**Technology for the College Writing Classroom**

*Word processing:*

I recommend that you use **Microsoft Word**. At school we have Word on the computers. If you use a word processing program other than Word at home (such as Works, Word Pad, Word Perfect, Pages), you *will not* be able to open your document—and neither will your teacher. Save your document as “RTF” (Rich Text Document). This feature allows you to work on a document across platforms and programs, though you may lose some formatting or punctuation marks when you open it in another program. If you use a newer version of Word than we have at school, remember to “save down.” If you plan to print your document at school, save it as a PDF so you can print it using a teacher’s or a media center printer. Wherever you are working, **Print your work so you always have a hard copy.**

*Multimedia:*

**Powerpoint** is generally cross-platform (you can save work on either Mac or PC). If you’re planning on working at home and at school, check out compatibility issues first.

**iMovie** is a Macintosh product. It’s not compatible with its PC counterpart, **MovieMaker**. We have MovieMaker at school. Students can download MovieMaker safely and for free for their home computers. If you begin work on one platform, it will be easiest to finish it in that platform. Once saved, it generally will be compatible.

**To transport files from home to school or school to home:**

1) Save to a “JumpDrive” via a USB connection. All school computers have a USB connection. It’s highly recommended you purchase a “USB drive” of 2 or 4 GB. It’ll allow you to save and transport documents as well as multimedia projects, pictures and sound files. Be sure to know what version of a program you are working with as you might need to “save down” to open at school or at home or to send to a teacher.

**OR**

2) Email the document to yourself (“attach” the document or copy/paste the document into an email). This may not work well for sound, image or video files. It will affect the formatting of your document if you copy/paste. For documents, do both: copy/paste AND attach. Students might have trouble accessing their e-mail account from school computers. Be sure to test out your account before assuming that you will be able to retrieve your homework via e-mail.

**OR**

3) Use Google Docs or a similar web based program where you can access your documents wherever you are working.

**To print files at school:**

**The best way to print a document at school is to save it as a PDF on your flash drive**. You can print directly from the flash drive to a school printer (but you cannot continue to work on a document once it’s a PDF because it’s essentially a picture). If you do not do this, then you will have to log in to a computer and access your file via email, Google Docs/Drive, or a flash drive. This may take more time than you have. **Do not count on being able to print from your teacher’s computer.**

**IMPORTANT:**

**Credit for being “on time” depends on having a hard copy to hand in on the assigned due date. Work sent to the teacher via email or GDocs is not considered “on time” unless an electronic format was specified. Compatibility/printing issues are the responsibility of the student. Students will not be allowed to spend class time retrieving and/or printing documents.**

**Plagiarism** is the act of presenting someone else’s ideas as your own (*Writers Inc*, 275). Any

work that is plagiarized will automatically receive a zero and the incident will be written up on a

behavioral action plan. Plagiarism includes the following: **copying a classmate’s work,**

**submitting another person’s work as your own, taking phrases, sentences, or larger**

**sections of work from another source and putting it into your own work without**

**quotations and citations, rephrasing someone else’s work without crediting the source**

**from which you took it**.

**College Writing Technology Questionnaire**

1. What word processing program do you use at home?
2. Is this a “free trial” program or do you own it?

(if it’s a free trial, when it ends, you lose *everything)*

3. If you’re using something *other than* Microsoft Word (such as Microsoft Works, Wordpad, Word

Perfect, or Pages), your document *cannot* be opened at school. If this is the case, what will you do?

4. If your printer runs out of ink when you need to turn in an assignment, offer at least 4 options to

problem solve this and get your work in on time.

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5. Does your computer have a built-in microphone? Do you have an external microphone you can

plug in? (You’ll need a way to record your own voice).

6. What is a file extension? If you don’t know, look it up. You’ll need to use and understand this.

(and you’ll need to recognize the differences between documents, sound files, movie files, and movie

maker files and you’ll need to know which programs are compatible with which file extensions)

7. Outside of school, do you use a PC or a Mac?

You’ll need access to a movie-making program like iMovie (Mac) or Windows Movie Maker (PC) and

you’ll need a sound editing program like Garage Band (for Mac) or Audacity (cross platform product

with a free download).

8. What is your organization system for files on your computer?

**REMINDER:** Technology enlarges our world and allows us to create lots of cool things, but it can

also be frustrating and time-consuming as we learn new programs and tasks. Please remember,

however, that **we** must take responsibility for learning and using the technology correctly (e.g. if you

fail to save a document, please don’t say “the computer lost my paper” or if you discover that your

document is not on your flash drive, please do not say “my flash drive didn’t save my work.”). Yes,

computers occasionally crash and programs sometimes fail—that’s why you **always** back up your files,

print hard copies, save often, etc. Be smart and be proactive.