

3-26-2021

## Impact of Multimodal First-Year Composition Courses on Student Success, Satisfaction, and Growth

Abdullah Mir

Florida International University, [amir007@fiu.edu](mailto:amir007@fiu.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Other Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Mir, Abdullah, "Impact of Multimodal First-Year Composition Courses on Student Success, Satisfaction, and Growth" (2021). *FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 4618.

<https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/4618>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the University Graduate School at FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [dcc@fiu.edu](mailto:dcc@fiu.edu).

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

IMPACT OF MULTIMODAL FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION COURSES ON  
STUDENT SUCCESS, SATISFACTION, AND GROWTH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

ENGLISH

by

Abdullah Mir

2021

To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus  
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

This thesis, written by Abdullah Mir, and entitled Impact of Multimodal First-Year Composition Courses on Student Success, Satisfaction, and Growth, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

---

Kimberly Harrison

---

Luke Thominet

---

Vanessa Sohan, Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 26, 2021

The thesis of Abdullah Mir is approved.

---

Dean Michael R. Heithaus  
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

---

Andrés G. Gil  
Vice President for Research and Economic Development  
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2021

© Copyright 2021 by Abdullah Mir

All rights reserved.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my loved ones:

My family. You all bent over backwards to give me the time and space to work without distraction while always affirming my success.

Rain. You gave me the best reason to wake up out of bed every day and giving me something to look forward to when I came home.

Juan. You provided me a place to call home and meet people I will never forget. You saw potential and created an environment to draw it out.

Joel. Your incisive eye was endlessly helpful in not just the writing of this thesis, but also in looking at myself. You helped rip off the bandages on my old wounds so I could confront them.

Tina. You were the first to show me what real friends do for each other. You have served as a buoy to remind me to be the best instructor to my students that I can while I worked on this thesis.

Sofi. You taught me to unapologetically be myself. You reminded me that no matter how dark the night is, the sun will always rise in the morning.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank the faculty and staff working at FIU's English department. From bottom to top, I've been given respect and care befitting for someone in a much higher station than my own. The program gave me a light at a very dark time and showed how I can still have an impact on the lives of others.

I wish to thank the members of my committee for their unending support and optimism. Their various lived experiences and areas of expertise were all invaluable and truly appreciated. Dr. Kimberly Harrison not only provided access to University Course materials but also provided her expertise on the curriculum which only she could provide. Dr. Luke Thominet's experience with Technical Writing Research alongside his incisive eye served as perfect tools for grounding myself and my work into the realms of academia. I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. Vanessa Sohan, for her support, confidence, and guidance throughout my academic career. As one of the first professors who taught me during my Graduate studies, she told me what I needed to hear in order to succeed.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS  
IMPACT OF MULTIMODAL FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION COURSES ON  
STUDENT SUCCESS, SATISFACTION, AND GROWTH

by

Abdullah Mir

Florida International University, 2021

Miami, Florida

Professor Vanessa Sohan, Major Professor

Universities have shifted towards pedagogies involving different modes of composition. However, little focus has been shown on students' ability to transfer learned skills to other fields. Florida International University (FIU) addressed this problem by retooling their First Year Composition (FYC) curriculum in 2019, including more multimodal opportunities for students. This thesis will look into how FIU addresses students' ability to transfer their skills and their dispositions. The thesis analyzed anonymous surveys conducted on site in 2021 and assesses whether students believe if they will be able to transfer their learned skills outside the classroom. By using grounded theory and coding to identify students' dispositions and interaction with learning skills, this paper shows students finding difficulty in applying learned skills past initial assignments in ENC 1101 and 1102. The resulting analysis shows more work can be done to make FYC curriculums more applicable to students from a wider variety of disciplines.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Addressing the Problem .....	2
The Role of Transfer .....	2
Looking at the Students .....	4
II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND .....	6
The Place of Multimodality in Education .....	6
Transfer in the Classroom .....	7
Student Dispositions and its Impact on Transfer .....	10
III. METHODS .....	11
Participant Population .....	11
Data Collection .....	11
Analysis .....	12
Local Context .....	14
IV. RESULTS .....	16
V. DISCUSSION .....	21
VI. LIMITATIONS .....	27
VII. CONCLUSION .....	29
WORKS CITED .....	32
APPENDICES .....	36



## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

In First-Year Composition courses, students oftentimes know what they want to say, but they have some difficulty getting those thoughts down onto paper (Gonzalez n.p.). This difficulty primes students to believe good writing is only achievable by the talented and the less talented have to struggle (Edwards & Paz 65). To combat the belief that good writing is only achievable by the talented, universities have worked towards making writing more approachable and accessible through incorporating more multimodal assignments. Multimodality can be defined by breaking the word down to its constituents – multiple and mode where a mode “refers to a way of meaning-making, or communicating” (Ball & Charlton 41). Putting it together, multimodality means to compose a text which engages in any combination of modes such as linguistic, aural, visual, gestural, and spacial (Ball & Charlton 41). These modes are different from media which focuses on the usage of new technologies in composition (usually referring to computers) or genre which are an expression of a certain mode (a documentary uses multiple modes to convey meaning).

These multimodal assignments ask students to bring in their personal experiences into the texts they compose. Numerous composition researchers explore the benefits of moving towards a wider view as to what writing is in the classroom (see Gonzalez; Horner, Selfe, and Lockridge; Selfe; Shipka). More specifically, research has shown how students can better connect with the content they create when they are allowed to bring their own experiences into the classroom (Gonzalez n.p.).

### ***Addressing the Problem***

In response to these trends, universities – such as Florida International University (FIU) – have retooled their entire FYC curriculums to provide students in FYC courses the ability to learn valuable skills they can apply in situations outside of the composition class. Because writing is universal across the university curriculum, another goal of this shift is to include more multimodal assignments to encourage multiple modes of writing. My thesis will use Ball and Charlton’s definition of multimodality where it is defined as combining multiple modes of composition (such as linguistic, aural, visual, gestural, and spacial) to compose texts which no longer forces composers to limit themselves to writing within the norms of a specific mode.

### ***The Role of Transfer***

When composing multimodal texts, students do not start over with a fresh slate of knowledge. Students transfer what they understand from their previous modality of writing (mainly textual) to the new mode that they are working in (Clark 39). The exact meaning of transfer is still debated in the literature of Rhetoric and Composition. Neil Baird and Bradley Dilger define transfer as “the movement of skills, knowledge, and experience between contexts” (686). Conversely, a definition introduced by Driscoll and Powell define transfer as “literate development that builds on and interacts with previous learning.” I will use a definition provided by Elizabeth Wardle where transfer is “[teaching] students ‘learned intelligent behavior’ that will help them seek out/or create situations in which what they have learned will transfer” (Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström qtd. in Wardle 67). The Wardle definition is in contrast to other definitions of transfer –

which are broader so as to focus mainly on being able to transfer knowledge from the composition classroom to outside contexts.

Another facet when considering student transfer of knowledge is student disposition towards composition. In contrast to transfer, disposition can be described as qualities that determine how students adapt their knowledge to various environments using traits such as scientific thinking, moral reasoning (Brent “Boundaries”), persistence, self-efficacy, and metacognition (Driscoll & Wells). The importance of disposition in the equation is its ability to aid in learning and transfer. Even if someone has the skill to transfer, their disposition determines whether or not they are willing to engage in said transfer (Halpern qtd. in Driscoll, et al.). It must be stated that dispositions are not a simple description of traits (such as knowledge), but something which determines how those traits are used (Driscoll & Wells). As stated by Driscoll and Wells, the ability for a student to be able to learn and apply transferable skills is dependent on their previous dispositions and experiences when growing up and learning about writing. There are two distinct categories of dispositions: generative or disruptive (Devet & Driscoll n.p.). A generative disposition can lead to student success and supports learning while a disruptive disposition can prevent a student’s progress (Devet & Driscoll n.p.). Research involving disposition has been limited because of the difficulty in observing characteristics which denote certain dispositions, because of the wide range of potential dispositions, alongside arguments when defining what separates individual dispositions (Driscoll and Powell n.p.). As a result, the focus of my analysis will be limited to identifying the types of dispositions – whether generative or disruptive – acquired by students as a result of ENC 1101 and 1102 coursework.

### *Looking at the Students*

Although research has been conducted advocating for different modes of writing in the class, there is less information available when discussing the transfer of multimodal skills outside of the FYC classroom. Cynthia Selfe identifies the importance of teaching students the necessary skills to be successful outside of the class. Theo Van Leeuwen discusses allowing students to bring in experiences with digital media and composition (called new literacies) they are familiar with from outside back into the classroom (583). Ball discovers how having a more open-ended approach to multimodality can impact the tools students will be familiar with once they leave the institution, but not the potential impact on continued education.

To be more specific, my paper assesses the ability of FYC multimodal assignments in assisting students in transferring their knowledge in other contexts and the dispositions of students when working on multimodal assignments. In order to achieve this goal, I conducted a brief survey at FIU – a diverse, Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) located in South Florida – prompting students to recall their attitudes towards multimodal assignments and their dispositions towards composing multimodal texts. As seen in FIU’s course outcomes for ENC 1101 and 1102, students are expected to:

- Display appropriate format, structure and stylistic choices to meet audience needs and to satisfy their rhetorical purpose
- Interact with complex texts, explore alternative perspectives, and articulate and support their own perspective in response

- Incorporate sourced materials into their own work through effective use of quotation, summary, paraphrase and citation using MLA or other appropriate style manual
- Write to achieve varying purposes and to engage different audiences (FIU First Year Core).

These four outcomes highlight FIU's commitment to preparing FYC students to have the necessary tools to be able to transfer skills learned in class to other rhetorical contexts. With these outcomes, students are prompted to compose texts using various formats and rhetorical choices to engage different audiences. Although modes are not explicitly mentioned in the outcomes, both ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 contain options for major assignments which ask the student to compose using modes outside of traditional written composition (FIU ENC 1101 & 1102 Canvas Shell). The course outcomes also allow for students to engage and adapt information from a field of their interest – whether from a STEM or Humanities perspective – and translate it to an objective analysis of the information. It must be stated: I do not aim to come to a single solution that will determine the efficacy of multimodal assignments on transfer and dispositions of students at FIU. My paper aims to add to the ongoing conversation in the field regarding student transfer of skills by analyzing FIU and the enrolled FYC students to further the discussion on the impact of multimodal practices on transfer and dispositions. At the very least, I aim to continue the discussion – at least at a departmental level – to discover the best way to encourage transfer to better serve the students who put their faith in the Writing & Rhetoric program.

My paper argues students enrolled in FYC courses see progress and growth during their initial experiences in those courses. However, students are not presented with enough opportunities to practice their skills using multiple modes of composition – such as linguistic, gestural, spacial, visual, or textual modes – in FYC courses, and as a result, are less able to transfer their knowledge to other contexts nor acquire the dispositions necessary for effective transfer.

## **CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### ***The Place of Multimodality in Education***

Multimodal scholarship argues that the education students receive in classroom settings should be representative of the tools and contexts they will use once they leave the classroom. (Van Leeuwen 583). Ignoring the realities of the world outside, surrounding the educational institution in favor of blindly clutching to what the older belief of what literacy should be, leads to not only revoking our ability to be reliable instructors who can describe how humans communicate but runs the risk of creating and pushing for a curriculum that is no longer relevant for students (Selfe 55).

Although multimodality is being pushed as a new approach to teaching students, a standardized curriculum is used within the First-Year writing curriculum of many institutions, and the way assignments and units are taught will vary from professor to professor. Within the same educational institution, an instructor's approach to advocating for multimodal texts can vary because of their personal connection with multimodality and the curriculum. As a current Teaching Assistant (TA) who has taught FYC courses at FIU, I have found that some professors view multimodal assignments as supplemental to writing assignments instead of assignments in their own right. This belief of multimodal

assignments being viewed as supplemental is reinforced in my discussions with fellow TAs, where we have noticed how multimodal aspects of assignments were sometimes relegated to adding an image at the end of a writing assignment. This belief of multimodal assignments being supplemental additions is supported by Xiao Tan and Paul Matsuda with their surveys of instructors, which concludes an instructor might view the multimodal component of an assignment as a supplement compared to a traditional text-based paper or end up permitting students to add some visual elements to a textual composition at the last minute (Tan & Matsuda) leading to students perceiving multimodality as simple artistic elements to a text-based composition instead of alternative modes of composition. In the aforementioned scenarios, students have less opportunity to engage with the necessary tools to transfer knowledge in or outside of their class.

### ***Transfer in the Classroom***

When considering the “best” way to encourage transfer, one theory suggests transfer is best learned when students are given the same, real-world context in which they are expected to perform (Brent “Transfer”). As a result, some universities have incorporated more assignments and projects to allow students to complete assignments which better fit the rhetorical contexts they might encounter outside of the composition classroom. FIU is one such university, whose new multimodal approach was implemented in the Academic Year of 2013-2014 (Nicholas 7). Upon implementing the multimodal approach alongside the new curriculum, data have shown a 7% and 5% increase in passing rate, respectively for both ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 courses (Nicholas 8). Looking at the data, the implementation was a resounding success –

students are passing at higher rates than before, and retention and graduation rates are improving as well (Nicholas 9).

Positioning multimodal assignments to have real-world context to promote transfer can specifically be seen in an option for the first assignment in FIU's ENC 1101 course. In this assignment, students are asked to create a multimodal text on discourse communities. Although a modality is not picked for students (the only specific instruction is it must not be a traditional essay), the first assignment allows students to make various rhetorical choices that are planned and articulated (Gonzalez). Students are pushed to focus on other aspects of composing that are unique to making a multimodal text: aural and visual components, script, music choice, website layout, etc. As a TA who has taught both ENC 1101 and 1102 using the new curriculum, I have seen students create a variety of vlogs, websites, and videos to satisfy the requirements for the first assignment. During my mentorship as a TA in 1101, I asked the students what their approach to composing their "text" was and received a variety of answers. A common link was always making sure the text would satisfy the requirements of the modes they were working within (picking out appropriate music or footage for a video) while including the information they needed (making sure they explain why the group they are a part of is a discourse community).

For the FIU ENC 1101 assignment, students are allowed to use any type of media they so choose and urged to work with modes they are familiar with. The purpose of this assignment is to push students to compose a project which incorporated multiple resources to make meaning and challenge the conventions of what composing a text means (DePalma & Poe Alexander 2015). Students are expected to apply the knowledge



they picked up in their shared course to work outside of class and create the rhetorical situations for which their work can be received and delivered (Shipka, “Multimodal” 3).

One of the options for FIU ENC 1101 first assignment comes with the expected caveat that interruptions or mistakes could halt or stifle the composition (DePalma & Poe Alexander). However, the end goal of the project is not to grade students on how well they created using the new mode. It instead focuses on if the message of the text has been sufficiently conveyed: whether students have been able to explain the discourse community they are presenting. Focusing on the message of the text instead of focusing on a professional presentation seems in opposition to the Canvas Shell for FIU’s ENC 1101 assignment which states: “The final video is polished and edited, including sound levels, transitions, and overall professionalism” (FIU ENC 1101 Canvas Shell). However, in past conversations with my mentoring instructor I was informed of how students are potentially forced to work with tools they may have never used before. As a result, in class we needed to make sure we were grading the content we were asking for, and not focus on the quality of the video or vlog unless it hampered understanding the content (such as their voice being inaudible). Even if the topic itself is not challenging, having the students engage in a non-standard mode to complete an academic task is seen as challenging and engaging – necessary attributes for transfer (Wardle).

### ***Transfer Is Not Guaranteed***

Although transfer is an observable phenomenon, it is difficult to measure and not an automatic process (Brent, “Transfer”). There is no way to perfectly prepare every student for all of the genres, assignments, or genre conventions across the multiple disciplines they will encounter (Wardle 82). Even though an assignment could be a good

example of determining when and how transfer occurs, transfer between rhetorical situations is not a guaranteed occurrence (DePalma & Poe Alexander).

Furthermore, if a student is not primed to know what transfer is or how what they are learning will be applicable in other contexts, they may not be able to make that connection. The idea of students having to be primed to know what to transfer and the applicability of what they are learning is similar to how the meaning of words change over time – a student’s perception of what they are doing (such as editing a video, vlog, or website) might go by a different name (creating and drafting). Students should be made aware of the connections instructors want them to make between the work they do, the assignments they produce, and how they can use their toolbox of skills to solve the problem (Shepherd 2018). The end goal of allowing students to see the connections of their classwork to real-world contexts is to help students create a connection between the context of their writing and into the outside contexts that they might not be aware of (Shepherd).

### ***Student Dispositions and its Impact on Transfer***

While students might have gained the knowledge in order to transfer skills from one setting to another, disposition is the factor which will determine if they use the skill (Wardle 76). The place of disposition cannot be ignored as transfer relies heavily on student disposition – without the appropriate disposition, transfer cannot occur even if a student knows how to use the skill if they are not willing to use it (Driscoll et al.).

Reflective activities which help students learn from their experiences is a common method used to assist in keying students in to developing a disposition where they are better equipped to transfer what they have learned (Brent “Transfer”). Furthermore,

dispositions are not a static entity – students learn and develop specific dispositions as they go through their education (Perkins et al. qtd. in Driscoll & Wells). With appropriate training and planning, students can be encouraged to develop generative dispositions which can lead to a more effective ability to transfer between rhetorical contexts (Devet & Driscoll).

### **CHAPTER III. METHODS**

#### ***Participant Population***

The study was conducted at FIU, a large, public Hispanic-Serving Institution. Study participants were recruited by an intermediary at the FIU English department who sent out an email to current faculty members on the FIU Writing and Rhetoric (W&R) Electronic Mailing List (Listserv). The email sent to instructors prompts them to ask their current students to complete the anonymous IRB-approved Qualtrics survey. As a platform, *Qualtrics* allows users to create surveys with a variety of question types alongside including privacy options to allow for the completely anonymous recording of information. Thirteen students responded to the survey. In order to maintain the anonymity of students, the survey did not gather information related to gender identity, race, or ethnicity. All participants were enrolled in FYC courses during the Spring Semester of 2021.

#### ***Data Collection***

To answer the question of the impact of multimodal assignments on transfer and dispositions of students in both academic and non-academic contexts, I designed a brief survey with Likert-scale questions, multiple choice questions, and open-ended responses. The Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions allowed students to pin-point specific

assignments or outcomes they believed to have impacted them the most and learned the best from. The open-ended responses enabled students the ability to explain why they found assignments to be useful or to identify how way they would be able to utilize the knowledge gained in the future. A survey was chosen as it allows for greater potential of having a large number of respondents as opposed to in-person interviews. The survey contains nine questions. The survey contains four Likert-scale questions, three free response questions, and two multiple choice questions (see Appendix 1). These questions were generated after looking at the course outcomes and the major course assignments for both ENC 1101 and 1102. Furthermore, given the current global situation involving COVID-19, I anticipated students wanting to avoid having to meet on campus. I also wanted to avoid scheduling interviews with students who have no obligation to attend a virtual interview. The survey was conducted over an 18-day span. At the time of data collection, thirteen responses have been recorded.

### *Analysis*

I used Grounded Theory to analyze the open-ended responses regarding students' dispositions and the potential transfer of multimodal skills to academic and non-academic contexts. Grounded Theory allows for natural connections to arise from the open-ended responses (Glaser & Strauss). Furthermore, Grounded Theory affords me the structure to quickly hand-code answers and find relationships which may arise. I compared these open-ended responses to students' responses to the Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions.

When looking at the results, I aimed to cover the two major bases which have been discussed in this thesis: students being able to identify transferable skills and

looking at the dispositions students had towards composition. With the former, I asked students to pick which course outcomes (called skills in the survey) from ENC 1101 and/or ENC 1102 they believe they gained as a result of the course. Furthermore, I also asked students to list a favorite assignment they completed from either ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 and explain why with the aim to see if students could identify other learned transferable skills that were not listed as strict outcomes of the course.

In one question, I asked respondents to relate their experience(s) in ENC 1101 and/or ENC 1102 with the career they hope to have in the future. A follow-up question asked students to declare what career they want or expect to pursue after leaving the University. The aim of the first question was to allow survey respondents to self-report their ability for them to identify transferable skills learned in class. The second question allowed me to look for any correlations between the career path students pick and their dispositions towards composition. After reading through the survey responses, I looked to find key terms such as students highlighting learning valuable skills. I refined the category down from a singular “learned valuable skill” to see if students learned a skill which is applicable to what they want to do. I looked for whether or not students were able to identify their skills as transferable, whether or not their dispositions towards multimodal writing were generative or disruptive, and whether their self-identified career in a STEM or non-STEM related field impacted their responses. I developed the following coding system to organize the survey data:

- Identified transferable skills
- Unidentified transferable skills
- Generative composition disposition

- Neutral composition disposition
- Student is pursuing STEM profession
- Student is pursuing non-STEM profession

The goal of this coding system was to establish commonalities between the education received in ENC 1101 and 1102 with the goals of FIU's FYC courses regarding transfer of skills and dispositions. Classifying a student as one pursuing a STEM career is to see if the curriculum allowed students the ability to transfer skills learned in the FYC class into their field of choice with a specific focus on non-Humanities careers. One of the goals of FIU's FYC courses is to provide an education which will be useful for all students regardless of the courses they go on to take afterwards. Therefore, it is important to identify whether or not students in STEM courses are able to transfer skills learned in the classroom to their fields.

### **Local Context**

Florida International University was picked for the site of this study because of its position as the largest HSI in the United States with over 60% of students self-identifying as Hispanic or Latino (Amorim & Martorana 4). Furthermore, although more than 60% of students being categorized as Hispanic or Latino, "... a significant number of [the] students come from non-Hispanic immigrant families or are international students. In total... students have roots in 125 different countries" (Amorim & Martorana 4). As a result, the survey has the potential to reach a wide variety of respondents from various backgrounds and lived experiences, which will be valuable when trying to synthesize the information down to a generalized form.

Another reason I selected FIU as the site of my study is because of my relationship with the University. I started and completed my Bachelor's in English Education at FIU in 2017. As a result, I was put into contact with various professors teaching FYC during the mandatory teaching internship for the last semester and taught a dual enrollment ENC 1101 course at John A. Ferguson Senior High School. With my close proximity to both the professor and the material, I became familiar with the education and methodological approaches to how ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 should be taught with the curriculum that was in place at the time.

I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in English in the Writing & Rhetoric track at FIU and have been hired as a teaching assistant (TA) at the university. As a result, I have not only seen a marked shift in the English Department's approach to teaching their FYC courses but also have been taught how to teach the new ENC 1101 and 1102 curriculums. As a result of having been taught at FIU with the old English Curriculum alongside being a current TA, I am in a unique situation where I have not only been taught the old curriculum, but have taught the new curriculum as well.

At FIU, the Writing and Rhetoric (W&R) program aims to "help students communicate effectively both in and beyond the academy" (FIU First Year Core). FIU's initial FYC course is called ENC 1101 and "introduces students to the writing, reading, and critical thinking skills required for college writing" (FIU First Year Core). In ENC 1101, students are taught to rethink their approach to writing as something that is tedious and uncreative. Students are also pushed to break free from the "five paragraph essay" mold that many students have come to find comfort in. FIU's second FYC course is ENC 1102. This course builds upon the skills learned in ENC 1101 by "placing additional

emphasis on argument and researched writing” (FIU First Year Core). As stated in the course description, researched writing is a major focus of the course and students are tasked with conducting research for multiple topics of their choosing throughout the semester. The course culminates with a final project which asks students to create a text in a non-standard mode (such as an infographic or comic strip) which advocates for a position they have been researching.

#### CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Thirteen surveys were analyzed for this study (See Appendix 1 for complete survey). In Table 1, 69% of students who responded found the first assignment for ENC 1101 (Rhetorical Listening, where students read texts and would synthesize the information presented) to be Very Useful. When asked about the final assignment for ENC 1101, a Literacy Narrative assignment asking students to write about their relationship and experiences with literacy as a whole, 23% of students found the assignment to be moderately useful – the fifth highest rank response for ENC 1101.

ENC 1101 Assignment Usefulness %s	Not At All Useful %	Neither Useful nor Unuseful %	Slightly Useful %	Moderately Useful %	Very Useful %	Not Applicable %
Rhetorical Listening	0%	0%	15%	15%	69%	0%
Literacy/Education Narrative	0%	0%	23%	15%	38%	23%
Belonging To A Discourse Community	0%	8%	15%	8%	46%	23%
Reflection/Personal Theory of Writing	0%	0%	8%	23%	38%	31%

*Table 1 Likert Question A: Results of answers to Likert Question - Please rate ALL of the following assignments from ENC 1101 from Least to Most Useful.*

Out of the surveyed students, none found the assignments for FIU’s FYC courses to be not at all useful. For ENC 1101’s third assignment – “Belonging to a Discourse Community” where students have the option to either vlog, write a traditional paper, or create a website in relation to a discourse community they belong to – one respondent



found it to be Neither Useful nor Unuseful while another respondent found it to be Moderately useful. However, a majority of respondents found the assignment to be Very Useful. However, the more than 20% drop between Rhetorical Listening to the next highest ranked assignment shows a marked shift in student ability to identify transferable skills from what they are taught in class and what they expect to be able to do outside of the composition classroom.

ENC 1102 Assignment Usefulness %s	Not At All Useful %	Neither Useful nor Unuseful %	Slightly Useful %	Moderately Useful %	Very Useful %	Not Applicable %
Reseraching Rhetorically Analysis Posts	0%	0%	8%	15%	46%	31%
Research Blog Posts	0%	0%	8%	15%	23%	54%
Annotated Bibliography Prezi	0%	0%	8%	15%	15%	62%
Informative Report	0%	0%	8%	0%	31%	62%
Persuasive Web Article	0%	0%	8%	23%	15%	54%
Putting Research into Action (Genre Shift)	0%	0%	8%	0%	38%	54%

*Table 2 Likert Question B: Results of answers to Likert Question - Please rate ALL of the following assignments from ENC 1101 from Least to Most Useful.*

In Table 2, 46% of survey respondents identified the first major assignment of ENC 1102 – where students are asked to research a topic of their choice and tasked with rhetorically analyzing sources related to it – to be Very Useful. This was the highest ranked assignment in ENC 1102. Although there is a large dip from Very Useful % from Researching Rhetorically Analysis Posts to the rest of the assignments in ENC 1102, the rising Not Applicable % marked by more than 50% of survey respondents could highlight a majority of students not having had the time to complete the assignment. Another implication is students viewing “Not Applicable” as an alternative way to state that they don’t remember.

When asked an open-response question if they agree or disagree that the skills they developed in either ENC 1101 or 1102 would be helpful in their career path, most respondents were able to identify transferable skills learned in their FYC courses and connect it to rhetorical situations outside the classroom. One student wrote that “writing

will always be present. Maybe you won't have to write 3-page essays, but you will have to write an email to your boss or give an oral presentation.” Another respondent wrote more directly towards how their in-class work would transfer to situations in their future stating, “I believe that these skills will help me create any kind of reports in a more visually appealing way.” Other students highlighted how “... writing skills are needed for my future career” and how “It is critical to learn various approaches to rhetoric when writing emails, reports, etc. in the workplace.”

One respondent was unable to identify transferable skills, writing “I am becoming more aware of language and discourse communities, but that is not applicable to medical field. Maybe just the use of formal [language]”.

STEM Career	Non-Stem Career	Undecided/Not Applicable
4	8	1

*Table 2 Free-Response Question C: What career do you want or expect to pursue after leaving FIU?*

When asked to self-identify their respective career paths, responses ranged from pursuing Science Technology Math Engineering (STEM) degrees like nursing or medicine to Humanities oriented degrees such as working in law enforcement. Four students are categorized as pursuing a STEM profession, with eight having been categorized as pursuing a non-STEM profession. One respondent highlighted they were unsure of their future prospects at the time.

When looking at the course outcomes for ENC 1101 and asking students to select whichever outcomes best described skills they gained, student responses rates were consistent and closely grouped. Students were asked: “What skills do you believe you gained from taking ENC 1101? Please check all that apply.

- Define and Explain concepts such as rhetoric, purpose, genre, audience, metacognition, and discourse community: 8
- Combine different perspectives articulated in course readings: 9
- Identify strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques within diverse contexts: 11
- Develop effective strategies for completing a writing task: 9
- Exhibit reflective thinking strategies: 7
- Develop effective invention, composing, and revision processes: 10
- Identify personal areas for growth in writing, thinking, and learning: 10
- Choose appropriate genre and audience: 7
- Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques: 10
- Produce a written product with content that fulfills its purpose: 9

Surprisingly, responses for the outcomes for ENC 1101 were not only high – with more than half respondents marking as having picked up one of the skills – but evenly distributed. This suggests the curriculum for ENC 1101 being universally applicable throughout students’ various fields of study. While this does not mean the curriculum is perfect, it does imply the current approach to setting incoming students up for success in later courses is being met.

When asked about which course outcomes from ENC 1102 and asking students to select all applicable skills they believed to have learned, the responses were low, but still

evenly distributed. Students were asked: “What skills do you believe you gained from taking ENC 1102? Please check all that apply.

- Choose appropriate media/genre/audience to communicate research findings: 4
- Compose rhetorically effective media for different audiences: 3
- Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques within multilingual and diverse linguistic contexts: 5
- Create questions to drive research: 4
- Develop critical knowledge of primary and secondary research methods: 2
- Understand how to use intellectual property responsibly (evaluating source reliability and validity for rhetorical context, citation): 4
- Understand core concepts about rhetorical research-writing: 5
- Understand research as a cyclical, inquiry-based process: 4
- Evaluate how information is produced and consumed in specific contexts: 3
- Exhibit reflective thinking strategies: 4
- Develop and use effective invention, composing, and revision processes: 5

Surprisingly, less than half of survey respondents listed having gained skills as a result of the assignments for ENC 1102. This suggests students may have had difficulty separating the completion of assignments to working towards accomplishing the outcomes set by the course. Similarly, the low scores for “Exhibit reflective thinking strategies” highlights how even though all major assignments in ENC 1102 have mandatory reflection assignments, students may be having difficulty separating the idea of stating how they

completed an assignment instead of reflecting on the writing process, why certain decisions were made, or what they may have learned and can apply in other contexts as a result of the assignment.

When asked an open-ended question about which assignments from ENC 1101 or 1102 they found useful for developing a generative disposition, one student stated how personal reflections were helpful for them and how “people of different races sharing their perspectives was useful.” Another student stated writing would “help you in whatever area you want to spacialize.”

One student was categorized as having a neutral composition disposition. They wrote about how the Personal Essay assignment for ENC 1101 was the most useful for them because it was easier for them to write about themselves and how “meetings with the TA and the professor helped to improve my writing.”

When asked to state their preferences between traditional writing assignments or multimodal assignments, three students stated they preferred traditional assignments as opposed to Multimodal assignments, suggesting there is work that can be done to either increase student buy-in to completing multimodal assignments or more explanation needs to be done to have students connect what they do in the course to what they will be doing once they leave the classroom.

## **CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION**

An initial interpretation of the data shows after switching to a multimodal curriculum, almost all assignments having been at least Somewhat Useful for students across the board. The high Not Applicable score for ENC 1102 assignments in Table 2 was a result of students potentially haven’t having taken the course yet or just starting it.

With 69% of students identifying the first major ENC 1101 assignment as being “Very Useful” has a few implications: first, students could have identified it as personally helpful (to help them learn how to approach college writing). Secondly, it could mean the student has acquired a skill as a result of the assignment which they find useful. This is in stark contrast to the respondent ranking of the second major assignment of ENC 1102 – Very Useful dropping to 38% and Slightly Useful rising to 23%. Overall, the results in Tables 1 and 2 show wide, surface-level applicability. However, the sharp drop off in how useful some assignments are for students highlights the potential for growth in the curriculum where more subject areas can be better catered towards in FYC courses in order to make it more widely applicable for more students. This suggests more context may be necessary for students when completing assignments in ENC 1102 for them to better connect the work they are completing with the type of work they can be expected to do in their core classes and their future careers (Brent “Transfer”).

It is important to remember that understanding dispositions is an incomplete science with the only concrete proof being “indirect and [taking] the form of either self-report or behavior indicating the attitude, perspective, belief, or value in question” (Driscoll et al. n.p.). However, the high percentage of students finding the first assignment for ENC 1101 (Rhetorical Listening) being at least Slightly Useful or Moderately Useful (15% for both) with a majority of students finding the assignment to be Very Useful (69%) is a comforting indicator that the assignment starts off by priming students to develop a generative disposition and building students’ self-efficacy when starting the course as it will “facilitate the student’s positive growth and development” (Driscoll and Powell n.p.) and can hopefully be carried forward into further assignments

during the course. By building up students' self-efficacy, students will be more likely to work hard and be persistent when facing obstacles (Zimmerman qtd. in Driscoll and Wells).

Out of all the outcomes listed for ENC 1101, four of the outcomes had at least ten students responding they had learned the appropriate skill: "identifying strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques within diverse contexts," "Develop effective invention, composing, and revision processes," "Identify personal areas for growth in writing, thinking, and learning," and "Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques." This can be a sign of instructors for the course having demonstrated the connections between diverse contexts (Shepherd) and, as a result, assisting students in identifying transferable skills which would be useful for them outside of the composition classroom. It can also be an indicator that the varied modes students are tasked with composing in are sufficiently engaging and challenging enough in order to allow for students to identify transferable skills (Wardle).

One of the survey respondents – one who wanted to pursue a career in the medical field – wrote they were unable to find a connection to what they were learning in ENC 1101 and 1102, and how it would transfer into their potential future field. This is a case where the student can identify how the knowledge they have gained would transfer into other, non-career related situations, but not directly in the degree path or profession they are choosing to pursue. However, the student did acknowledge that the usage of formal language could be helpful for them. This dissonance between FYC writing and future professional writing tasks is supported in Driscoll's study where students' potential lack of knowledge regarding future writing tasks interfered with their ability to make

connections between the work they were doing in FYC courses and the type of work they would encounter in their field (140). This leaves open the possibility of further research regarding the usage of writing in STEM-related fields. As an initial balm, it would be prudent for instructors to demonstrate to students how their writing experiences relate to out-of-course contexts (Shepherd n.p) which is a difficulty students pursuing STEM careers and non-STEM careers encounter when being introduced to a different approach to composition. This result supports the usage of reflective activities in assisting students developing dispositions where they are more suited to transfer the skills they have acquired (Brent “Transfer”). Although post-assignment reflective activities can be stated to achieve this goal, the results highlight a potential gap with the way students use reflective activities in ENC 1102. A suggestion would be to not only have students reflect on what they have learned but also on how the learning process had taken place (Bastian qtd. in Tan & Matsuda). This extra step could serve as another way for students to establish context between what they have learned (and how they have learned) to the type of work they will be doing outside of the course.

A common narrative within students studying at institutions is “STEM doesn't need writing.” This is given with the caveat that lab reports and other texts do not fall under the category of writing because it is too different from the texts they had to write in their composition classroom. To push through the STEM stigma, I believe FYC instructors would benefit by explaining how a multimodal approach to composition can enrich texts composed with a standard approach by “attending more closely to materiality and the roles humans and nonhumans play in processes of making” (Shipka, “Transmodality” 255-256). With this approach, STEM students would be primed to



create connections between their multimodal assignments, how what they have learned could be applicable in more traditional writing, and the work they might encounter in their other core courses.

None of the respondents have been identified to have disruptive dispositions towards multimodal composition. There is a mixture of both STEM and Humanities careers students are pursuing – such as Dermatologist, international business marketer, or nursing (see Appendix 4). A majority of respondents were able to highlight how the skills they developed as a result of having taken ENC 1101 and 1102 would be valuable assets for them once they pursue their careers. However, three students highlighted they preferred traditional writing assignments over multimodal assignments. Furthermore, these three students stated they were hoping to pursue law enforcement, working at an oil company, and wanting to be a financial advisor. Although only one of the students would fall under a STEM related field, these responses can indicate some students are still having difficulty in identifying how what they have learned in class is transferred into their specific fields. This result shows students who recognize the usefulness of writing understand the type of writing they will do in the workplace will not be the same as the writing done in the composition classroom – requiring different “purposes, readerships, and techniques to writing” (Brent, “Transfer” n.p).

Furthermore, it is important to remember that dispositions develop differently depending on contexts where “a student may display high self-efficacy for a familiar or enjoyable writing task and low self-efficacy for an unfamiliar or disliked writing task” (Driscoll et al. n.p.). Self-efficacy is defined as the ability for a person to believe there are capable in performing a specific action in order to have a specific outcome (Luszczynska

& Schwarzer 128). When looking at students' rankings of the usefulness of assignments for both ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, all ENC 1101 assignments are ranked as generally Very Useful with the first assignment for ENC 1102 being ranked as the most useful compared to its peers. This could highlight how ENC 1101 does a good job of equipping students with the necessary skills in order to tackle writing in different situations (where ENC 1102 is more focused on research writing),

To continue, the ranking of usefulness of assignments can also be related to the modes students had to compose in. Only five students out of the thirteen respondents found the ENC 1102: #2B Assignment (Annotated Prezi) to be useful in any way. This result is closely mirrored to the number of respondents which found the ENC 1102: #4 Assignment (Putting Research Into Action [Genre Shift]) useful in any way – with five finding it Very Useful and one finding it Slightly Useful. These results can highlight students having difficulty with developing generative dispositions with modes they are not familiar with, even if it may suggest otherwise (a Prezi is conceptually similar to a PowerPoint, which fellow instructors along with myself would have assumed students were familiar with). As a caveat, however, it must be remembered there were respondents who just started ENC 1102 and – as a result – have yet to complete any of the other major writing assignments which can skew the usefulness of ENC 1102 assignments. This is reflected in the increasing “Not Applicable” statistic for ENC 1102 which starts at 31% for the first assignment, and jumps to 52% for the second assignment.

The high response rate to outcomes in ENC 1101 is not reflected for the responses for ENC 1102 outcomes. As discussed earlier, this can be a result of students not having taken ENC 1102 or are currently enrolled in the course and have not completed the major

assignments yet. However, six out of the surveyed students stated being able to have mastered “Choosing appropriate media/genre/audience to communicate research findings.” When looking at this course outcome with the lens of multimodality, this outcome allows students to identify the building blocks necessary in order to pick a specific mode they would like to compose in. When paired with the answers given by students regarding their future career choices, these answers show around half of the surveyed students having identified an area they will be able to transfer the skill of communicating research findings into their potential future career choice.

## **CHAPTER VI. LIMITATIONS**

Considering the year this was written, it would be remiss of me to not mention COVID-19 as a limitation of this study. An initial draft of this project involved interviewing instructors and students alike to discuss the impact of multimodality on the ability for students to transfer their knowledge and potential dispositions towards composition that students have gained as a result. I am thankful I am in a completely healthy state and had I been living on my own I would have taken the risk of getting sick in order to conduct a more in-depth look into the students taking FYC courses at FIU. However, I cannot and will not assume potential respondents would be comfortable taking that same risk. Furthermore, the Institutional Review Board is not allowing in-person research interviews, closing off that avenue of compiling data.

One of the limitations of the study was the survey format itself. Even when providing definitions for specific verbiage like “usefulness”, it can still be interpreted differently by survey respondents. In this survey “usefulness” was defined as “having learned a skill, having made a connection, or any beneficial take-away from that Module”

to better link the responses that would be received with the idea of transfer. The definition was left intentionally broad so survey respondents would be primed to think about being able to apply the information they have learned in non-classroom related contexts; however, survey respondents could still have misinterpreted the meaning. With this in mind, the results of the survey still provides valuable insight as to students dispositions towards the assignments they have to complete for FYC courses.

Time was another limitation of this study. While surveys are a good way to reach a broad audience to receive fast responses, it is much harder to get more specific answers – especially in the field of disposition which still relies on self-reporting or observing (Driscoll et al. n.p.). As a result, I often felt the responses to the survey were too narrow and wished I had the opportunity for the respondents to be able to elaborate on the ideas or thoughts they presented. While this could be remedied with better question structure nothing can replace the ability to simply ask the respondent to expand their ideas or points of view in person.

Another limitation was the subject population. As a result of using the W&R Listserv as the method of communication between myself and the instructors (and, as a result, the survey respondents), I could only get in contact with students who were currently enrolled in English courses at the time. Although some students taking ENC 1102 would be able to identify skills they have been able to transfer from ENC 1101 into other academic and non-academic contexts, the results leave out the perspective of students not currently in English courses who might have had different experiences with the new multimodal curriculum. This also led to the study having a low response rate. As a result, any conclusions made by this study are based on limited data.

To continue, another limitation was that not all surveyed students have taken nor completed ENC 1102 at the time of the survey. This occurred because the student population only consisted of students currently in ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 and not on students that had completed ENC 1102. This skewed the results for the ENC 1102 course assignments, leading to a higher number of “Not Applicable” responses.

## **CHAPTER VII. CONCLUSION**

This paper set out to closely look at a multimodal curriculum at a secondary education institution to identify the ability for students to transfer skills learned in class into other contexts alongside their dispositions towards multimodal composition. By looking at FIU’s implementation of its multimodal curriculum, this study has shown that of those surveyed, a majority of students were able to identify transferable skills and relate it to future career paths. However, some students had difficulty with determining how they will be able to transfer their skills into the future fields they aim to pursue. Furthermore, students have generally shown to have a generative disposition towards multimodal composition – leaving the door open for current and future transferable skills to be applicable in future contexts. Even then, a few students still prefer traditional writing assignments – hinting at the possible need for breaking the “barrier” between multimodal composition and traditional writing to highlight how each method of communication can benefit from understanding the other side (Shipka, “Multimodality” 256).

As a current Teaching Assistant for FIU’s ENC 1102 course, there is a lot of material to cover – so much so it is not difficult to imagine students having difficulty retaining the information. This increased volume of information can make it difficult for

students to be able to keep a generative disposition and make students “unwilling to put forth the effort required’ to reflect on their past learning enough to use what they had learned to solve these more difficult writing problems” (Wardle qtd. in Driscoll and Wells).

When looking to the future, I believe it is important to not only look at if students have been able to identify transferable skills, but also to “measure transfer by looking at the *productivity* of the old skills, that is, their ability to facilitate new learning in [a] new situation” (Hatano and Greeno qtd. in Brent “Transfer” n.p.). By looking at students’ productivity of their own skills in new situations, instructors can gain a better understanding of what modalities and formats to teach students in order to better prepare them for the work they will be doing outside of the composition classroom. To add on, looking to see how students adapt their learning to new situations over the course of their education – while lengthy – would be a worthwhile process in determining what work may still need to be done in FYC curriculums to make the transition between composition in FYC courses more readily applicable to composition in the more specialized courses students end up taking in their college careers.

It is important to remember that a student’s perspective can be limited – they may not realize the type of work that needs to be done later on in their academic or professional career. I have spoken to some of my own undergraduate friends in STEM fields who did not see the need for writing or their composition courses early on in their college studies, stating it would not be that important to them. However, after taking various upper division courses and having entered the work force, all have come to the realization that even though they may not be writing five paragraph essays there is still a

use for writing. With this in mind, it would behoove instructors to not solely defer to what the student believes they need out of a FYC course and refer back to other faculty in the academy who may know more about their specific fields of study.

Neither the concepts nor implementation of multimodality and transfer in educational institutions are new. Nor are they revolutionary. However, instead of approaching the subject of multimodality and transfer as two-way-street (with students transferring skills from outside contexts into the class and vice versa), it would be beneficial for FYC departments to collaborate with departments in other fields to better determine what skills and modalities will best suit the needs of the students that pass through the doors of the institution. Further understanding of what modalities and skills students will need in order to be successful can better prepare FYC courses to be equitable and better prepare students for the work they will face once they leave the classroom.

## WORKS CITED

- Amorim, Jacqueline, and Christine Martorana. "Online Teaching, Linguistic Diversity, and a Standard of Care: Developing a Shared Curriculum at a Hispanic-Serving Institution." *Working with and Against Shared Curricula: Perspectives from College Writing Teachers and Administrators*, edited by Samantha NeCamp and Connie Kendall Theado, Peter Lang, forthcoming.
- Ball, Cheryl E., et al. "Genre and Transfer in a Multimodal Composition Class." *Multimodal Literacies and Emerging Genres*, edited by Tracey Bowen and Carl Whithaus, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013, pp. 15–36.
- Ball, Cheryl, and Colin Charlton. "2d - All Writing Is Multimodal." *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*, edited by Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle, Utah State UP, 2016.
- Baird, Neil, and Bradley Dilger. "How Students Perceive Transitions: Dispositions and Transfer in Internships." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 68, no. 4, 2017, pp. 684–712. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/44783589](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44783589). Accessed 12 Feb. 2021
- Brent, Doug. "Transfer, Transformation, and Rhetorical Knowledge: Insights From Transfer Theory." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2011, pp. 396–420, doi:10.1177/1050651911410951. Accessed 12 Feb. 2021.
- Brent, Doug. "Crossing Boundaries: Co-Op Students Relearning to Write." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 63, no. 4, 2012, pp. 558–592. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/23264229](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23264229). Accessed 12 Feb. 2021.
- Clark, Irene L. "Print/new media transfer: Genre issues." *Journal of Teaching Writing*, 29.1, 2014, pp. 21-44.  
<https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/teachingwriting/article/view/20733>. Accessed 15 Jan. 2021.
- DePalma, Michael-John, and Kara Poe Alexander. "A Bag Full of Snakes: Negotiating the Challenges of Multimodal Composition." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 37, 2015, pp. 182–200., doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2015.06.008>. Accessed 20 Jan. 2021.



Devet, Bonnie and Dana Lynn Driscoll, editors. "Writing Centers as a Space for Transfer: Supporting Writing, Writers, and Contexts." *WLN*, 2020, [wlnjournal.org/digitaleditedcollection2/DriscollandDevet.html](http://wlnjournal.org/digitaleditedcollection2/DriscollandDevet.html). Accessed 3 Feb. 2021.

Driscoll, Dana L. "Pedagogy of Transfer: Impacts of Student and Instructor Attitudes", *ProQuest*, 2009, <http://ezproxy.fiu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.fiu.edu/dissertations-theses/pedagogy-transfer-impacts-student-instructor/docview/304990890/se-2?accountid=10901>. Accessed 5 Feb. 2021.

Driscoll, Dana Lynn, et al. "Down the Rabbit Hole: Challenges and Methodological Recommendations in Researching Writing-Related Student Dispositions." *Composition Forum*, 31, 2017, [compositionforum.com/issue/35/rabbit-hole.php](http://compositionforum.com/issue/35/rabbit-hole.php). Accessed 30 Jan. 2021.

Driscoll, Dana Lynn, and Roger Powell. "States, Traits, and Dispositions: The Impact of Emotion on Writing Development and Writing Transfer Across College Courses and Beyond." *Composition Forum*, 34, 2016, [compositionforum.com/issue/34/states-traits.php](http://compositionforum.com/issue/34/states-traits.php). Accessed 30 Jan. 2021.

Driscoll, Dana Lynn, and Jennifer Wells. "Beyond Knowledge and Skills: Writing Transfer and the Role of Student Dispositions." *Composition Forum*, 26, 2012, [compositionforum.com/issue/26/beyond-knowledge-skills.php](http://compositionforum.com/issue/26/beyond-knowledge-skills.php). Accessed 30 Jan. 2021.

Edwards, Dustin, and Enrique Paz. "Only Geniuses Can Be Writers." *Bad Ideas About Writing*, West Virginia University, 2017, pp. 64–70.

*ENC 1101*. Florida International University, [canvas.fiu.edu/](http://canvas.fiu.edu/).

*ENC 1102*. Florida International University, [canvas.fiu.edu/](http://canvas.fiu.edu/).

- Florida International University. "First Year Core." *College of Arts, Sciences & Education* | Florida International University, case.fiu.edu/english/expertise/writing-and-rhetoric/first-year-core/index.html. Accessed 5 Feb. 2021.
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss, A. *Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York, Routledge. 1999
- Gonzalez, Laura. "Multimodality, Translingualism, and Rhetorical Genre Studies." *Composition Forum*, 31, 2015, compositionforum.com/issue/31/multimodality.php.
- Grauman, Jillian and Kathy Rose, "Motivational Scaffolding's Potential for Inviting Transfer in Writing Center Collaborations." *WLN*, WLN Journal, 2020, <https://wlnjournal.org/digitaleditedcollection2/RoseandGrauman.html>. Accessed 15 Feb. 2021.
- Horner, Bruce, Cynthia Selfe, and Tim Lockridge. "Translinguality, Transmodality, and Difference: Exploring Dispositions and Change in Language and Learning" [intermezzo.enculturation.net/01/ttd-horner-selfe-lockridge/index.htm](http://intermezzo.enculturation.net/01/ttd-horner-selfe-lockridge/index.htm)
- Leeuwen, Theo Van. "Multimodality in Education: Some Directions and Some Questions." *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2015, pp. 582–589., [www.jstor.org/stable/43893773](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43893773). Accessed 11 Feb. 2021.
- Luszczynska, A and R Schwarzer. "Social cognitive theory." *Predicting health behaviour*, edited by Mark Conner & Paul Norman, Buckingham, England: Open University Press, 2005, pp. 127–169.
- Nicholas, Tekla. "Noticing Differences for Equity: Insights from Student Perceptions & Behaviors Surveys." *Sharepoint*, August 2020, Zoom.
- Selfe, Cynthia L. "Students Who Teach Us: A Case Study of A New Media Text Designer." *Writing New Media Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*, edited by Anne Frances Wysocki et al., Utah State University Press, 2004, pp. 43–66. Accessed 11 Feb. 2021.

- Shepherd, Ryan P. "Digital Writing, Multimodality, and Learning Transfer: Crafting Connections between Composition and Online Composing." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 48, 2018, pp. 103–114., doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.03.001>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2020
- Shipka, Jody. "A Multimodal Task-Based Framework for Composing." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 57, no. 2, 2005, pp. 277–306. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/30037916](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30037916). Accessed 7 Oct. 2020.
- Shipka, Jody. "Transmodality in/and Processes of Making: Changing Dispositions and Practice." *College English*, vol. 78, no. 3, 2016, pp. 250–257., [www.jstor.org/stable/44075115](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44075115). Accessed 18 Feb. 2021.
- Tan, Xiao, and Paul Kei Matsuda. "Teacher Beliefs and Pedagogical Practices of Integrating Multimodality into First-Year Composition." *Computers and Composition*, JAI, 2020, [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S875546152030075X](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S875546152030075X). Accessed 29 Jan. 2021.
- Wardle, Elizabeth. "Understanding 'Transfer' from FYC: Preliminary Results of a Longitudinal Study." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 31, no. 1-2, 2007, pp. 65–85., <http://associationdatabase.co/archives/31n1-2/31n1-2wardle.pdf>. Accessed 3 Feb. 2021

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

# Multimodality, Attitudes, and Dispositions Survey

---

Start of Block: AgeConfirm

AgeConfirm Please confirm you are 18 Years Old or Older

Yes

No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Please confirm you are 18 Years Old or Older = No*

*Skip To: TextA If Please confirm you are 18 Years Old or Older = Yes*

---

TextA This survey will ask you about your thoughts regarding the major multimodal assignments you completed for ENC 1101 and/or ENC 1102.   
   
 The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.   
   
 A multimodal assignment is defined as an assignment where instead of writing a traditional essay, you also use images, sounds, design, and/or graphics to create something like a website, v-log, prezi, etc. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.   
   
 **PLEASE DO NOT** include your name, ID number, or professor in any of the responses.

End of Block: AgeConfirm

---

Start of Block: Block 6

---

Start of Block: Block 5

---

Start of Block: Usefulness

Q33 The first set of questions will ask you about the usefulness of the assignments you had to complete for ENC 1101 and 1102. Usefulness is defined as having learned a skill, having made a connection, or any beneficial take-away from that Module.

LikertA Please rate ALL of the following assignments in ENC 1101 from Least to Most Useful. If you did not attend FIU for this course, please choose "Not Applicable" for all Modules. If you have not completed a listed module, please choose "Not Applicable" for the Module.

	Not At All Useful	Neither Useful nor Unuseful	Slightly Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful	Not Applicable
Module 1: Rhetorical Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 2: Literacy/Education Narrative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 3: Belonging to a Discourse Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 4: Reflection/Personal Theory of Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

LikertB Please rate ALL of the following assignments in ENC 1102 from Least to Most Useful. Note: You may not have had some of these modules assigned to you when taking this course. If you did not attend FIU for this course, please choose "Not

Applicable" for all Modules.</div><div>If you have not completed a listed module, please choose "Not Applicable" for the Module.</div>

	Not At All Useful	Neither Useful nor Unuseful	Slightly Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful	Not Applicable
Module 1: Researching Rhetorically Analysis Posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 2: Research Blog Posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 2: Annotated Bibliography Prezi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 3: Informative Report	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 3: Persuasive Web-Article	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Module 4: Putting Research Into Action (Genre Shift)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

FreeA Are there any particular assignments from ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 that you found useful? Please explain why.

---

End of Block: Usefulness

---

Start of Block: Encouragement and Career

LikertC Please indicate to the extent to which you agree with the following statement:  
As a reminder, a multimodal assignment is defined as an assignment where instead of writing a traditional essay, you also use images, sounds, design, and/or graphics to create something like a website, v-log, prezi, etc.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
<p>In ENC 1101, my professor provided opportunities for me to engage in multimodality for my assignments</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>In ENC 1102, my professor provided opportunities for me to engage in multimodality for my assignments</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

LikertD Explain to the extent to which you agree with the following statement:  
As a reminder, a multimodal assignment is defined as an assignment where instead of writing

a traditional essay, you also use images, sounds, design, and/or graphics to create something like a website, v-log, prezi, etc.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe the <strong>multimodal skills</strong> I developed in ENC 1101/1102 will help me <strong>in my career</strong> after leaving FIU/College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe the <strong>multimodal skills</strong> I developed in ENC 1101/1102 will help me <strong>outside my career</strong> after leaving FIU/College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

FreeB Please explain why you agree or disagree that the skills developed in ENC 1101/1102 will be helpful in your career path.

---

FreeC What career do you want or expect to pursue after leaving FIU/College?

---



Start of Block: Skills

MultA What skills do you believe you gained from taking ENC 1101. Please check all that apply.

- Define and explain concepts such as rhetoric, purpose, genre, audience, metacognition, and discourse community
  - Combine different perspectives articulated in course readings
  - Identify strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques within diverse contexts
  - Develop effective strategies for completing a writing task
  - Exhibit reflective thinking strategies
  - Develop effective invention, composing, and revision processes
  - Identify personal areas for growth in writing, thinking, and learning
  - Choose appropriate genre and audience
  - Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques
  - Produce a written product with content that fulfills its purpose
-

MultB What skills do you believe you gained from taking ENC 1102. Please check all that apply.

- Choose appropriate media/genre/audience to communicate research findings
- Compose rhetorically effective media for different audiences
- Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques within multilingual and diverse linguistic contexts
- Create questions to drive research
- Develop critical knowledge of primary and secondary research methods
- Understand how to use intellectual property responsibly (evaluating source reliability and validity for rhetorical context, citation)
- Understand core concepts about rhetorical research-writing
- Understand research as a cyclical, inquiry-based process
- Evaluate how information is produced and consumed in specific contexts
- Exhibit reflective thinking strategies
- Develop and use effective invention, composing, and revision processes

End of Block: Skills

---

Start of Block: Preference

MultC Do you prefer traditional writing assignments or the non-standard, multimodal assignments? Please explain your answer.

Traditional Writing Assignments

Multimodal Assignments

End of Block: Preference

---

**Appendix 2**

Are there any particular assignments from ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 that you found useful? Please explain why.
No Response
No Response
The narrative assignment about language in discourse communities
n/a
No assignment in particular, but the discussions with the professor and class om zoom are always insightful and fun.
No Response
In general all writing. It will help you in whatever area you want to specialize and its a big medium of communication.
The videos Professor Wicks showed about language and people of different races sharing their perspectives was useful. Personal reflections are also useful
ENC 1101

No Response
No Response
No Response
Personal Essay from ENC 1101 because it was easier to write about myself and because the meetings with the TA and the professor helped to improve my writing

### Appendix 3

Please explain why you agree or disagree that the skills developed in ENC 1101/1102 will be helpful in your career path.
It is critical to learn various approaches to rhetoric when writing emails, reports, etc. in the workplace.
No Response
Because I help me to strength my rhetoric and writing skills
Be able to retain and reflect on more informative we have learned
Everyone needs a basic understanding on grammar, writing skills, and identifying your audience.
No Response
Because, as I said before, writing will always be present. Maybe you won't have to write 3-page essays, but you will have to write an email to your boss or give an oral presentation.

I am becoming more aware of language and discourse communities, but that is not applicable to medical field. Maybe just the use of formal language.
No Response
No Response
I believe that these skills will help me create any kind of reports in a more visually appealing way.
No Response
I agree because my writing skills have improved significantly since taking ENC 1101 and beginning ENC 1102. Writing skills are needed for my future career.

#### **Appendix 4**

What career do you want or expect to pursue after leaving FIU/College?
Nursing
Something in Business Administration
Law enforcement
a neuropsychologist
Financial Advisor
Civil Engineer
I want to launch my own business.

doctor, nurse, PA or something in medical field.
Oil company in my County
Financial consulting
International business marketer
I don't know yet
I want to become a Dermatologist or a Geneticist