Writing Center Workshops
Spring 2021 – Online in Zoom

"I’m writing a first draft and reminding myself that I’m simply shoveling sand into a box so that later I can build castles." —Shannon Hale, American author

The workshops—sponsored by the USD Writing Center, the Academic and Career Planning Center, and the Departments of English and Media & Journalism—are free and open to all USD students, staff, and faculty, no registration required. Workshops start Wednesdays at 4 p.m. See details below.

To attend live online, log into D2L and select the Online Writing Center (if you don’t see the link, email wccenter@usd.edu to be added). Under Communications, select Zoom Conferencing (USD). Then, select the link for the current workshop. All times listed are Central Standing Time.

Writing and Responding to Posts in Online Discussions: (Wed. Jan. 13, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): More and more, professors are asking you to engage with them and your peers via online discussion platforms. How is this writing different from more formal projects? What do your instructors want to see in your posts? Join this workshop to learn useful guidelines for writing and responding to online posts while looking at examples. Then, practice writing and responding to an actual writing prompt. The presenter is Taya Sazama, PhD student, Department of English.

Short Fiction: Close Reading and Thesis Generation (Wed. Jan. 20, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): In this workshop, students will learn steps in preparing to write about short stories, including close reading, highlighting, annotating, and generating thesis ideas. Then we will read and analyze a very short story in order to practice these skills. The presenter is Marcella Remund, Instructor, Department of English.

MLA Documentation (Wed. Jan. 27, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): This workshop introduces you to the conventions of MLA-style citation and documentation. It covers how 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 presenter is Lindsay Stephens, PhD student, Department of English.

Choosing and Using Textual Support (Wed. Feb. 3, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): How do you choose textual evidence to support and develop your thesis? This hands-on workshop will introduce you to strategies for selecting examples (quotations) from academic articles and books. We will focus, in particular, on strategies for understanding and navigating scholarly sources. The goal is to equip you with techniques for choosing and effectively using the textual support that will strengthen your academic essays. The presenter is Prentiss Clark, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

APA Documentation (Wed., Feb. 10, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): 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 APA style as well as where to find additional online resources on APA. The presenter is Kenneth Green, Instructor, Dept. of English.

Writing in Response to a Novel (Wed. Feb. 17, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): You’ve read the novel; now you’re wondering how best to write an essay about it. Using the novel Beloved by Toni Morrison as a model, we will explore strategies for writing in response to a novel (bring your novel to the workshop). The presenter is Melanie Wood, Instructor, Department of English.

Writing Successful Essay Exams (Wed. Feb. 24, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): This workshop prepares students for writing in-class essay exams. The workshop includes techniques for planning, quick drafting, and proofreading. The presenter is Jeremiah Davis, PhD student, Department of English.
Writing the LONG Essay/Thesis (Wed., Mar. 3, 7-8 p.m., Zoom): Writing a long essay or thesis can be significantly different from writing shorter papers. This helpful workshop covers choosing a successful topic; applying strategies for research, note-taking, organization, composition, and revision; and avoiding common pitfalls in a long writing project. The workshop is useful for anyone writing an Honors or graduate thesis, a lengthy research essay, or any other complex writing project. The presenter is John Dudley, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences.

Writing about Poetry (Wed. Mar. 17, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): Dig into poetry! This workshop sheds light on some of the literary terminology used to write about poetry and describes the process of writing an analysis of a poem. Students then apply the process of analysis to a poem. The presenter is Lisa Ann Robertson, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

Writing an Effective Conclusion (Wed. Mar. 24, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): Students often struggle to come up with effective conclusions for essays. Learn what works and what doesn’t in this interactive workshop. The presenter is Jillian Linster, Instructor, Department of English.

Using Transitions (Wed. Mar. 30, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): Learn how to create flow in your essays, to connect your ideas, sentences, and paragraphs more smoothly through the use of appropriate transitions, in this hands-on workshop. The presenter is Patti DiMond, Instructor, Department of English.

Understanding and Using Social Media (Wed. Apr. 7, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): Fake news websites, satirical sites, opinion/editorial pieces, and sites containing misinformation or propaganda have made it challenging for students to find reliable sources on the Web for academic essays and projects. This interactive workshop, designed for students engaged in any form of academic research writing, concentrates on helping students to evaluate social media. The presenter is Janet Davison, Lecturer, Dept. of Media and Journalism.

Writing Your Way to a Winning Résumé and Cover Letter (Wed., April 14, 4-5 p.m. Delzell 110): This workshop provides practical tips and strategies for creating effective résumés and cover letters. Bring your questions. The presenter is Heather Johnson, Assistant Director, Academic Career and Planning Center.

Reading, Understanding, and Writing about Drama (Wed. Apr. 21, 4-5 p.m., Zoom): Do you wish that you understood drama (plays) better? Does reading literature that is meant to be performed seem confusing? Attend this workshop to get help with reading, understanding, and writing about drama. The presenter is Jacque Morgan, M.A. student, Department of English.

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! We encourage appointments but welcome drop-ins, too.

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