

Guidelines for Assignments for College Level Courses

American professors have an expectation that students' assignments will meet minimum guidelines concerning format and clarity. It is not uncommon for a professor to refuse to accept an assignment or even worse automatically fail a student because they have not met this minimum requirement.

Common guidelines often appear as follows:

For assignments that are handed into your professor for credit or a letter grade, ***students must follow the following standards or they shall not receive credit or a letter grade.***

1. All graded or credit assignments must be **typed**. If your teacher grants an exception to this standard, then please refer to the “guidelines for handwritten assignments” below.
2. All typed documents must be double spaced.
3. All typed documents must be in Times New Roman 12 point font.
4. All typed documents must have a standard format of a 1” each margin on the left and right sides with a .5” setting for the bottom and top. The margin set up is found under the page setup on your Word menu.
5. All documents (whether typed or handwritten) must have a standard header inserted into the document that contains your complete name, class, CRN, Professor’s full name, assignment date, and assignment name.
6. Please see the below example.

Guidelines for Written Assignments:

All graded or credit assignments where your teacher has granted an exception to allow you to handwrite your assignment must be written according to the following guidelines:

1. All assignments must be written on standard college-ruled (lined) paper.
2. You must write on every other line so that the document is double spaced.
3. You must use black ink, the standard for business and academia.
4. You must still write a standard header on the upper left lines of the paper (not in the top margin) that includes your complete name, class, CRN, Professor’s full name, assignment date, and assignment name.
5. If your handwriting is not legible (clear) enough for your professor to read, then you can not hand in a written assignment, but must always type your assignments even if an exception is granted by the professor.

Jean Paul Format
December 1, 2009
Assignment: Essay
Advanced Writing
Section 2222
Professor Smith
Word Count: 510

My Goals for English

In order to pass this class, it is necessary to concentrate on three important objectives. These goals include building academic vocabulary, improving grammar, and organizing content. Despite knowing the importance of concentrating on these important goals, many students fail to accomplish their objectives because they do not understand the importance of keeping up with their daily assignments, maintaining an organized course folder, and practicing their writing every day. However, students who do apply themselves can certainly be successful.

Concerning building academic vocabulary, it is essential that students maintain their own personal dictionary in their notebooks where they can record new vocabulary words that they may encounter in class or through their reading assignments. Academic vocabulary presents a unique challenge because it often differs from conversational English. For example, when writing academic essays, many of the common uses of verbs are not acceptable as in the use of “get.” While it might be acceptable to discuss getting a good grade with your friends, it is written as obtaining a good grade using academic English. Therefore, students need to build a treasure chest of academic words that they should store in their memory.

In addition, students must take responsibility for improving their ability to write using correct grammar. One way to improve grammar is to do practice exercises for homework. Sometimes in the college setting professors expect students to practice on their own even if the assignments are not all collected for a grade. Independent practice, especially in advanced courses, is not only expected, but also an essential tool for passing exams. Outside practice may take the form of grammar labs either in a

campus writing center or on-line. All in all, it is of utmost importance that students take responsibility for their own grammar improvement.

Most importantly, many students are surprised to find that the American style of communicating is unexpectedly standardized and organized in a linear fashion. In brief, Americans like to “get to the point.” American academic English is not flowery, flowing, and flattering. Rather, it is highly organized into standard formats of argumentation including exemplification, narrative, process, cause effect, comparison contrast and persuasive argument. In all of these forms, there must be a thesis statement supported in an organized fashion by paragraphs that contain clear main ideas with adequate supporting details. It is often a daunting task to create essays that meet minimum requirements which often can be 1000 words in many Freshman English composition courses. Finally, subject matter professors in the various disciplines such as biology, sociology, history and many other subjects shall assume that student have the ability to write clear and academically appropriate essays.

While achieving success in American college classrooms seems an awesome task, it is attainable if students take responsibility for their own independent work. This independent study should include building their academic vocabulary. In addition, students should perfect their grammar to meet standards. Finally, organizing their ideas into an acceptable academic format is of the utmost importance. By following this advice, students will achieve academic success.

