



Making the Transition: High-school to College Writing and Communication

Making the transition from high school to College is a challenging, rewarding, and exciting process for students. One way to help facilitate this transition is by being aware of the specific program and course requirements for writing and communication processes that you will encounter in your various College classes.

What are the Differences Between High School and College Writing?

Students may be surprised to learn that a major focus of College Writing is on **discipline specific communication**. While knowing grammatical guidelines and how to compose a five paragraph essay on specific research topics are still important, there is just as significant an emphasis on writing for future employers' needs – such as learning how to create clear emails, work logs and reflective journals that are based on specific career related outcomes and goals.

Why is it Importance to Learn College Writing?

While high school certainly prepares students to write fluently and effectively in specific formatted styles, such as APA, college professors train students to write in the various styles for their employment. Tasks that may be required in the workplace include memos, lab reports, reflective journals and detailed reviews. Also important is having a specialized vocabulary and writing style related to your career choice. In college, students may be introduced to some new terms, or jargon, that relate specifically to the career they are studying. Jargon is basically defined as the language that covers a specific career field or interest. These usually do not include terms used by all people in their daily lives, but rather by those in certain careers. For example, a network engineer will need to be familiar with terms like WAN or LAN. An electrician or a teacher will probably not need to be familiar with terms like "cardiopathy" or "pharmacology," but for a college student in a nursing program, knowing these phrases could be absolutely necessary. Whatever the college degree, jargon will be learned and practiced in writing

(sections cited from <http://www.brighthub.com/education/college/articles/83447.aspx>).



Tips for Students:

1. **Find out** (from your high-school guidance counsellor, Confederation College recruitment personnel, or our College WAC website) what specific communication techniques you will likely encounter in your program and become familiar with those methods. For example, Nursing Students are often expected to complete weekly reflective journals, Business Students create research reports and business plans, Engineering Students may complete weekly learning logs, etc.
2. **Many instructors use online tools**, like *Blackboard*, for assignment, homework and test submissions and use email as the primary mode of communicating with students. Students should become comfortable with knowing how to access and create emails, understand how to upload documents and use research databases.
3. A large majority of learning will happen in studying for class, not just listening in class. To support this, **new Confederation College students** should become familiar with a variety of communication tools to enhance their writing composition and learning found at our College.

These tools include the following:	
Student Success Centre:	http://www.confederationcollege.ca/student-success-centre
College Tutoring	http://www.confederationcollege.ca/tutoring-services
College Library Links: → Lib Guides → PrepStep → Communication Tutorials	http://www.confederationcollege.ca/library
Writing Across the Curriculum	http://www.confederationcollege.ca/wac
APA Style Central	http://www.apastyle.org/products/asc-landing-page.aspx

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