**SPC English Department: Key Concepts and Skills for Developmental Writing Courses**

Students learn to:

1. Understand writing as a process: planning, drafting, revising, editing
   * I have students create paragraphs and essays in class. I take them step-by-step through the stages of brainstorming, clustering/mapping, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing. The first two essays involve whole-class brainstorming, and I model the process of clustering for them. I work one-on-one with students when I check their clustering, thesis statements, topic sentences, and rephrased thesis (see folder)
2. Use various rhetorical modes for various writing purposes, audiences, and topics:
   * Paragraph level: illustration, cause/effect analysis, process analysis, comparison/contrast, argumentation, etc.
   * Essay level: cause/effect analysis, argumentation, film or book evaluation, etc. (None of the writing assignments in my developmental writing courses involve using sources because students are not able to use research for the TSI writing test)
3. Understand and employ basic paragraph structure: (see model outlines)
   * Topic sentence, supporting details, closing statement
4. Understand and employ basic essay structure: (see model outline)
   * Introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, conclusion
5. Understand and apply the four major characteristics of strong essays:
   * Unity, support, coherence, strong sentence skills
6. Employ sentence skills to edit their writing for effective and successful communication:
   * Make sure students avoid these major errors:
     1. Sentence fragment
     2. Fused sentence
     3. Comma splice
     4. Pronoun-antecedent agreement error
     5. Subject-verb agreement error
     6. 3 spelling/wrong word errors = 1 major error
   * Other errors: faulty parallelism, misplaced/dangling modifiers, apostrophe usage, comma usage,