Writing

Education

Writing assignments in college come in several formats that include research papers, literature or book reviews, essays, and summaries. Below are some general tools to help manage common thinking and communication challenges when completing college-level writing assignments.

Strategies

Know your assignment before getting started. Clarify requirements for form, length, and thought process. Ask for guidelines or an example if none are provided.

Double-check deadlines, and add them to your organization system to stay on track.

Set a plan to pace yourself when writing so you aren't rushed near the deadline. Give yourself more time to complete the writing assignment than you think. Here's a suggested timeline:

Short paper (1-5 pages): 1-2 weeks
Long paper (6-10 pages): 3-5 weeks
Research paper: 5-8 weeks

Don't complete a writing assignment in one sitting, even if you think it will be easy. Giving yourself more time will help you see things that you missed or could add to make it better.

Organize your ideas first. Use outlines or mind maps to help you conceptualize your thoughts. This will help you come up with the right words when you need them.

Pace yourself when writing. Use tools for thinking conservation and for visual health to maximize efficiency.

Make sure to proofread. Read your assignment aloud and ask a friend to review it before turning it in.

Take advantage of your college's resources like writing centers as well as the instructor's office hours to get feedback on your initial drafts.

Use tools like a thesaurus when you have trouble coming up with words.

Technology

- Use Grammarly to check your grammar before turning in your assignment.
- Try an app like Scrivener for longer writing projects.
- Use a mind mapping tool like Coggle to organize your ideas.