Memorandum ME EN 3400 (Spring 2024)

To: Russ Askren

From: Brandon Lim

Date: 1/8/2024

Subject: Formatting Review

cc: N/A

Attachments: Figure 1.1

What benefits do require first-year composition courses in the United States have on newly graduated engineering students entering their fields in the 20th century and why is it important to require these courses? Addressing the targeted audience of current and postgraduate engineering students who dreaded taking these required first-year composition courses under the opinion that it would not offer them any benefits in their respective fields of work, there is evidence to support the overlap of skills developed in these courses and skills needed to thrive in engineering. In reviewing the literature on first-year composition courses and engineering, I will show that required first-year composition courses have many benefits that transcend the generic field of rhetoric studies and humanities while transferring to other fields of interest, and that what is ultimately at stake is the question if first-year composition courses have any benefits for engineering majors.  Writing and rhetoric skills are utilized in engineering and these skills can be developed in first-year composition courses for students. First-year composition courses can develop engineering students' responsibilities and metacognition which will assist them when trying to communicate effectively in their fields. A major problem for engineers is their underdeveloped ability to work in rhetoric, which is used very often in the profession, although this is something that is heavily developed in first-year composition courses. The benefit of better-developed metacognition and responsibility skills from first-year composition courses also helps engineering students build their management and leadership skills which are heavily emphasized traits that are sought out in the field.

         To explain the benefits and transfer that first-year composition courses have on engineering professions, it is important to first declare and interpret the proven benefits of these classes. There are many benefits to taking required first-year composition courses in college. Many individuals think that these benefits only apply to rhetoric emphasizing majors and courses, but the benefits transcend these fields. In “First-Year Writing: What Good Does It Do?”, the National Council of Teachers of English points out the major advantages and benefits of having required first-year writing courses in college. In brief, 4 main benefits were found from studying the outcomes of taking first-year writing courses. The first benefit pointed out is that these courses foster engagement by offering students a smaller student and teacher ratio in the classroom which is something that only first-year writing courses usually offer and is a key factor to student engagement and retention. The next benefit pointed out is the enhancement in rhetorical knowledge where students can learn the rhetorical skills they can use in their own respective disciplines throughout their lifetimes. The third benefit pointed out is the development of metacognition through broadening students' scopes beyond high school writing courses and teaching them how to address a variety of different writing contexts and situations. The last benefit that was reported in the brief was the increase in student responsibility where first-year writing courses can stimulate students' metacognition and responsibility for their own writing and college courses leading to greater responsibility. This brief was created by the NCTE which is a very well-known and respected organization that aims to improve the education system within the United States by researching current teaching decisions and making changes to improve them. So, this research of first-composition courses and its benefits are backed by a major organization with lots of validity behind their name. Hello

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A diagram of a load

Description automatically generated

Figure 1.1: Experimental setup of a 3-point bending test, where a load P is applied in the center of a bar with supports that are 4 inches apart.