

UW-GREEN BAY WRITING POLICY

The faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay adopted the following writing policy for out-of-class assignments.

Acceptable Writing:

1. Clear writing is a reflection of logical thinking; therefore, an acceptable paper must be organized. Every essay should be structured around a thesis and supported by factual evidence and by arguments that are organized in a logical progression.
2. Writers must acknowledge their use of data or ideas of others; therefore, an acceptable paper must have proper documentation of all source material, following professional guidelines such as those approved by the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Psychological Association (APA), or the American Association for the Advancement of Science, or those published in a standard style manual such as Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.
3. An acceptable paper must reflect control of correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.
4. An acceptable paper must be presented in appropriate manuscript form, with errors neatly corrected and care taken with margins, numbering of pages, spacing, and format.

Unacceptable Writing:

1. A paper without clear organization is unacceptable. Unclear organization includes illogical progressions from one idea to another and the inclusion of unnecessary ideas.
2. A paper without proper documentation is unacceptable. *Failure to acknowledge the use of another writer's words or ideas constitutes plagiarism.* Plagiarism is both unethical and illegal. The use of professional editing for student papers is also unacceptable, as is the use of purchased papers, which is also a form of plagiarism.
3. A paper containing frequent errors in grammar, usage, spelling, or punctuation is unacceptable.
4. A paper which does not appear to be carefully done is unacceptable. This includes papers with ragged edges, typographical errors and strikeovers, illegible handwriting, stains, or smudges.

To achieve acceptable writing standards, students should purchase and use a good dictionary and a writing handbook. Assistance in improving writing skills is available through regular courses in composition and from the Writing Center, which conducts writings workshops and provides advice and tutoring (but not editing). All students who wish to improve their writing are encouraged to use these resources.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WRITING

Listed below are some major factors that differentiate good writing from poor writing.

This list may help you identify particular aspects of your writing that need improvement. For further assistance consult with instructors who are familiar with your writing skills. Writing assistance is also available in the Writing Center (CL 109).

1. PURPOSE

- Is the purpose of your paper clear to your audience?
- Is the purpose appropriate to the assignment and to the audience?
- Is the purpose consistently maintained throughout the paper?

2. CONTENT

- Are the ideas in the paper interesting?
- Do the ideas in the paper reflect independent thought, a new approach, fresh insights?
- Is the writer actively engaged with the topic?

3. ORGANIZATION

- Are the ideas developed in a logical order?
- Is the organizational pattern clear to the readers?
- Is the discussion coherent? Are transitional devices used effectively to shift smoothly from one idea to another?

4. DEVELOPMENT

- Are the major ideas adequately supported with examples, specific details, and other kinds of evidence?
- Are the ideas presented in meaningful paragraphs?
- Is there a general sense of completeness and closure?

5. WORDS: CHOICE AND ARRANGEMENT

- Have clear, precise, and appropriate words been selected?
- Have clichés been avoided?
- Have the words been arranged into correct and graceful sentences?

6. STYLE AND TONE

- Is the style clear, lively, fluent?
- Is the tone appropriate for the purpose and audience?
- Are the sentences varied in length and structure?
- Is there appropriate use of metaphor, analogy, parallelism, and other rhetorical devices?

7. TECHNICAL QUALITIES: MECHANICS

- Does the writing conform to the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage?
- Is the format of the paper appropriate to the assignment?
- Has all material from other sources been properly documented?
- Has the paper been carefully proofread, with all typos neatly corrected?