

Conferences

English 106, Bradley Dilger, Fall 2014 ~ <http://dtext.org/>

Experienced writers, designers, and communicators rely heavily on conversations with others about their writing. Some writers collaborate extensively, conducting their research together, writing in the same room as others to allow periodic consultation, or even drafting side by side. It's true that many writers work alone at times, some most of the time, but at one point every writer collaborates with others—designers, consultants, editors, artists, or other professionals.

To practice this important element of writing, you will frequently conference with me and others about your English 106 work. In week 1, we will begin with a group orientation. From weeks 2 to 15 of the semester, you will have a 10 minute conference with me every other week. In week 16, we'll have a final project focus group.

In the course schedule, you will see that I have suggested a topic for conferences each week. However, you are welcome to use the time we have to discuss anything related to our reading and writing, as long as you are come prepared with **two printed copies of both of the following:**

1. A short passage which you have carefully read and annotated, and are ready to discuss. You can draw from one of our texts, or a short passage from one of your project starters or drafts. Keep in mind that with 10 minutes, short is the key word here.
2. A short (150-200 word) articulation of the questions, ideas, and trouble spots you have about the passage.

You will leave one copy with me at the end of the conference; we will write on the other as necessary and you will consult it as necessary.

This written preparation is essential. Just as professional writers invest time to get ready for meetings with others, you need to put in the time to prepare for ours. If you are not ready for your conference, not only will you miss the opportunity to talk about your work with me, but you will be marked absent.

Ten minutes is not very much time, so please note that we cannot discuss anything but your reading or writing during our conference. I'm happy to talk about your grades, suggest other courses at Purdue, or just chat—but not during conference time.

If you need to talk about your writing more than conferencing allows, you have several options to continue the conversation:

- Come to my office hours or make an appointment with me;
- Visit the Writing Lab and/or make use of their online materials;
- Collaborate with another student in the course.

See *Composing Yourself* chapter 2 for more about the important role conferencing plays in English 106.