to use my words more clearly since I have been in the Portfolio class, and especially since I have been going to the Writing Center. My grammar has also improved. On the negative side, I did not learn everything that I wanted too. I had many times that I wanted to memorize the information that I was being give, but I didn't. It was just to much for me to take in all at once.

Student #10

1. I do not feel that I have benifitted from the portfolio format of the class. I became confused with certain aspects of this course and began to focus more on that than on my writing development.
2. The same problem arose from the computed assisted format. (Although I haven't used computers much in the past.)

Student #11

1. I think that the portfolio format of this course has been beneficial to me. It has guided me from essay to essay making the writing process easier. The examples on the portfolio are good for us because they clarify what we need to do during the semester. Also, the idea of the cover sheets is been really helpful.
2. I enjoyed working on the computers because I feel more comfortable when I write, and I think computers made a difference on my performance during this class. Writing on a computer is fun and easier because we can change words, or the whole paragraph pretty easy. I hope that they offer more computer English classes on the future.

Student #12

1. I have benefited from the portfolio system in many ways and want to express some of them. First and foremost, I have been out of school for five years and had no real experience writing college level papers. The portfolio system helped me out by guiding me through the whole writing process and shifting the focus to revision. Secondly the pace of the class was good because I had time to revise, and mill over my papers with my peers.
2. The computer format was so helpful to me I spent 3 years in an office environment. I really enjoyed being able to edit my papers without endless of paper and ink. Many student are afraid of the computer format; I am not one of those. I hope in the future that many more classes will incorporate the computer into the class room.

Student #13

1. I think, the portfolio format has help me in this course. It has because it gave me more chances of correcting my essay each time. That gave me time to learn my mistakes and not to make them next time. It did not pressure me in turning in my essay at a certain time. That help my writing process so much. The method also reduce my errors in grammer so much. It gave me time in correcting my mistakes.
2. The computer-assisted format was great for me. It gave me a chance to connect with my professor. It also help get connect with my partner if I need help on my essay. The computer in the class were great because it help me write my essay quicker. Overall, the computer-assisted method was great for me this semester.

Student #14

1. Yes, I definitely benefitted from this portfolio format of this course because it taught me how to write papers better. It gave me a better understanding in what order to go by to write the five paragraphs for a good essay.
2. Yes, I also feel that the computer assisted format helped me a great deal because I started out not knowing anything about computers to what I know about them now.

Student #15

1. I have benefited from the portfolio format. It gave me a chance to revise my essays and correct them without being punished through my grade. My peers have helped me tremendously with ideas.
2. I have benefited from the computer assisted format. I have learned so much about a computer. I can now complete an essay with very little assistance. The computer also allows you to correct your essay without having to rewriter it in its entirety.

Student #16

1. I believe that the portfolio format helped me by always challenging me. I was able to see examples when needed, have my questions answered at any time. And it also had it in a format that I was able to understand. Because, this is the second time of taking this course. The portfolio helped me in plenty of ways, as I mentioned.
2. The computer-format helped me by giving me patients with it. And also allowed the freedom to write, rewrite and print, to see exactly what it looks like. Also, the information on the computer class web, helped me with my writing, and I was able to print up any info given on that web site. Plus see exactly what was due on any given day. It was fun exploring the computer. Thank you!

Student #17

1. Yes, this format made it easy for me to set up each essay in the proper sequence according to the way I write. As a beginner in composition writing, I really did not know how to start a writing assignment. This format gave me the information I needed to be able to critique myself as well as my peers. The portfolio format enabled me to a more informed writer, giving my readers more than just words on a piece of paper. The thought process used in this format gave me time to really think about my topics and the information needed to support my subject matter. I think each student taking this course should be required to use this format.
2. The class room computer usage was also helpful, this method of using the e-mail to correspond with my peer

gave another out look into my writing skills. I wish that all my classes had some type of computer format to use for instructional teaching.

Student #18

1. Yes I think this style of instruction has helped me a great deal. It allowed me to develop some writing skills before having to worry about a grade. This was of great help because as a first semester student, I had enough to worry about in other classes.
2. I really like the computer format. I makes up for my penmanship and spelling. And the need for competency with the computers is needed in todays environment.

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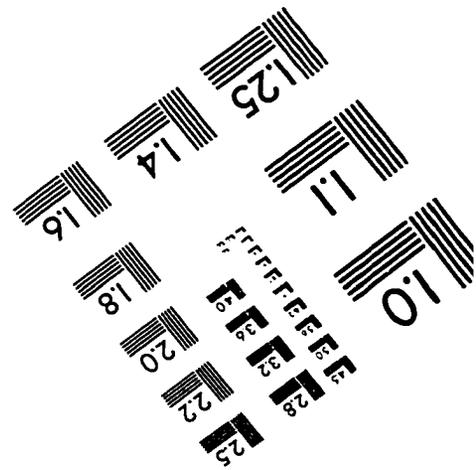
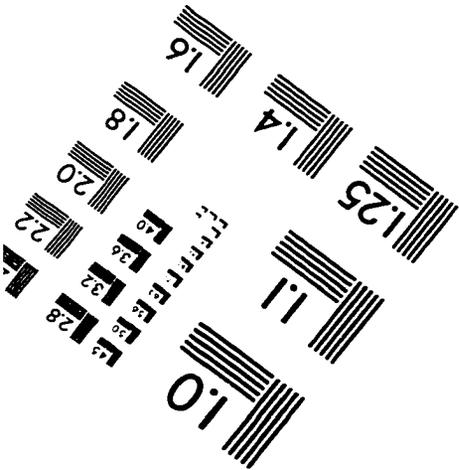
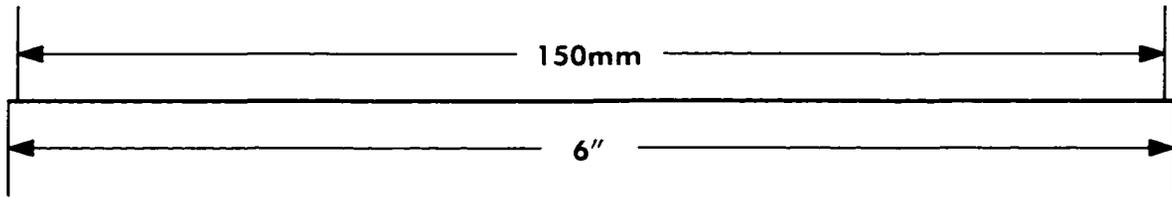
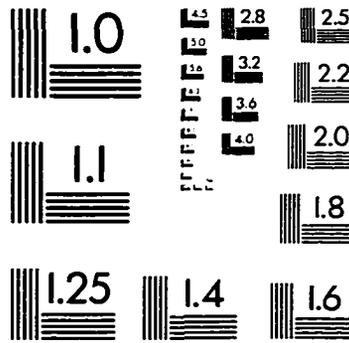
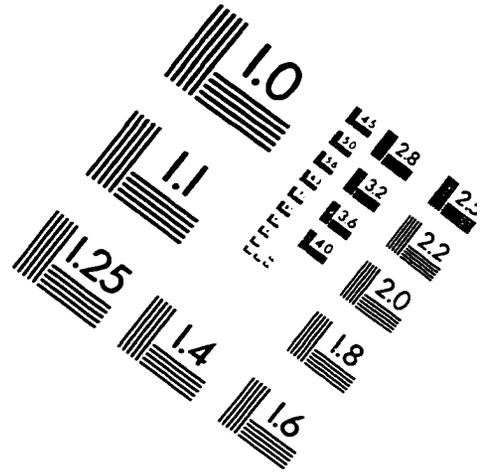
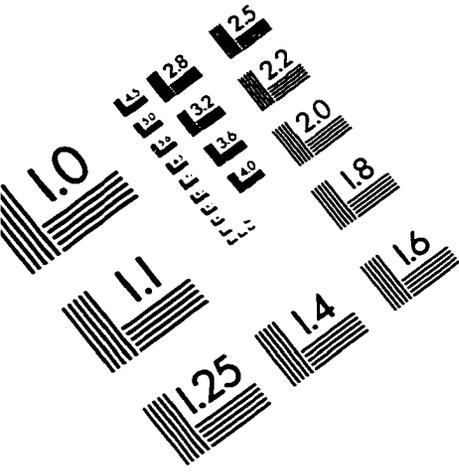
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