

15 Helpful Writing Tips



Office of Student Life & Academic Support

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1. **Have one dedicated device for writing assignments.** Doing this limits the likelihood that you will access social media outlets and the internet. It also allows you to focus on writing alone and avoid distractions.
2. **Establish a writing nook.** Find an area where you feel you can be both comfortable and creative.
3. **Begin your work early.** Do not wait until the last minute to begin a writing assignment.
4. **Be accountable.** Block out time specifically for writing assignments and discussion board posts. Set reminders for yourself to ensure accountability.
5. **Make sure you understand the assignment.** Read the instructions carefully, do not make assumptions, and ask the professor to clarify if necessary.
6. **Make sure you understand the writing style expectations of the assignments.** The writing style for a discussion board post may greatly differ from a research assignment. Avoid using first person (I, me) in formal writing assignments.
7. **Utilize your library resources.** Himmelfarb and Gelman libraries offer on and off campus access to valuable resources to assist you including hundreds of electronic databases.
8. **Create an outline.** This helps you organize your thoughts and plan out the assignment or research paper logistically. This exercise alone will save you valuable time.
9. **Know the required citation style.** If you are required to cite content, make sure your citation guide is readily available.
10. **Write the content.** After collecting all your resources and using the outline you created, write the content required for each section. Include an introduction and conclusion. Use appropriate transitions between thoughts and ideas. Use complete sentences and paragraphs.
11. **Make adjustments as needed during the writing process.** As you write, you may discover that you need to adjust your outline or move content from one area to another to better support your thesis.
12. **Allow time for developing more than one draft.** This is another reason to avoid procrastination and ensure you submit a sound academic product.
13. **Print out your drafts and read them aloud.** You are more likely to find errors or areas requiring more clarity in printed form versus screen form.
14. **If the professor allows it, have someone proofread your written work.** This requires that you have a draft completed in advance to allow time for proofing your work and incorporating suggestions. Utilize the services of the University or SMHS Writing Centers.
15. **Take brief breaks.** If you are suffering from writer's block, take a brief break to relieve stress and return to your writing rejuvenated and more focused.

Resources:

Fuster B. 5 tips to improve writing in online classes. U.S. News & World Report. <https://www.usnews.com/education/online-learning-lessons/2016/02/05/5-tips-to-improve-writing-for-online-classes>

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