

# Inside Colleges and Universities

## What Is Higher Education?

This book introduces expectations about writing you'll likely encounter in college and helps you develop a set of tools to complete writing tasks successfully. To understand those expectations, you may find it helpful to understand first how colleges and universities are structured; how your other writing experiences in high school, college, and work might compare; and what expectations about writing you might encounter in your particular college or university classes. These expectations will likely differ according to the type of college or university you attend.

As you read through the chapters in this book, certain recurring features will help expand your knowledge of college writing:

- *Insider's View* boxes contain excerpts of comments by scholars and students discussing academic writing. Several of these are gleaned from video interviews that complement the instruction in this book. The videos, which are further referenced in the page margins, can be viewed for greater insight into the processes and productions of academic writers. Video content and other helpful resources are available on LaunchPad, designed to accompany this text.
- *Inside Work* activities prompt you to reflect on what you have learned while trying out new insights and techniques.
- *Writing Projects* offer sequences of activities that will help you develop your own compositions.
- *Tip Sheets* summarize key lessons of the chapters.

Before we turn to college writing, however, we ask you to read about and reflect on some of the wider contexts of higher education — in particular, your place in it.



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## HOW DO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES DIFFER FROM ONE ANOTHER?

As we discuss the expectations you might encounter related to writing in college, you should consider the specific context of the school you're attending. What kind of school is it? What types of students does it serve? What is the school's mission? It's important to realize that different schools have differing missions and values that influence their faculty members' expectations for students.

How did you determine where to attend college? Some prospective students send out applications to multiple schools, while others know exactly where they want to start their college careers. Some students transfer from one school to another, and they do so for a variety of reasons. If you researched potential schools, you likely realized that there are many different kinds of schools in the United States (not to mention the variety of institutions of higher education elsewhere in the world). If we just focus on the range of higher education options in the United States, we find:

- **Community Colleges:** schools that typically offer associate's degrees. Some community colleges prepare students to enter careers directly following graduation; others specialize in helping students transfer to bachelor's-granting institutions after completing most of their general education requirements or an associate's degree.
- **Liberal Arts Colleges/Universities:** schools that introduce students to a broad variety of disciplines as they pursue their bachelor's degrees. Liberal arts schools generally focus on undergraduate education, although some offer graduate degrees as well.
- **Comprehensive Colleges/Universities:** schools that emphasize undergraduate education. They offer bachelor's degrees and often some master's degrees and other graduate degree options. Comprehensive schools are frequently regional public institutions, and they can range in size. Such schools usually have a dual focus on undergraduate and graduate education, but they might not emphasize research expectations for their faculty as intensely as doctoral-granting institutions do.
- **Doctoral-Granting/Research-Intensive Universities:** schools with an emphasis on research and a focus on both undergraduate and graduate education. Doctoral-granting universities, especially those that are research-intensive, can often be quite large, and they generally have higher expectations for faculty members' research activities than other types of institutions do. As a result, students may have more opportunities for collaborative research with faculty members, and graduate students might teach some undergraduate classes.
- **Schools That Serve a Specific Population:** schools that serve specific populations or prepare students for particular careers. Such schools might be single-sex institutions, historically black colleges and universities,

Hispanic-serving institutions, or religious-affiliated schools, to name a few.

- **Schools with a Specific Vocational Focus:** schools that prepare students for careers in particular professional areas. These schools might have a focus on agricultural careers, technical careers, culinary careers, or other vocations.
- **For-Profit Institutions:** schools that operate on a business model and are privately held or publicly traded companies. Some are regionally accredited institutions; many focus on meeting the needs of students whose schedules or other commitments require a different approach from what a typical non-profit college or university provides.



What kind of school is the institution that you currently attend? Knowing how your particular college or university is structured, and how it fits into the larger context of higher education, can help you understand its institutional values and the emphasis it places on particular kinds of academic preparation. If you know these important factors, you'll be able to anticipate the expectations for your academic work and understand the reasoning behind the requirements for your degree.

### **INSIDE WORK** Choosing a College

Write brief responses to the following questions, and be prepared to discuss them with your classmates.

- What kind of institution do you attend? What characteristics of your school seem to match that category?
- What degree program or major are you most interested in? Why?
- Was your interest in a particular degree program or major a factor when you decided to go to college? Why or why not?
- What classes are you taking, and how did you choose them?
- What kinds of factors do you consider when choosing your classes? What guidance, requirements, or other influences help you make those choices? ▶

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF COLLEGE?**

People's reasons for pursuing an undergraduate degree can differ, depending on the school and the individual student. Some schools and degree programs focus on preparing students for particular careers that they can pursue directly

after graduation. Others focus more broadly on developing well-rounded, informed graduates who will be active in their communities regardless of which careers they pursue. Still others emphasize different, and sometimes quite specific, outcomes for their graduates. If you have never done so, consider taking a look at the mission or values statements for your university, college, or department. What do the faculty members and administrators value? What are their expectations of you as a student?

For example, the mission statement of Texas A&M University begins by stating:

Texas A&M University is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication, and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields.

This statement shows a broad commitment to a range of academic interests and professions; therefore, students at Texas A&M can expect to find a wide range of majors represented at the university. The mission statement also emphasizes that knowledge discovery is important at Texas A&M, highlighting the school's role as a research-intensive university.

As another example, the mission statement of Glendale Community College in California reads:

Glendale Community College serves a diverse population of students by providing the opportunities and support to achieve their educational and career goals. We are committed to student learning and success through transfer preparation, certificates, associate degrees, career development, technical training, continuing education, and basic skills instruction.

This statement illustrates Glendale Community College's emphasis on preparing students for careers and serving a broad range of students with specific academic and professional goals.

A third example is the mission statement of Endicott College in Massachusetts, which begins by stating:

Shaped by a bold entrepreneurial spirit, Endicott College offers students a vibrant academic environment that remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts with experiential learning including internship opportunities across disciplines.

Endicott's mission mentions an emphasis on "experiential" learning, which is evident through the connection of professional experiences with academics and the availability of internships for students. Students who enroll at Endicott College should expect a practical, hands-on application of their learning throughout their coursework.

Of course, different students have different goals and reasons for pursuing undergraduate degrees. Sometimes those goals match the institution's mission fairly closely, but not always. What is your purpose in attending your college or university? How do your personal and professional goals fit within the school's goals and values?

## **INSIDE WORK** Writing about Your School's Mission

Find your college or university's mission statement (usually available on the school's website), and write a brief description that compares your goals for college to the mission statement. How does the mission of your school fit your goals? How might the characteristics and mission of your college or university help you achieve your goals? ▶

## **INSIDE WORK** Writing about College

Read the following questions, and write a brief response to each.

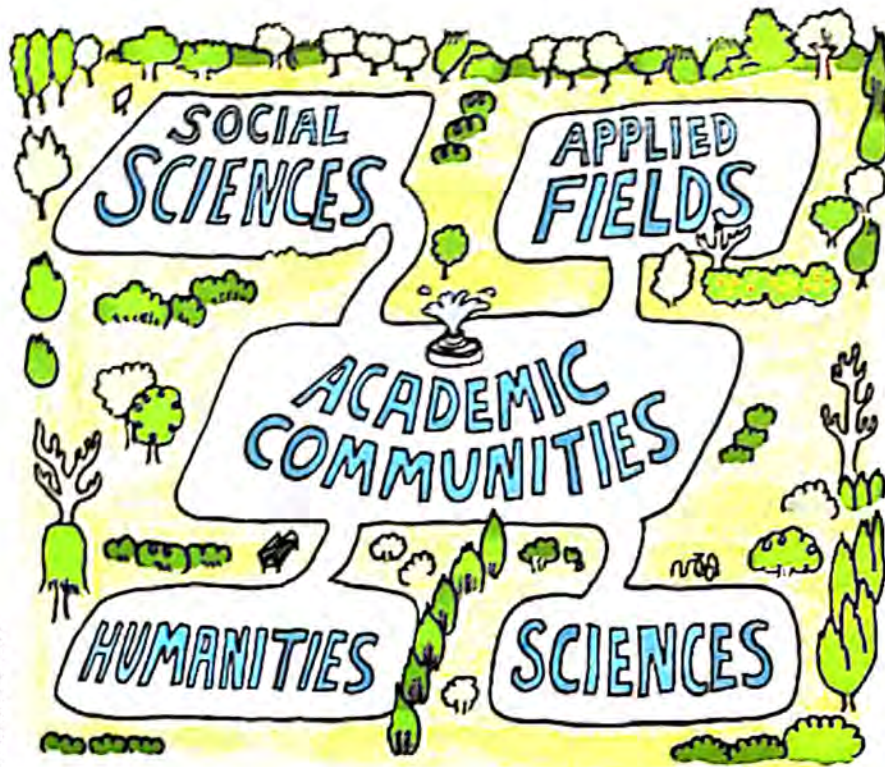
- What goals do you hope to achieve by attending college?
- What steps should you take to maximize your opportunity to achieve your academic goals?
- What will you need to do while in college to achieve your goals?
- What have you already accomplished, and what do you still need to know and do?
- How do you feel about attending college?
- What concerns you the most about being in college?
- What do you like the most about being in college? ▶

Regardless of your purpose for attending college, the transition to college can be a challenging one. Vincent Tinto, a researcher interested in what helps students succeed as they make the transition to college, has identified and written extensively about three stages that students go through as they adapt to college: separation, transition, and incorporation.\* At the separation stage, students might feel disconnected to prior communities and commitments, but successful students move through a transition stage and then find a way to connect themselves with new communities in college (incorporation). The separation stage can be very challenging, though, and knowing what resources you have available to you as you make the transition to college can be incredibly helpful.

## **INSIDE WORK** Writing about Resources at Your Institution

Take a look at your institution's website and look for support services that are available to students. These might include academic, professional, and counseling services, to name a few. What resources are available at your school that might help you improve your transition to college? ▶

\* Tinto discusses these stages in "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving," *The Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 59, no. 4, 1988, pp. 438-55.



## What Are Academic Disciplines?

An important structural feature of colleges and universities is the way they are divided into academic disciplines. Depending on the school, this might take the form of departments, divisions, colleges, or other groupings. **Academic disciplines** are, broadly defined, areas of teaching, research, and inquiry that academics pursue. Sometimes these disciplines are listed in broad categories, such as psychology, English, biology, physics, and engineering.

At other times, disciplines are listed in more specialized categories that demonstrate the diversity of areas encompassed within higher

education: for example, adolescent psychology, abnormal psychology, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, molecular biology, physiology, astrophysics, quantum mechanics, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science, Victorian poetry, and medieval literature.

While the specific divisions may differ according to the institution, most college and university faculties are grouped into departments or divisions. Larger schools are typically further divided into colleges or schools-within-schools, which usually cluster together departments that are related to one another in some way. These groupings often, but not always, fall along common lines that divide departments into broader disciplinary areas of the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and applied fields. We describe these broad categories in more detail in the next section.

### HOW MANY DIFFERENT ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES ARE THERE?

You might find that different faculty members give varying answers to the question, "How many different academic disciplines are there?" And those answers differ for good reason. Sometimes academic disciplines are seen as equivalent to departments. Faculty in the history department study history, right? But the subject of history can be divided into many different categories, too: antebellum U.S. history, Middle Eastern history, and African American history, for example. In addition, people in other departments might study and teach topics that are related to history, such as American religious history, medieval literature and culture, and ancient rhetoric. You can probably

imagine how categorizing all these different areas of study and research would be difficult.

For the purposes of this text, we're going to explore writing in different disciplinary areas that are grouped together according to (1) the kinds of questions that scholars ask in those disciplines and (2) the research strategies, or methods of inquiry, that they use to answer those questions. As mentioned earlier, we've divided various academic disciplines into four broad disciplinary categories: humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and applied fields. As we talk about these four areas of study and the disciplines associated with them, both here and in Part Two of the book, you'll notice some similarities and differences within the categories:

- Scholars in the **humanities** usually ask questions about the human condition. To answer these questions, they often employ methods of inquiry that are based on analysis, interpretation, and speculation. Examples of academic disciplines that are generally considered part of the humanities are history, literature, philosophy, foreign languages, religious studies, and the fine arts. For examples of the kinds of questions humanists ask, see Chapter 7.
- Scholars in the **social sciences** usually ask questions about human behavior and society. To answer these questions, they often employ methods of inquiry that are based on theory building or empirical research. Examples of academic disciplines that are generally considered part of the social sciences are communication, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and anthropology. For examples of the kinds of questions social scientists ask, see Chapter 8.
- Scholars in the **natural sciences** usually ask questions about the natural world. To answer these questions, they often employ methods of inquiry that are based on experimentation and quantifiable data. Examples of academic disciplines that are generally considered part of the natural sciences are chemistry, biology, physics, astronomy, and mathematics. For examples of the kinds of questions natural scientists ask, see Chapter 9.



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- Scholars in **applied fields** might have their foundation in any one (or more) of the disciplinary categories, but their work is generally focused on practical application. Some disciplines that could fall under the category of applied fields are criminal justice, medicine, nursing, education, business, agriculture, and engineering. Each of these fields has elements that are closely aligned with the humanities, social sciences, and/or natural sciences, but each also focuses on application of that knowledge in specific contexts. For examples of the kinds of questions scholars in applied fields ask, see Chapter 10.

These categories are not perfectly distinct, though; they sometimes overlap with one another, and they are debatable. Sometimes you'll find that different institutions categorize certain classes as part of a particular disciplinary area through their General Education requirements, for example. Another institution might list a similar class as meeting a different requirement. You'll see examples of disciplinary overlap in the chapters in Part Two and in the student writing examples there. Regardless of some of these complexities, the disciplinary categories of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and applied fields are useful for understanding some of the distinctions in the ways academics think and do research.

### **INSIDE WORK** Understanding Disciplinary

In your own words, write a brief description of the four academic disciplines mentioned in the previous section.

- humanities
- social sciences
- natural sciences
- applied fields

Next, look at your current course schedule. How might you classify the classes you're taking in terms of these four categories? For each class, write for a few minutes about what characteristics of the class cause it to fit into the category you've chosen. Finally, compare your answers with a classmate's. ▶

### **WHY DO ACADEMICS WRITE?**

As you think about the writing you will do in college, keep in mind that you are learning how to participate in the kinds of discussions that scholars and faculty members engage in about topics and issues of mutual interest. In other words, you're entering into academic conversations that have been going on for a while. As you are writing, you will need to think about who your audience is (other students? teachers? an audience outside of the academic setting?), who has already been participating in the conversations of interest to you (and perhaps who hasn't), and what expectations for your writing you'll need to follow



in order to contribute to those conversations. (We'll have much more to say about the concept of audience in Chapter 3.)

As we explore the kinds of writing done in various disciplinary areas, you'll notice that different disciplines have different expectations for writing. In other words, faculty members in a particular discipline might expect a piece of writing to be structured in a particular way, or they might use specific kinds of language, or they might expect you to be familiar with certain research by others and refer to it in prescribed ways. Each of these expectations is an aspect of the writing conventions of a particular discipline. **Conventions** are the customs that scholars in a particular discipline follow in their writing. Sometimes those conventions take the form of repeated patterns in structure or certain choices in language use, just to name a couple.

To prepare for writing in varied academic contexts, it might be helpful to think about why academics write. Most faculty members at institutions of higher education explain their responsibilities to the institution and their discipline in terms of three categories: their teaching, their research (which generates much of their writing), and their service (what they do outside of their research and teaching that contributes both to the school and to their discipline). Many academics' writing is related to communicating the results of their research, and it might be published or shared with academic audiences or more general audiences. In fact, a scholar might conduct a research project and then find that he or she needs to communicate the results of that project to a variety of audiences.

Imagine that a physiologist who studies diabetes has discovered a new therapy that could potentially benefit diabetic individuals. The researcher might want to publish the results of her study in an academic journal so that other scientists can read about the results, perhaps replicate the study (repeat it to confirm that the results are the same), and maybe expand on the research findings. She might also want to communicate the results of her research to doctors who work with diabetic patients but who don't necessarily read academic journals in physiology. They might read medical journals, though, so in this case the researcher would need to tailor her results to an audience that is primarily interested in the application of research results to patients. In addition, she might want to report the results of her research to the general public, in which case she might write a press release so that newspapers and magazines can develop news stories about her findings. Each of these writing situations involves reporting the same research results, but to different audiences and for different purposes. The physiologist would need to tailor her writing to meet the needs of each writing situation.

### **INSIDE WORK** Thinking about What Academics Write

Look for a published piece that has been written by one of the professors that you have for another class. Try to find something that you can access in full, either online or through your school's library. Some colleges and universities

have lists of recent publications by faculty on their websites. Additionally, some faculty members list their publications on personal websites. You might also seek help from librarians at your institution if you aren't familiar with the library's resources. Then write your responses to the following questions.

- What does the professor write about?
- Where was that work published?
- Who is the audience for your professor's work?
- What surprised you most about your professor's published work? ▶

### Insider's View

#### Undergraduate students on academic writing

SAM STOUT, GENA LAMBRECHT, ALEXANDRIA WOODS, STUDENTS



Left to right: Sam, engineering; Gena, design; Alexandria, biology

**QUESTION:** How does the writing you did in high school compare to the writing you've done in college so far?

**SAM:** Well, in high school [teachers] mainly chose what we wrote about. And here in college they allow you to write about what you're going to be focusing on and choose something that's actually going to benefit you in the future instead of writing for an assignment grade.

**GENA:** Well, I thought I would be doing a lot more writing like in my AP English classes, which was analyzing literature and poems and plays and writing to a prompt that talked a lot about specific conventions for that type of literature.

**ALEXANDRIA:** I expected my college writing to be science-related—doing lab reports and research proposals—rather than what I did before college, in middle school and high school, which was just doing definition papers, analysis of books, and things like that.



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Hear more from students about college writing.

## How Does Writing in College Compare with Writing in Other Contexts?

Many of your expectations for writing in college might be based on prior experiences, such as the writing you did in high school or in a work setting. Some students find that writing in college focuses less on personal experience and more on research than writing they've done in other contexts. Some students are surprised to find that writing instruction in college is not always paired with discussion of literature, as it often is in high school. While some colleges and universities use literature as a starting point for teaching writing, many other schools offer writing instruction that is focused on principles of **rhetoric**—the study of how language is used to communicate—apart from the study of literature. (Rhetoric will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters throughout this book.) As you may have already experienced, many

courses require you to write about different topics, in different forms, and for different audiences. Depending on your school, writing program, and instructor, the study of literature might be part of that approach, but you might also need to learn about the expectations of instructors in other disciplines.

When we compare the writing expectations in college with what you might have experienced in other contexts, we're making some general assumptions about your experience that may or may not be true. We're also making generalizations about colleges and universities that might differ from the school you're currently attending. One of the most important concepts we'll discuss in this book is the importance of context (see Chapter 3), so you'll need to balance the principles we talk about in this text with your firsthand experience of the context of your particular college or university. You might find that some of our assumptions are true to your particular experience and some are not. When possible, make note of the principles we discuss that are similar to your experience and the ones that are different. As you do so, you'll be learning about and applying these principles in a way that is much more useful than just memorizing information.

Although the approaches toward teaching writing at various colleges and universities differ, we can talk about some common expectations for college-level writing. The Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), a professional organization of hundreds of writing program directors from across the country, published a list of common outcomes for first-year writing courses that has been adapted for use by many schools. The first list of common outcomes was published in 2000, and it has been revised twice since then, most recently in 2014. The purpose of the statement is to provide common expectations for what college students should be able to accomplish in terms of their writing after finishing a first-year course, but the details of those expectations are often revised to fit a specific institution's context. For example, the first outcome deals with "Rhetorical Knowledge" and emphasizes the importance of understanding how to shape your writing for different purposes and audiences. It states that:

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts

### Insider's View

**We're looking for students to get their own voices**

KAREN KEATON JACKSON, WRITING STUDIES



"In general, the sense that I get is that in high school, writing is more focused on literature. At the college level, we're more interested in critical thinking. We're looking for students to get their own voices in place. Really getting students to think stylistically about the choices they make, really thinking about purpose and audience and the whole rhetorical context. I think that's really key at the college level. By college we're looking at the purpose, and the audience, and the style, and how all of this is determined based on the different writing situation you're in."



**LaunchPad**

Get expert advice on transitioning to college writing.

- Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes
- Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
- Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
- Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations

<http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>

The statement introduces several specialized concepts and terms that we will describe in more detail throughout the book. You might also notice that the statement doesn't specify what kinds of writing students should do in their classes. It is left up to individual schools to determine what will be most helpful for their students.

Some institutions follow the guidelines from the Council of Writing Program Administrators explicitly, while others do not. Even at institutions that use these outcomes as a foundation for the writing curriculum, however, it's often possible to find many different approaches to teaching writing that help students achieve academic literacy. How do your institution's outcomes for writing compare and contrast with your experience in other English classes you have taken? How do the outcomes for writing compare and contrast with your writing experience outside of school (perhaps in work-related or personal settings)?

### **INSIDE WORK** Understanding the Goals of Your Writing Course

Take a look at the goals, objectives, or outcomes listed for the writing course you are currently taking. You might look for a course description on the school's website or in a course catalog, or you might find goals or learning objectives listed in the course syllabus.

- What surprised you about the goals or objectives for your writing course?
- What is similar to or different from the writing courses you have taken before?
- What is similar to or different from the expectations you had for this course?
- How do the outcomes for the course align with your goals for writing and for college?
- What does the list of goals for your course tell you about what is valued at your institution? ▀

## HOW DO WRITERS LEARN TO WRITE IN NEW CONTEXTS?

In this chapter, we have discussed the goals and expectations of writing in college and how they might differ from writing you have done in other contexts. The culminating writing project in this chapter asks you to learn from another writer, someone who has more experience in the kind of writing you will be doing in your own academic or professional career, by asking how they discovered the conventions and expectations for writing in their field.

### INSIDE WORK

#### Learning about Writing in Other Contexts

For this activity, you will interview one of your classmates to understand the kinds of writing they have done in school and how they have learned about writing in a new context. Choose one major writing assignment for a course other than your English class and discuss the following questions:

- What was the assignment?
- What kinds of writing instruction did the instructor give you?
- Was there a writing prompt?
- Did you receive feedback?
- Did you read student samples?
- How did you feel about the instruction and the assignment?
- What are the biggest challenges you've faced regarding writing that you've done in classes other than our English course?
- What advice would you give to students who must take a writing class in order to help them succeed? ▶

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### Profile of a Writer

### WRITING PROJECT

For this writing project, you will develop a profile of a writer in an academic field or profession of interest to you based on an interview you conduct. Under the guidance of your instructor, identify someone who is either a professor, graduate student, or upper-level student in your major (or a major that interests you); or a professional who works in a career that you could imagine for yourself. You might choose someone with whom you already have a connection, either through taking a class, having a mutual acquaintance, or enjoying a shared interest. Ask the person if you can interview him or her, either in person or through e-mail. Consider the descriptions of different disciplinary areas in this chapter, and write a profile of the writer that addresses questions about his or her writing, such as the following.

- What kinds of writing do people do in your field?
- What is the purpose of the writing you do in your field?

- What writing conventions are specific to and important to your research or work? How did you learn those conventions?
- What kinds of writing do you do most often in your work?
- What was your experience the first time you attempted to do those kinds of writing?
- What expectations do you have for students or new professionals who are learning to write in this field?

Be sure to follow up your questions by asking for specific examples if you need more information to understand your interviewee's responses. In addition, you might ask to see an example of his or her writing to use as an illustration in your profile. Don't forget to thank the person for taking the time to respond to your questions.

A profile of a writer should do two things: (1) make a point about the person being interviewed (in this case, your point should focus on the person's writing), and (2) include details about the person's experiences that help develop the point. Incorporate the person's responses into an essay that uses the interview to make a specific point about his or her development and experience as a writer.

## Insider Example

### Student Profile of a Business Professional

Rubbal Kumar, a sophomore at the University of Arizona, conducted an interview with Benu Badhan, a software engineer from India. Kumar is a computer science major, and he interviewed Ms. Badhan to learn more about the expectations for writing in his future profession. Through his interview with Ms. Badhan, Kumar learned that writing is very different for a software engineer than for a computer science major, but the writing he does as a computer science major will still prepare him well for his future career.

#### Rubbal Kumar's First Draft of Interview Questions

1. Why did you choose this specific major?
2. What is your specific area of interest in computer science and why?
3. What different types of writing are involved in this field?
4. Is there any specific set of rules for writing in the IT field? If yes, then how is it different from college writing?
5. Did you face any difficulties in understanding writing conventions of computer science?

#### Rubbal Kumar's Final Profile Draft

Rubbal Kumar

ENG108

May 30, 2017

#### Profile of a Writer: Benu Badhan

Benu Badhan is a software engineer at Infosys, an information technology consulting company. She has been working in this field for about five years

and her specialty includes software testing: manual testing and automation. She has completed her Bachelors in Technology in Computer Science from the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, and completed her Masters from Delhi University, New Delhi. She worked for two different IT firms, Calsoft and Wipro, before joining Infosys.

A key point of the profile, followed by examples from the interview

In an in-person interview, she told me that writing expectations in an IT firm are totally different in comparison with college writing. She said, "In college, we had to write 4-5 page essays, but in the workplace there are totally different conventions." At work, software engineers are expected to write programming codes, and along with each programming code, they have to explain the function of each line using the comment feature. Comments are the description of the logic used to write the code. Commenting on the code is necessary because a programmer may inherit the features of existing code in his or her own code. Therefore, to transfer code successfully, comments are necessary. In this way, if someone else reads the code, the comments make understanding the logic far easier. She said that comments are the heart of the code because without comments another person cannot easily understand the programming code.

Quotation that emphasizes the differences between college and IT writing

When I asked further about whether college had prepared her for writing comments clearly for her code, she replied that if there had been no college writing then she would have had difficulty. She also said that college writing prepares students to express things clearly and concisely, and this is one of the requirements in the IT field. She said that whether it is college writing or workplace writing, quality matters instead of quantity.

A second key point, which builds from the first one

Apart from writing comments in programming code, another form of writing she engages in frequently is writing email. In order to communicate effectively with colleagues, she mentioned that it is important to have good email etiquette. She said that without good communication skills, a person cannot survive in an IT company. In addition to commenting on code and writing email, there are video conference calls and PowerPoint presentations which demand good communication skills. Sometimes she has to lead projects, so leadership qualities and clear communication with a team are also important. As an example, she described working on an idea proposal with her project group and drawing on skills she had learned through college writing. She is convinced that college writing prepares students for other writing assignments in their careers.

A paragraph elaborating on the second key point with examples from the interview

I learned through my conversation with Ms. Badhan that workplace writing is different from college writing in computer science, but the academic writing we do in college prepares us well for what we will be asked to do in the workplace. The workplace is competitive, so it is important to have good writing skills, communication skills, and leadership qualities, and to be a

The central point of the profile

good problem solver. Through my interview with Ms. Badhan, I learned that in order to be successful in writing in the workplace I must also perform well in my writing in college. While the writing conventions may change in the IT industry, the foundation built in college writing is essential.

Work Cited

Badhan, Benu. Personal Interview. 22 May 2017.

### Discussion Questions

1. Read through Rubbal Kumar's interview questions of Badhan. What was his purpose in interviewing Badhan? What did he want to understand?
2. Was there anything that surprised you in the profile? If so, what was it?
3. If you were going to add a question to Kumar's interview, what would it be? Why would you add that question?

**tip  
sheet**

### Inside Colleges and Universities

- **Colleges and universities are not all the same.** Different kinds of colleges and universities have varying purposes, majors, and degrees, and they appeal to a variety of potential students.
- **The institution you attend has a specific focus.** You may find it helpful to identify this focus and understand how it fits with your academic and career goals.
- **Colleges and universities are divided into disciplinary areas.** You might see these areas at your school as departments, divisions, and/or colleges. In this book, we talk about four broad disciplinary areas: humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and applied fields.
- **Academic and professional writing follow unique conventions.** When academics and professionals write, they often follow conventions specific to their writing situations and to their disciplinary and career areas.
- **Writing in college is not always the same as writing in other contexts.** In college writing courses, we focus on principles of rhetoric, or how language is used to communicate.