

**Here are a few tips we hope will be helpful as you prepare your first papers!**

- Paraphrasing an assignment or making a bullet list of its requirements is a good way to **make sure you understand what a professor expects of you**. You'll probably receive a wider variety of writing assignments at Southwestern than you're used to, and some may be unfamiliar. If you have questions about what an assignment requires, **don't be shy about asking** classmates, your professor, or your local friendly DEWC consultant.
- Try to **visit your professors** during office hours as soon as you can. Stop by with questions or comments when you have some extra time. Most **professors love to talk with students** about their work, and visiting early allows you to establish a relationship while the stakes are low. Then, if you have a serious question or get stuck, you won't be nervous about making an appointment.
- **Give yourself enough time** to complete your assignment. As you're adjusting to a new set of scholarly expectations it can be difficult to know in advance how long it will take to do a good job on your writing assignment. **Go ahead and start early**. That way, if you have questions you'll have time to get them answered.
- If you (like many of us) can have trouble focusing at times, **find a spot where you can hide** from distractions like roommates and the internet, and work. Have you found the amazing lounges in the library yet? And **you're always welcome in the DEWC** if you'd like to work in here!
- **Trade papers with classmates**. This one can be tricky because you need to make sure you're avoiding collusion & honor code violations, but **if your professor says it's OK**, it can be really helpful to see where and how other students are approaching writing at Southwestern.
- **Take advantage of resources** Southwestern provides. If you have a question about research, or what constitutes a scholarly source, **you can ask a librarian** (in person or online).
- **Remember** that you're up to the task! Regardless of the assignment, some of the key writing skills you used writing the essay that helped get you in to Southwestern are the same ones you'll continue to use now that you're here: your ability to stick to the prompt and organize your ideas around that prompt, to provide a clear thesis and support it with examples, to prewrite, brainstorm, and outline, and revise, revise, revise – You may feel intimidated by some of your early assignments; don't forget that **you can handle this!**
- And, of course, **come see us** at any stage of the writing process!

**306 Mood-Bridwell Hall**

**6-9 p.m. Sunday**

**3-9 p.m. Monday-Wednesday**

**12-9 p.m. Thursday**