

## Essay Submission Procedure

Present papers neatly, and staple them in the upper left-hand corner so the pages turn easily. **Do not submit a paper with folds, rips, whiteout, or hand-editing.**

Format essays in MLA style—instructions appear on pages 45-56 and 429-431; a sample essay appears on pages 436-440 of *A Writer's Reference*.

Do not use cover sheets.

Print a dark copy that is easy to read. Laser printers make the best copies. If your essay's print is smeared or is otherwise difficult to read, reprint the essay. If you do not own a printer, print your essays in one of LLCC's labs. **Do not print on both sides of the paper.**

Proofread and check spelling before submitting an essay to avoid easily found problems.

Read your essay to ensure it makes sense—read it aloud.

Make sure your writing is clear, precise, and simple.

Avoid overlong sentences. Many inexperienced academic writers use unnecessarily long sentences and tack half a dozen clauses together with *and*, *but*, or *which*. Short sentences are less clumsy and easier to follow. However, vary sentence length.

Do not use slang, jargon, pretentious language, or thesaurus language.

Submit your essay by the beginning of class on the due date. No e-mail copies will be accepted. All essays submitted after the beginning of class will be considered late.

Be sure your essays deal with appropriate academic topics, using academic sources when applicable. Some essays will require an accompanying Works Cited in MLA style.

Do not ask for extra credit, and no, I do not have a stapler you can borrow at the beginning of class. Have your essays ready to hand in when you arrive at the classroom.

**I reserve the right to not accept essays that are not submitted according to the above procedure.**

## PEER EDITING

Be serious in reading each other's essays—anyone who thinks this is a game may leave class. However, if you leave, you will be counted absent and will not receive credit for your peer draft.

Gather in groups no smaller than five, and read each other's essays carefully, looking to strengthen the essays—write comments on the essays you read. When you finish reading, you may quietly make appropriate verbal comments to the author if such comments are necessary. Wait for someone else in your group to finish reading and exchange essays as long as you aren't getting your own essay or an essay you read earlier. You are expected to read these essays carefully, making honest, meaningful, helpful comments.

Look for a clear, well-defined thesis. Let the writer know if this or any other element of the paper isn't working, and give praise where it is due.

On the first essay you read, mark all passive verbs (**am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been**). Work on limiting these if your essay is returned with several passive verbs marked. Check pages 157-158 of *A Writer's Reference* for help with passive verbs. Your job as a peer reviewer is to mark these words; it is up to the writer to make changes. Mark overused and cliché words and phrases, such as **you, your, yourself, stuff, things, he/she or his or her (Choose a gender at use it throughout.), in today's society, and vague words like many, most, often, and occasionally**. These words must be replaced with specific language that adds strength to your writing. Mark **excessive** use of personal references (I, me, my, mine). A few in the essay present no problem.

Does the essay develop the announced topic, or does it drift off course?

Does each paragraph develop only one topic?

Check for excessive wordiness—times when an idea might be expressed in fewer words.

Write a brief note with an honest appraisal of the essay, but don't simply write something useless like, "It's nice" or "I liked it". **Mention what makes the essay strong or weak**. Don't be falsely flattering or intentionally cruel.

Remember that your purpose is two-fold. First, your goal is to collaborate in strengthening each essay you read. However, it is just as important to pay attention to how other writers use language. Learn from what you have read, and use your new knowledge to improve as a writer.

Sign your name **legibly** at the end of each essay you edit.

Students who are late, absent, or fail to bring two copies of the peer draft on assigned dates will have ten points (twenty points on the research essay) deducted from their final grades. No, you are not an exception to the rule. **If you didn't bring drafts, edit essays to gain from what you read.**