University Writing Center
Workshops — Fall 2017

The workshops, sponsored by the Writing Center and the Departments of English, Biology, Chemistry, and Political Science, are free and available to all USD students, staff, and faculty who wish to improve their writing skills. No registration is required.

Distance students, to attend live online, log into D2L and select the Online Writing Center (if you don’t see the link, email wcenter@usd.edu to be added). Under Communications, select Collaborate Ultra. Then, select the link for the current workshop. To access workshop recordings, in the Collaborate Ultra menu (top left corner), select Recordings.

Building a Paragraph (Wed. August 23, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): Clear, well-developed paragraphs are essential to nearly every successful academic essay. Learn strategies for creating effective paragraphs in this hands-on, interactive session. The workshop presenter is Marcella Remund, Instructor, Department of English.

Media Analysis (Wed. August 30, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): The focus of this workshop will be how to approach media and/or American pop culture using critical thinking. The emphasis will not be to criticize, but to analyze media/pop culture and the messages we see and hear. We’ll also consider how we might become more thoughtful, informed consumers of these pervasive elements of our culture. The presenter is Hanna Conrad, M.A. student, Dept. of English.

Writing an Effective Summary (Wed. Sept. 6, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): Being able to write an effective summary is essential not only in many college courses but also in the jobs that happen after college. In this workshop, students will study sample summaries and what makes them work, as well as drafting their own. The workshop presenter is Lisa Ann Robertson, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

Writing Personal Statements for Graduate and Professional School Applications (Wed. Sept. 13, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): What makes a successful and compelling statement of purpose? What do admissions committees look for when reviewing applications for graduate or professional schools? This workshop will provide guidelines for writing an effective personal statement, consider some examples of successful and unsuccessful statements, and explore your questions about this essential element of any application to graduate or professional school. The workshop presenter is Skip Willman, Associate Professor, Department of English.

The Power of Synthesis (Wed. Sept. 20, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): Synthesis, an important skill needed for many academic writing assignments, requires writers to perform such tasks as making connections or showing disagreement among ideas, combining ideas or concepts, demonstrating gaps in knowledge, creating a fuller understanding of a concept, or even producing new ideas. This hands-on workshop offers some helpful strategies for using synthesis. The workshop presenter is Patti DiMond, Instructor, Department of English.

Peer Review: Focused Feedback (Wed. Sept. 27, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): This workshop offers hands-on techniques in peer review. By approaching your neighbor’s text as a way to improve rather than fix, you will learn what’s important to you as a writer, while at the same time offering another set of eyes to the process of writing. The key to effective peer review is focused feedback, which this workshop aims to achieve. The workshop presenter is Kevin Phillips, PhD student, Department of English.

MLA Documentation (Wed. Oct. 4, 7-8 p.m., Delzell 110): This workshop introduces students to the conventions of MLA style citation and documentation. The workshop covers different ways to use sources within the text of essays, including quoting, paraphrasing, and using introductory tags for borrowed material. Guidelines for creating a works-cited list will also be presented. The workshop is primarily for students in humanities courses. The workshop presenter is Heather Love, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

APA Documentation (Wed. Oct. 11, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): This workshop introduces students to the conventions of APA style citation and documentation. Topics addressed include why we use citation styles, what elements are common to citation styles, and how to take advantage of the APA style. Students will leave the workshop with a basic understanding of the APA style format as well as where to find additional online resources on APA. The presenter is Ken Green, Instructor, Department of English.
Integrating Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism (THURSDAY Oct. 19, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): You know that you're not supposed to drop quotations into your text without using signal phrases, right? You know that you should cite the source, whether you're quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing, right? Whether you're new to this concept or need to learn strategies for doing it more smoothly, this hands-on workshop provides guidance for integrating sources into your sentences. The workshop presenter is Benjamin Hagen, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

Writing a Literature Review (Wed., Oct. 25, 7-8:30 p.m. Delzell 110): Knowing how to develop an effective literature review is critical if you're writing a thesis, dissertation, scholarly article, or grant/research proposal. It is also helpful for research papers and experiment/lab reports. Literature reviews can be embedded in longer documents or appear on their own. They are essential to scholarship in the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. In this 90-minute workshop, students will examine sample literature reviews and learn from a faculty panel about, for example, how the literature review varies from one discipline to the next and how to tailor the literature review to the purpose. The presenters are John Dudley, Assoc. Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; James Hoeftmeyer, Professor, Dept. of Chemistry; and Shane Nordyke, Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science.

Lab Reports: Telling Your Story (Wed. Nov. 1, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): You will write lots of lab reports in your academic career. Why? Lab reports are a form of scientific communication that all scientists use. In this workshop, you'll learn the dos and don'ts of lab reports. Most importantly, you'll learn how to use your lab report to tell the story of your scientific discovery. The workshop presenter is Jeff Wesner, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology.

Revision Strategies: From Thesis Statements to "Flowing" Prose (Wed. Nov. 8, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): The word "revision" in its most literal sense means re-sion, or "seeing again." This hands-on workshop will guide you through several strategies for effectively (and efficiently!) revising your academic writing. We will practice techniques for revision at the conceptual as well as technical levels. If you struggle with thesis statements, organization (including Introductions and Conclusions), and/or creating "flow" in your writing, then this workshop is for you. Students from all academic fields are encouraged to attend. The presenter is Prentiss Clark, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English.

How to Write a Portfolio Introduction (Wed. Nov. 15, 7-8 p.m. Delzell 110): Portfolio-based classes, including English 101, challenge students to compose a compelling introduction for the portfolio. Often overlooked, this important document should be crafted with care. This interactive workshop will guide students through the process and pitfalls of writing an introduction worthy of preceding a fantastic portfolio. The workshop presenter is Paul Formisano, Director of Writing, Department of English.

Write-In! (Wed., Nov. 29, 7-11 p.m. Delzell 110): Are you working on an essay, a report, a portfolio, or another kind of writing project? Get helpful feedback from a writing consultant. You can also write and revise on your own at a nearby table. We will have free beverages and snacks! Drop in anytime from 7 to 11 p.m., Delzell 110.

Do you need individualized help with your writing? Come to the Writing Center! We can help you with all of your writing assignments, from start to finish.

For more information, contact the Writing Center. You can reach us by phone at 605-677-5626, by email at wcenter@usd.edu, or in person in room 133 in the Academic Commons, I.D. Weeks Library. You can also visit us online at http://www.usd.edu/writingcenter.