

Working with the Disciplines' Goals and Requirements

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Abstract: Writing in the academic discipline you study in collage does much more than simply demonstrate your competence. Writing is actually a way you learn concepts, focus ideas, analyze data, uncover assumptions, interprets patterns, and ask and answer questions. Once you have assessed your writing situation, or even while you are assessing it, you will begin generating the ideas and information that will help you achieve your purpose. At some point, too, you will begin bringing orders to your thoughts, focusing and organizing them so that readers respond as you intend. Academic discipline both resembles each other and differs in their methods and evidence, assignments, tools and language, and style for source citations and documents format. This article introduces the goals and requirements common to any academic writing. Note whatever strategy you use, do your work in writing, not just in your head. Your work will be retrievable, and the act of writing will, help you concentrate and lead you to fresh, sometimes surprising.

Key Words: Disciplines in writing, methodology, writing assignment.

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1. Guidelines for Academic Writers:

- For the discipline you are writing in, become familiar with the methodology and the kinds of evidence considered appropriate and valid.
- Analyse the special demands of the assignment – the kind of research and sources you need. The questions you set out to answer, the assertions you wish to support, will govern how you choose your sources and evidence.
- Become familiar with the specialized tools and language of the discipline.
- Use literature in writing because something will seem too important.
- Use the style for source citations and documents format customarily used by writers in the discipline.

2. USING THE METHODS AND EVIDENCE OF THE DISCIPLINE:

The **methodology** of a discipline is the way its practitioners study their subject – that is, how they proceed when investigating the answers to the questions. Methodology relates to the way practitioners analyse evidence and ideas. For instance, a literary critic and a social historian would probably approach Shakespeare's Hamlet quite differently: the literary critic might study the play for a theme among its poetic images; the historian might examine the play's relation to Shakespeare's context.

Analysis is the separation of something into its parts or elements, the better to understand it. To see these elements in what you are reading, begin with a question that reflects your purpose in analysing the text: why you are curious about it or what you are trying to make out of it. This question will serve as a kind of lens that highlights some features.

Whatever their approach, academic writers do not compose entirely out of their personal experience. Rather, they combine the evidence of their experience with the appropriate to the discipline, drawing well-supported conclusions about their subjects. The evidence of the discipline comes from research, from primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources are first-hand or original accounts, such as historical documents, works of art, and reports on experiments that the writer has conducted. When you use primary sources, you conduct original research, generating your own evidence. You might analyse a painting and then use examples as evidence for your interpretation of the painting. Or you might conduct a survey to support your conclusions about students' attitudes.

Many primary sources can be found in the library. But more prevalent among a library's holdings are **secondary sources**, books and articles written about primary sources. Much academic writing requires that you use such sources to spark, extend, or support your own ideas, as when you review the published opinions on your subject before contributing conclusions from your original research.

In contrast, **secondary sources** report and analyse information drawn from other sources (often primary ones): a reporter's summary of a controversial issue, a historian's account of a battle, a critic's reading of a poem, a physicist's study of several studies. Secondary sources may contain helpful summaries and interpretations that direct, support, and extend your own thinking. However, most research-writing assignments expect your own ideas to go beyond those in such sources.

3. Understanding the Discipline' Writing Assignment:

For most academic writing, your primary purpose will be either to explain something to your readers or to persuade them to accept your conclusions. To achieve your purpose, you will adopt your writing process to the writing situation, particularly to the kinds of evidence required by the assignment and to the kinds of thinking you are exposed to do. Most assignments will contain key words that tell you what these expectations are – words such as compare, define, analyse, and illustrate that express customary ways of thinking about and organizing a vast range of subjects. You should be aware of them and alert to the wording in assignments that directs you to use them.

Writing that is mainly explanatory is often called exposition (from a Latin word meaning “to explain or set forth”). Using examples, facts and other evidence, you present an idea about your subject so that readers understand it as you do. Writing that is primary persuasive is often called argument. Using examples, fact, and other evidence. You support your position on a debatable topic so that readers will at least consider your view, and perhaps agree with it or act on it.

3.1. Following the Disciplines' Styles for Citations and Document Format:

Most disciplines publish journals that require authors to use a certain style for source citations and a certain format for documents. In turn, most instructors in a discipline require the same of students' writing papers for their courses.

When you cite your sources, you tell the readers which ideas and information you borrowed and where they can find your sources. Thus source citations indicate how much knowledge you have and how broad and deep your research was. They also help you avoid plagiarism, the serious offense of presenting the words, ideas, and data of others as if they were your own.

Plagiarism (from Latin word for “kidnapper”) is the presentation of someone else's ideas or words as your own. Whether deliberate or accidental, plagiarism is a serious and often punishable offense.

Documents format includes such features as margins and the placement of the title. But it also extends to special elements of the manuscript, such as table or an abstract that may be required by the discipline.

Academic documents are typically text-heavy design principle such as flow, grouping, and emphasis come more from the logic and evidence in the words than from elements such as varied type fonts, large spaces, or colour. Still, academic documents do employ design elements, even if we don't always see them that way: for instance page numbers keep the reader on track, margins ease crowding, and paragraph indentations separate ideas.

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