

Transitioning to College Writing

At Wesleyan, students will spend four years growing their voice and skillset as thinkers and writers. As students deepen their knowledge base in numerous disciplines, they will regularly be asked to create and share their own original thoughts. This kind of intellectual work is different from many high school writing experiences that focused on individual writing tasks (summary, response) or specific writing forms (five-paragraph essay, TOEFL essay). In college, students must *choose* how to utilize those genre, form, and skill-based skills while they practice developing their own original thoughts to add to ongoing conversations about multiple fields of study.

To prepare students for this transition, “Transitioning to College Writing” explains key traits of writing, expanding participants’ conception of the work that will go into their college writing experiences. Emphasis will be placed on the difference between a thesis in a five-paragraph essay and an evidence-based claim (or creative purpose) expected in most Wesleyan courses.

Brainstorming

Where do ideas for your writing projects come from? It’s still hard for us to tell, but one thing for sure is that devoting time to *thinking* about your ideas will help you produce clear and interesting articulations of these ideas. “Brainstorming” teaches students three stages of brainstorming and gets them practicing multiple brainstorming techniques such as free writing, flash writing, idea mapping, and more. Students will leave this workshop understanding the importance of brainstorming *throughout* the writing process (even after a draft is complete!) and will have a sense of what techniques work best for their brains and bodies.

How to Make an Evidence-Based Claim

This workshop reorients students to think about research projects as part of a conversation. Students will learn what an evidence-based claim is, learn how to integrate a claim into body paragraphs of writing projects, and think about top-down and bottom-up approaches to developing an argument and purpose when joining a conversation.

Revising

Many students never revise their writing, but they should. This workshop introduces students to a variety of revision techniques and asks them to try some out. Writers will leave this workshop with a sense of the revision options available to them, how to provide descriptive and evaluative feedback, and when in their writing process these techniques will help them most.

Using and Analyzing Evidence

Many writers understand that evidence must exist in their academic writing. But what exactly does analysis mean? What does ‘deepening’ one’s thoughts look like on the page? This workshop asks writers to identify types of evidence and analysis and practice writing their own.

Sentence Level Work

Our sentences are key tools for making meaning through language. Quite often, writers avoid paying attention to the sentence, relying instead on computers to do spelling and grammar

checks. This workshop teaches writers to attend to their sentences from a place of curiosity, care, and expertise, rather than correction. To do this, writers will review parts of speech, briefly, before learning about sentence level revision techniques that help them actively make choices about how they want their sentences to structure the meaning of their writing.

Peer Review

Have a Shapiro faculty member or peer writing tutor develop and run a peer review session (or multiple) for your class to get students reading each other's work. Peer review shows writers there is no *one* way to write and gets them practicing important critical reading skills they can transfer to their own writing projects.

Multilingual Writing Techniques

It's been said that thinking in more than one language opens the doors to other worlds. This session shows students prewriting techniques that can be completed in all of the languages they have access to including free-writing, brainstorming, and writing to overcome writer's block. By utilizing all of their languages, students may find that the ideas come faster, more fluently and from different perspectives. Once the ideas are there, the final draft in their target language will be easier to write.