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Writing for College Success

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Writing Across the Disciplines

 There are many different reasons that an individual may choose to write an essay. Literature is used in scientific courses to explain studies and advocate for research or the implications of previous research. Essays are written in artistic and history courses to explain the emotion and context behind an abstract concept or historical event. As a result of the various functions of literature, many different types of writing are essential in collegiate disciplines.

Students are expected to adapt from one course to the next, catering their style to the different purposes of their writing. This requires students to understand different writing formats, such as Chicago, APL, and MLA; and, students have to be flexible in what aspect of a subject they choose to focus on in their essays. This is determined by the expectations of their professors and the underlying purpose of the essay.

No student can be successful in a class or career without understanding that different classes require different approaches towards assignments. However, what role to adopt in each class can sometimes be confusing. This may require confused students to email or meet with professors outside of class so that they can discuss assignment expectations. Without this communication, a student’s grades will suffer. First-person communication with the same professor that is grading a student’s essay, though, is immensely beneficial because it allows a student to gauge that professor’s specific expectations and goals for an essay.

Despite the varying roles for students in each course structure, there are certain consistencies throughout every course. Much like attending a black-tie event, there are certain rules that are enforced to maintain formal composure. Students should never use contractions, informal language, or informal transitions when writing. Students are also expected to conform to a system of organization for essays that is defined by the format system used in their essay. For example, MLA format demands an introduction paragraph, 3 support sections, and a conclusion paragraph. Paragraphs also must be indented, and font must be Times New Roman, black, sized to twelve-point, and double spaced. There should be a specific header, and often numbered pages and a separate “Sources Cited” page.

In conclusion, well-rounded students must be flexible in order to succeed in all of the required courses for their major. In writing assignments, different kinds of courses have different needs for students. Even nursing and biology majors should be able to write a literary analysis essay and explain abstract philosophical concepts through literature, if not for their own benefit, because it is part of their college curriculum.