Notes on Chapter 1 of The Bedford Guide

• **Writing as a Process:** This chapter goes over the various stages of the initial writing process: Planning, Drafting, Developing, Revising and Editing. *For more information about each of those items, see the corresponding section in The Bedford Guide.*

• **Audience:** Writing is written to be read. Those that read what you’ve written comprise your audience. In our class, you will be writing for me, of course, but also your classmates, and perhaps for those who read *New Comm Ave.*

• **What It Means:**
  ‣ Use chapter 1 as a reference for writing your essays. The table on page 16 is concise and useful.
  ‣ Today, writing is a lot different from what it was at the turn of the century. In the days of handwritten manuscripts—even in the days of typewriters—revision and drafting was a very serious business. Before the computer, a new draft meant a new document. Not so today. Use the computer to your advantage. Think of the circular diagram on page 11. Say, for example, you sit down to write a bit of your first essay, but get stuck. No reason to suffer: Leave off; come back to it later. Before doing so, though, *save what you have.* The next time you come back to your essay, read through what you’ve written, edit it, revise, and add it to it. In this way, your paper is constantly being read, edited and revised.
  ‣ Audience is a bit meaningless in the context of a college class. Generally, the only audience for your paper is the professor. In this case, though, I’d like you to consider each essay you write for publication in *New Comm Ave.* Any disquisition or essay written for this class would be suitable for publication in *New Comm Ave.* Its readership, of course, is anyone who happens upon the website—which could be just about anyone in the world. In that sense, then, your audience is real. And, of course, when it comes to peer editing, and what’s posted on the discussion board, your audience comprises myself and your classmates. Think about crafting your prose in the context of your audience (e.g., how would I feel if Random Internet Person 6 wandered by and read this?).

• **Questions to Ponder:** Though a real audience is a bit difficult to replicate in a class, its importance can’t be overstated. Have you ever read anything that grossly underestimated your intelligence? What’s the effect?