Colby Student Learning Outcomes for W1 Courses

The following learning outcomes (or goals) for W1 students outline Colby faculty expectations in three categories important to college-level writing. Sometimes, not all of these outcomes will apply to a particular writing project. Taken together, however, they are a guide to the writing-related skills, abilities, and practices you should develop through your W1 course and in your first year at Colby.

Argument and Evidence
As evidence of strength in this area, your writing should:

- show your understanding of key concepts and terms from the course and subject at hand
- demonstrate your awareness of the scholarly, popular, or professional conversations on the topic
- have a clear, defined thesis and--if appropriate to the assignment--an original, interpretive claim
- address implications of your argument. (If what you say is true, why does it matter? To whom?)

*If your assignment requires you to use evidence from research, your writing should also:*

- support all claims with evidence from germane, authoritative, and timely sources
- smoothly integrate outside sources into your arguments
- acknowledge and respond to counter arguments and conflicting claims in the sources

Organization and Structure
As evidence of strength in this area, your writing should:

- employ a discernible organizational structure appropriate to the task and subject at hand
- have an engaging introduction and a synthetic conclusion that goes beyond just stating or restating your subject and main findings/arguments
- use transitional phrases and topic sentences to guide your reader
- use paragraphing effectively to partition claims and ideas for readers

Language and Conventions
As evidence of strength in this area, your writing should:

- show control of standardized written English (grammar, syntax, punctuation, and word choice)
- use an appropriate tone, vocabulary, format, and/or design for the assignment
- represent your authorial voice
- accurately and consistently document research sources in a format appropriate to the assignment