

Talk about WAC!
Writing Across the Curriculum: A Short Guide
Brittany Bayless (2004)

The following are helpful format and content hints to help you when you're working on different kinds of writing assignments for classes other than English.

Research Papers:

Title

Clear thesis, logical organization, and consistency in format

Sentence length and structure

Appropriate and consistent use of tone, voice, and diction

Use transitions between and within paragraphs

Know if you need to use MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.

Sources (Primary/Secondary) and Citations/Documentation

Introduction to quotes/paragraphs/visual materials in the proper format

Assignment requirements fulfilled?

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Lab Reports and Scientific Papers:

Title (Is it concise? "Substance Y Alters Blonial Structure of Elephant Bone Marrow")

Headings/Subheadings

Title Paage

Table of Contents

Abstract

Introduction

Body (w/ various subsections: procedure/methods, results, discussion, references)

Conclusions

Appendix

Appropriate Tone/Style

Factual vs. Entertaining

Use passive voice and past tense

Concise and to the point, answer all necessary/applicable questions

Proper use of symbols and abbreviations

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Argumentative Papers

Clear Statement of Claim/Proposition: Thesis

Supportive evidence and appropriate use of it

Always use reliable sources

Is the evidence arrangement logical? Effective?

Use documentation

Properly place evidence

Correct context

Proper/Effective use of counterarguments

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Literature Papers

Purpose: To analyze/interpret/evaluate a text, answer specific questions with meaningful and persuasive analysis with specific evidence from the text.

Mention author and text in introductory paragraph

Effectiveness of evidence

Avoid plot summary

Use of present tense

Citation of work within the text

Refer to author by his/her last name

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Book, Film, and Play Reviews

Play: Focus on acting, sets, costumes, lighting, and music (the play as a whole)

All: Evaluate purpose, idea, or theme of work, often with relation to other works. Judge quality by strengths and weaknesses.

Proper citation of piece within the first paragraph

Introduction with scope and theme

Establish the criteria for the evaluation

Define evaluative terms, criteria, and how criteria fits (“good work” or “like a soap opera”)

Include a **brief** summary

Reasonable assertions with supportive evidence

Use proper tone (respectful and professional) and verb tense

Don’t overuse “I think” and “In my opinion”

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Resumes

Aesthetically pleasing

Only include necessary information.

Length (should be about one page)

Chronological listing of experience (recent to oldest)

Don't be wordy; be concise and brief.
Check verb tense, spelling, and grammar.

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Curriculum Vita

A vita is used more for art, scientific, and teaching positions than a resume.

Aesthetically pleasing

Discuss academic/teaching experience, academic background, honors and awards, professional development, publications, service

Only include necessary information

Be thorough in your descriptions

Chronological listing (recent to oldest)

Make sure references' information is current

Check verb tense, spelling, and grammar.

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Cover Letters

Mention the position sought, how you learned about the position, and your qualifications.

Request an interview.

Format (Business Letter)

Address proper person

Length (one page)

Don't be wordy; be concise and brief.

Error-free?

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Personal Statements/Admission Essays

Clear establishment of point of essay

Engaging introduction

Sincerity/Honesty

Effectively and clearly answer questions (if asked. Find questions in the directions.)

Include sufficient evidence/cite examples. Be specific.

Error-free?