**Writing Tips from Us to You!**

Many times, especially when working outside your chosen discipline, writing can feel like a chore, but it doesn’t have to! There is no question that research writing is different from creative writing, for example. As an online student, writing can turn into a full-time job, because it’s the main form of communication for distance students ranging from papers and discussion boards, to emails and exams.

The reason most people dislike writing is because they think they aren’t good at it, not because they can’t

---

**Inside This Issue**

- Writing Tips from Us to You! ...........................................Page 1
- Writing a Quality Paper ...............................................Page 2
- Writing Toolbox ..........................................................Page 3
- It’s a Balancing Act! .......................................................Page 4
- Becoming Your Own Advocate .......................................Page 4
- Top 10 Tips for Finals ....................................................Page 5
- Online Tutoring: WKU’s Best Kept Secret .......................Page 6
- Online Community Offers New Service .........................Page 6
- Exciting New Online Programs .......................................Page 6
- New 2013 Winter & Spring Courses ..............................Page 7
- Final Exam Schedule ....................................................Page 7
- Departments for Online Students .................................Page 8
do it. Once you discover your unique voice, feelings about writing can change quickly. Each of us represents a unique individual; one that offers unique perspectives on our areas of interests. How we relay that information is equally as important as how we retain it. Not everyone writes for pleasure, but in academia it is critical to effectively convey your thoughts, feelings and findings in a way that is clear and concise to others.

Whether writing is a favorite past-time or more of a chore for you, as a student, you will need to find your voice, and explore ways to improve your writing skills. There are plenty of ways to do this. Below are just a few tools you can use to help improve your skills.

1. **Free Association Writing** — Free writing is a timed activity. You write as much as possible in a 2 to 10 minute time span. Free association can be fun … you can write down anything you want, because anything goes! You may get a few good ideas or you may get junk, but at least you are writing and letting your ideas come out freely without anyone judging them as right or wrong. Free writing is used frequently by writers who have a “block” where they cannot think of what to write. Free writing not only helps generate ideas and remove writer’s block, it is also where you will find your active voice. After you complete a few free writing sessions, do some evaluation. Ask yourself, is it commanding, or does it sound more mechanical like you’d find in technical writing. Once you know your voice you can play to your strengths by adjusting the format and organization of your papers.

2. **The Art of Reading** — Good readers make good writers. Take time to read a good book! It can be purely for pleasure or something you’ve been asked to read for class. Regardless of the subject matter, reading enables you to develop your vocabulary and helps to strengthen your ability to write creatively.

3. **Journal Writing** — Journaling is a form of self-expression that millions take advantage of on a daily basis. Journaling is a great way to relieve stress, build creativity, improve writing skills and it’s easy to do! What you write is completely up to you! Topics can range from what you did that day, to how those events made you feel, to ideas for your future, to venting frustrations about life. In some cases, people rely on journals to help them remember what they did a week ago and even to remember what the state of the world was at the time of the writing. It’s up to you whether you share the ideas or feelings you write down with anyone else.

If you’re still unsure of your abilities, or just need help proofreading, visit our [Online Writing Center](http://wku.edu/online/src) at wku.edu/online/src! They will assist with proofreading, clarification of ideas, organization of work and identification of common mistakes.

**Writing a Quality Paper**

Even if you’re not a self-proclaimed writer, you probably have to do a good amount of writing for your college courses. This can be enjoyable, but it can also be intimidating. Different disciplines and different assignments, often call for different writing styles. WKU has help available through the [Online Writing Center](http://wku.edu/online/src) and [Online Tutoring](http://wku.edu/online/src) to assist you with this process. Trained tutors can assist you with writing research papers, creative writing, essay writing, and even a technical writing. In addition, [library liaisons](http://wku.edu/online/src) are available through [WKU Libraries](http://wku.edu/online/src) to assist you with things such as narrowing your research topic, finding reputable resources and searching the right journals based on your need! Services are accessible through the Virtual Student Resource Center at www.wku.edu/online/src.

First things first! What style are you using? Two of the more widely used forms of writing styles are MLA and APA. MLA is the Modern Language Association style, which is typically used in the liberal arts and humanities studies and contexts. APA is the American Psychology Association’s style, used within the social sciences like psychology, sociology, and education. Make sure to find out from your instructor which they prefer before you start on papers for that class. It will help you decide how to frame the paper. Gathering your train of thought for what you’re about to write is your next step. Try using the essay method for formulating thoughts for the page.

In school they teach us a traditional 5 paragraph
model to follow when creating an essay. This style can also be expanded to a paper.

- **Paragraph 1:** Introductory thought; last sentence should be your thesis
- **Paragraph 2:** Narrative; guide the reader here through the topic
- **Paragraph 3:** Affirmation of argument; backing up your point
- **Paragraph 4:** Negation; the disparaging evidence against your claim
- **Paragraph 5:** Summation of Thought, Conclusion

This formula is great for mind mapping your ideas, and creating a sense of organization in the piece you’re writing. Think of the 5 paragraph essay format as the cornerstone for how you develop ideas for your papers and discussion boards. It may not be the most creative way of getting out what you’re thinking about the topic at hand, but with time and practice you won’t need a guide to get you from the beginning of your paper to the end.

**Writing Toolbox**

**Tools for Inspiration**

**Mindomo**

This mind mapping system is designed to help you clarify your goals and objectives, identify key concepts, organize your work and more! Mindomo offers a free trial, so you can decide if it’s a good fit for you, and a low-cost premium subscription rate of $6/month!

**Co-mapping**

Online mind mapping software to manage and share information. You can use it to take notes, plan and organize. It’s an easy way to create one set of notes!

**Storybird**

Storybird, an art-inspired website, lets you get wordy and creative! It turns art into a story. A great detour to take when you have writer’s block for class.

**OneNote**

Combine all your ideas and notes in one area with a cloud-based note collector, and access them easily for papers you’ll be writing later.

**Tools for Research & Citing Sources**

**Citation Help**

Son of Citation Machine helps students and professional researchers properly credit the information they use. The primary goal of this tool is to make it easy for student researchers to cite their information sources.

**Instapaper**

If you want to save a web page to read later, this is a great alternative to just bookmarking it. After signing up, you simply click on the “read later” button, and you can read the article/site/post later from your computer, paper, iPhone, iPad, or Kindle. Chrome users can add it to the browser! This new addition will add offline article syncing, save where you left off in an article.

**CiteuLike**

A free service great for managing and discovering scholarly references. It offers automated article recommendations, stores references you find online, and stores PDFs.

**iCyte**

An amazing research tool. You can mark, make notes and organize your thoughts on a topic on a webpage, or a few keywords in an article online. This tool stores the information for you so when you visit the site again, it pulls up the information you keyed in.

**Diigo**

A powerful research tool and a knowledge sharing community. You can annotate, archive, and organize. With this tool you can highlight and add sticky notes to web pages.

**WriteCheck**

WriteCheck, from the makers of TurnItIn, is an anti-plagiarism service for students. WriteCheck checks your paper against sources to help you avoid plagiarism. WriteCheck also does an automatic grammar check on all submitted papers to help you avoid common mistakes in your writing. The WriteCheck grammar checker, powered by ETS, is powered by the same technology used to grade writing in popular standardized tests, including the GRE and TOEFL. With a pay-as-you-go subscription, it’s hard to go wrong!
It’s a Balancing Act!
The Importance of “Me Time”

The American Time Use (http://www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.t01.htm) survey provides fascinating data on what we do each day – and how much time we spend doing it. Work takes up about 7.6 hours, sleeping 8.6, and eating and drinking 1.23 hours. On the days we do housework, we spend about 2 hours doing it. The days get shorter when we add in school, childcare, errands and more. The more we squeeze into our day, the more likely we are to see “me time” as optional, which makes it easier to shut out of our minds and our schedule.

“Many online learners are balancing work, school, family and more. There is considerable pressure to “do it all,” from writing a great paper and being a star employee, to attending little league games, plays, and a myriad of other things. This leaves little time for sleep or “me time.’ The physical energy it takes is not sustainable, nor is the emotional energy required…” says Cindy Troutman, Assistant Director of Distance Learning at WKU. Hectic schedules lead to exhaustion and burn-out, which impacts performance in every area, and can present barriers to degree completion.

You may not have a choice in doing the great balancing act – most people do not, but you can easily reduce your stress level with a minimal investment of time.

What you should do:
Schedule “me time” each day

Identify a time of day when you can commit to squeezing in time for yourself; time where you are only focused on yourself. Take a walk; journal about your day; or dive into your favorite hobby. Finding this time can be difficult, committing to it can also be hard when you feel as if you have too much going on to take time for yourself, but this is an investment that pays off in several ways, including better productivity and less stress.

Getting Started

Start by completing a time management evaluation at http://www.studygs.net/schedule/. Then move on to time saving tips and organizational tools at http://www.studygs.net/timman.htm. These resources can help you stay organized, keep you on task and create free time.

Becoming Your Own Advocate in the Online Classroom

The ability to advocate for yourself is a very important aspect of being a successful online student. Communication is the single most important concept in being your own advocate. The first rule of thumb is to ASK QUESTIONS! Maybe there’s an assignment that you don’t quite understand or expectations aren’t clear … or maybe it’s more technological. Regardless of what the issue is the most important thing you can do is ask questions. Staying quiet about the issue at hand is not going to help you be successful. It is very important to communicate not only with university staff, but also with your professor and classmates on a regular basis. This will ensure that you have the best experience possible in your online classroom. In a brick and mortar classroom you benefit from being fully entrenched in the classroom for blocks of time; you overhear conversations, questions and ideas. Likewise, your professor has the benefit of looking out into the classroom and noticing looks of confusion. He/she can easily gauge when it’s time to explain further. That isn’t the case in the online classroom. In an online environment you must use the resources given to you to create “screen to screen” communication. E-mail, Wikis, Discussion Boards and Tegrity are all available in the online classroom and will help you feel more connected and encourage open communication. So, take advantage
of the tools you have at your fingertips, and start being your own advocate now.

**Top 10 Tips for Finals**

It’s finals time! These time-tested tips for preparing and taking your final exams can make a huge difference in your results!

1. **Shed some commitments.** You’ll find you have a lot easier time studying if you make extra time for it. Put off any unnecessary social obligations or family commitments. And, if you’re working, try if at all possible to a few extra days off for final exam week (or at least trim your work schedule). Even a few strategically placed hours can make the difference between doing just OK on finals and doing a really great job.

   **Secret Tip:** If you can finish your term papers the week before the last week of classes, it’ll free up extra time to study for finals.

2. **“Triage” your study time.** Some students think they should spend equal amounts of time preparing for each of their finals. Instead, proportion your study time to how hard the final is likely to be and how well you already know the material.

3. **Figure out what’s covered.** One of the most important things you need to be clear about is what materials are going to be tested on the final. Are readings and discussion sections included, or is the final going to focus almost exclusively on material from the lectures? Is the final going to concentrate on materials since the midterm or is it going to be a comprehensive or cumulative final? Knowing the extent—and the limits—of the exam will make it much easier to organize and structure your studying. This is where learning to be your own best advocate can really pay off!

4. **Decide if it’s going to be a grand tour or lots of local attractions.** Professors have two strategies in making up finals. Some profs design a single, big question or two; other professors give a series of more focused questions, each covering some single issue in the course. Before you start studying, make sure you’ve figured out your professor’s test-construction strategy.

5. **Torture the samples.** In the typical college course, there are many resources available that give you specific information about what questions will appear on the final. Sometimes, the professor simply drops hints about what “would make for a good final exam question.” But other times, the questions are right there in the open. A study guide, sample final, or set of review questions can often furnish questions amazingly close to the actual exam questions.

6. **Leverage your notes (when allowed).** Increasingly, professors are allowing students to use their notes and books on the exam. Rather than the trick question, “gotcha!” kind of exam, these professors want to see how well you can express your ideas, given the data. Be sure your notes are in tip-top shape if you’re given this chance.

7. **Read the instructions—and make a plan.** When you get to the exam and get your test sheet, take the time to carefully survey the format of the test. How many questions are you being asked to answer? Is there a choice? How much does each part count? Then make a (tentative) plan—right up front, before you start working—of how much time you’re going to devote to each question.

8. **Be sure to develop your answers fully.** Many students don’t realize that on essay exams part of what’s being graded is how well you develop and explain your answer, not just how correct it is. Consider explaining your points in more detail so that someone unfamiliar with the answer would know, just from what you say, what the answer is.

9. **Make it easy on the grader.** In many courses, the professor or other person grading will have 70 finals to read in a space of two or three days, which means about 10 or 15 minutes per exam. You’re more likely to get a good grade if you: make clear which question you’re answering; begin to give your answer in the very first
sentence of your essay; show all work in a problem-based exam; and, above all, write neatly.

10. Stay ‘til the bitter end. It’s amazing to see, but many students submit their exam before the allotted time is up. That’s never a good thing to do, since there are always problems to be checked over or essays to be added to or proofread. Even making a single correction to a problem, or adding a single point to an essay can be the difference between a good grade and a not-so-good grade.

As a reminder, some professors require proctored exams. If this is a requirement in one of your classes, we can help! Our DL Testing Center arranges proctoring for more than 13,000 exams each year. There are sites across the country and worldwide! To learn more, contact the DL Testing Center at dltesting@wku.edu or call 1-800-544-2280.

Your final exam schedule is on page 7. We wish you the very best of luck!

Online Tutoring: WKU’s Best Kept Secret!

Academic Advising and Retention Center offers Online Tutoring for the vast majority of general education courses among other courses perhaps in your major. Online Tutoring provides high quality tutors available to you from the convenience of your own home! If you are having some difficulty in a particular course or just some uncertainty over some specific content material, please do not hesitate to set up an appointment with AARC! This is a very underutilized student support service. We would love to see more students take advantage of this awesome benefit of being a WKU student! Remember, finals are less than a month away. Individualized tutoring can salvage a passing grade or boost you to next grade level! Simply call the Learning Center at 270-745-6254 to schedule a tutoring session!

Online Community Offers New Service!

WKU-Online has an Online Community available to all students learning at a distance. The community is accessible through blackboard and offers a host of information such as providing reminders and posting announcements that are beneficial to students, a study tips section, information on the diverse student services offered on campus, among other points of interest. Moreover, there is a discussion board where students can post questions and comments. Students can also receive specialized and individualized help from WKU Librarians regarding library services and help with research in our “Ask Your Librarian” section. A recently added service is our “Ask Your Career Counselor” section within the discussion board. WKU-Online has partnered with WKU’s Career Services to provide answers to your questions regarding job readiness and employment outlook. Simply post your questions on the discussion board, and we will work diligently to get an answer or provide further resources to you. With job attainment and your career as the end goal to all of your hard work at WKU, the assistance offered by Career Services is not something to overlook! If you are not a current member of WKU-Online’s virtual community, please feel free to email us at learn.online@wku.edu. We will be happy to add you as a member!

Exciting New Online Programs

Sport Media and Branding

The online Master of Science in Recreation and Sport Administration offers a new concentration in Sport Media and Branding- completely online! This concentration is a collaborative effort between the Department of Kinesiology, Recreation and Sport and the Department of Journalism and Broadcasting. The 33 credit-hour, two year program explores the area of sport media relations, branding, digital media production and distribution as well as sport sponsor acquisition. When looking for a lucrative and growing area to pursue, keep in mind that current labor statistics are projecting a 12% increase in the need for sports marketing managers through 2018! For more information visit the following link: wku.edu/cohort/master-of-science-in-sport-media-and-branding/

New B.S. in Organizational Leadership

WKU-Online is excited about a bachelors degree that just became available online. Beginning this semester, the Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership can be completed entirely at a distance. This program is interdisciplinary with a broad emphasis in management, leadership and various roles of responsibilities within
different types of organizations. While there are 27 hours of required coursework in the areas of Leadership and Management, the remaining 21 hours are electives. Students of the Organizational Leadership program, can fulfill elective requirements through coursework in Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Geography among others. Furthermore, for those students with a passion for Geography, a certificate in Geographic Information Systems can be earned simultaneously while completing the bachelors in Organizational Leadership. For more information on this exciting new opportunity, please check out the following website: http://www.wku.edu/leadership/bachelors/index.php.

New 2013 Winter Courses!

AGRI 108  Rural Sociology
EXS 122  Foundations of Kinesiology
GEOG 121  Meteorology
GEOG 451  Geography of Kentucky
HCA 401G  Fund Health Financial MGT
NURS 102  Intro to Professional Nursing
PE 101  Soccer Coaching
PE 340  Football Coaching
PHIL 102  The Good and The Beautiful
PS 220  Judicial Process
RELS 101  The Old Testament/Hebrew Scripture
SOC 100C  Intro to Sociology
SOCL 342  Aging in Society
SPED 532  Families, Prof & Exceptional I
SPED 533  Curr for Learn Beh Disorders
SPED 630  Special Educa Law & Finance
SPM 310  Sport Ethics & Morals
SWRK 676  Social Work with Migrants

New 2013 Spring Courses!

AGEC 561  AG Prod Economics
AGRO 454  Soil Mgmt & Conserv
AMS 305  Building Codes
AMS 462  Commodity Food Processing
AMS 594  Lean Systems
BE 310  Adv Comp Appl for Bus ED
BIOL 275  South African Wildlife Mgmt
BIOL 532  Behavioral Ecology
BUS 245C  Mgt Diversity in the Workplace
CD 483  Articulation Disorders
CD 570  Administration Supervision Slp

Elementary Chinese
Construction Administration
Research Methods
Economic Policy
Mat/Meth Social Studies
Cost Control & Fin An
Environmental Ethics/Geog
Gender Justice Sustainability
Managerial Finance in Hs
Comp Sys & Apps in Him
Blacks/Am Hist to 1877
Sem Anc Hist: Rome
Sustainability Symposium
Intro/History of Arch/ID II
Practicum in Idfm
Human Environmental Study Tour
R estoration Historic Interiors
Advanced Curriculum IECE
PR Writing for Sport
Leadership in Global Contexts
Assess & Eval Read & Write
College Algebra
Intermediate Statistics
Advanced Applied Pharmacology
Advanced Practice Leadership
Public Policy
Reinvestment Analysis
Issues in Nonprofit Administration
NP Grant Writing & Fundraising
Practicum in Rec and Sport
Master’s Project in Recreation
Models Pos Behavior Support
Curr for Mod/Sev Dis
Assis Techn & Commun for Asd
Prac Admin of Special Educ

Register at topnet.wku.edu
### 2012 Fall Semester Final Exam Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday December 10</th>
<th>Tuesday December 11</th>
<th>Wednesday December 12</th>
<th>Thursday December 13</th>
<th>Friday December 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 8:00 Tuesday</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 11:10 Tuesday</td>
<td>Reserved for Study</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 9:10 Monday</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 8:00 Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 10:20 Monday</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 11:30 Monday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 12:45 Tuesday</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 1:50 Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 9:35 Tuesday</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 2:20 Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Multiple Sections of ACCT 200, 201; CHEM 222, and FIN 330</td>
<td>Classes meeting first at 12:40 Monday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Late Afternoon and Night Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday December 10</th>
<th>Tuesday December 11</th>
<th>Wednesday December 12</th>
<th>Thursday December 13</th>
<th>Friday December 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Classes meeting at 4:00 Monday only; 4:00 Tuesday only; 3:30 Tuesday only; 5:30 Tues/Thurs</td>
<td>Classes meeting at 3:30 Wednesday only; 5:30 Mon/Wed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Classes meeting at 3:30 Thursday only; 5:00 Tues/Thurs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Classes meeting at 5:30 Monday only; 7:00 Monday only; 7:00 Mon/Wed</td>
<td>Classes meeting at 5:00 Tuesday only; 6:30 Tuesday only; 6:30 Tues/Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Classes meeting at 5:30 Wednesday only; 7:00 Wednesday only</td>
<td>Classes meeting at 5:00 Thursday only; 6:30 Tues/Thurs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
1. All final examinations for Main Campus and South Campus courses must be administered according to this schedule.
2. Final examinations for regional campus courses are administered at the regular class meeting time during finals week.
3. Class times not included in the above schedule will have a final examination time selected by the instructor and approved by the department head.
4. Final grades are due by noon on Tuesday, December 18.

---

**Key WKU Departments for Online Students**

- **Admissions** ........................................ 270-745-2551
- **Billings & Receivables** ....................... 270-745-6381
- **Bookstore** ........................................ 270-745-2466
- **Career Services Center** ..................... 270-745-3095
- **Community College** ........................... 270-780-2550
- **Counseling & Testing Center** ............ 270-745-3159
- **Distance Learning** ............................ 270-745-5173
- **Diversity Programs** ......................... 270-745-5066
- **Financial Aid** .................................. 270-745-2755
- **Graduate Studies** .............................. 270-745-2446
- **Independent Learning** ...................... 270-745-4158
- **Library Resources** ........................... 270-745-6125
- **Online Tutoring** .................................. 270-745-6254
- **Registrar** ........................................ 270-745-3351
- **Student Disability Services** ............. 270-745-5004
- **DELO Testing Center** ......................... 270-745-5122

---

[wku.edu/online](http://wk.edu/online)  [wk.edu/il](http://wk.edu/il)