

Analyzing Writing Assignments



Writing Center

989-964-6061, www.svsu.edu/writingcenter

Here are some important areas to look at when considering how to successfully complete a writing assignment in any course:

<p style="text-align: center;">Assignment Vocabulary</p> <p>1. Title – What type of assignment is it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The title often suggests what kind of writing you'll be doing (e.g., summary/response, annotated bibliography, etc.). <p>2. Verbs – What am I supposed to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words like <i>describe, explain, summarize, reflect, etc.</i>, indicate the purpose of the writing task. <p>3. Nouns/Adverbs – What am I writing about, and how am I supposed to do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words like <i>summary, response, synthesis, reflection, analysis, etc.</i>, let you know what content and approach you will need. Words like <i>thoroughly, briefly, objectively, critically, carefully, etc.</i>, provide guidelines for the content and approach. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Assignment Specifics</p> <p>1. Audience – Who am I writing for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of any paper is for reader understanding of the content. This will affect things like tone, style, and arguments. <p>2. Components – What do I include with the paper?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You might need to include such components as <i>outlines, abstracts, graphics, title pages, drafts, and notes pages</i>. <p>3. Organization – Does the professor suggest a specific way to set up the paper?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many times, the organizational format of a paper is laid out in the assignment. <p>4. Formatting – Is there a length requirement? Does the professor prefer certain fonts or margin settings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A paper might have a minimum, maximum, or no length requirement. Margins and fonts may be specified; if not, use standard formats. <p>5. Citation Style – What citation style is required in this paper?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MLA and APA citations styles are used most often. While both styles have the same purpose, they have some very noticeable differences; therefore, it is important to use the style requested by the professor.
<p style="text-align: center;">Additional Info.</p> <p>1. Purpose – What am I intended to learn from this assignment, and how will this affect the way I write it?</p> <p>2. Class Assignments – How does this writing assignment relate to course goals and other class assignments?</p> <p>3. Resources – Does the professor suggest any resources for help in research, writing, or revising?</p> <p>4. Tips – Does the professor include any helpful hints that will make the assignment easier?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Important Factors</p> <p>1. Evaluation Criteria – What qualities will the paper be graded on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many professors provide <i>rubrics</i> that let you know the qualities of the paper that are being graded. It is important to know which aspects of the paper (content, research, organization, thesis statement, conventions, etc.) are most heavily weighted in the grade, so that you can consider this when writing. While good grammar is important, it is not enough; the content, focus, and organization of the paper carry more weight. <p>2. Due Date – When is the paper due?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan your writing and schedule your time; begin when you receive the assignment. Writing is a process! Use time wisely to space out research, drafting, revising, editing, etc. <p>3. Professor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your professor is the best person to talk to if you have any questions.