

To the Instructor

“The moment we write we become part of a writing community. Do we do it as insiders or outsiders?”

—Arthur Brooks and Peter Grundy, 1990,
*Writing for Study Purposes: A Teacher’s Guide to
Developing Individual Writing Skills*
(Cambridge University Press)

With the growing numbers of graduate students and the importance of writing for coursework, conferences, and publication, a need for writing textbooks has also grown. Many universities have started offering courses designed for undergraduates desiring a graduate career or for new graduate students who haven’t had the training needed for success in an academic graduate program.

While other textbooks prepare students for graduate writing and assume prior knowledge or training, few textbooks bridge the gap between non-academic writing and more academic texts—the difference between being outside the academic community and inside with peers, colleagues, and experts in the same field.

Inside Academic Writing gives students the opportunity to examine basic assumptions about writing before proceeding to teach students to target their audience and map the flow of information. It allows students to think about the readers of their texts so that they develop a better piece of writing.

Throughout, students create a portfolio of pieces such as a biographical statement and a research interest essay—pieces that are important to many types of writing but that are rarely taught. So often, students are taught about the parts of a research grant, a fellowship application, or a conference paper, but rarely are they taught how to develop the pieces about themselves.

Inside Academic Writing is a predecessor to graduate-level writing. Its personal nature will help students create writings that they’ll use outside the classroom—writings they really need. Students preparing for future academic study in any discipline can focus on whether the grammar is correct but also on the writing as a whole—is it the correct piece for the purpose it is to serve? In other words,

depending on the purpose of the writing and who it is for, students can determine on their own who the audience is and if they've written an appropriate piece.

Inside Academic Writing is designed to help students cope with the challenges of developing materials for grants, fellowships, conferences, and publication. The crux of the writing is taught in academic writing courses, but the reasons why we write what we do and the ways to adapt the writings for different audiences are not. Created as a predecessor to other academic writing texts, the goal of *Inside Academic Writing* is to give students the chance to create words for a variety of audiences and the knowledge necessary to recognize the difference in audience.

While giving an overview of grammar, *Inside Academic Writing* minimizes students' time by having them create a portfolio of writings they'll be able to use and adapt long after they've left the classroom.

Inside Academic Writing addresses the needs of students whose first language is not English as they begin to position themselves as skilled writers in their fields of study, research, and professions. The textbook assumes that these students have an intermediate to low-advanced level of grammar from previous courses or from having prepared for the TOEFL®, GRE®, GMAT®, and/or other standardized English tests. They have probably memorized long lists of vocabulary and learned the verb tenses (including active and passive voice), the parts of speech, and the rules for punctuation; however, they generally do not apply them consistently in academic writing or adapt each writing text for a particular audience or academic genre. Therefore, this textbook offers samples for students to read and others for them to analyze before applying the concepts and strategies to the writing assignments.

Inside Academic Writing situates students within their writing communities quickly and easily by prioritizing the steps of learning. Students are not presented all grammar rules and all genres of academic writing but are directed to use the common threads of academic writing across disciplines. Students are encouraged to write about topics related to their field of study for both general academic readers and for others in their field or their lab partners.

The first part of the textbook presents the distinctiveness of academic writing for English-speaking readers, the second incorporates practice strategies and techniques, and the third guides students to create common texts and structures.

The text is divided into ten units that fall into three parts. Part 1 contains three units that introduce students to the world of academic writing. Students are

given an overview of concepts needed to view their writing as a whole—they learn to target an audience, use academic language, develop paragraphs, and then incorporate cohesive devices to make sure each paragraph flows into the next all the while not straying from the claim or thesis or losing sight of reader expectations. Part 2 focuses on strategies for the actual writing experience—using outside sources, planning, drafting, evaluating, and editing. Part 3 introduces several structural formats students can use while reinforcing the concepts and strategies used in Parts 1 and 2.

Each writing assignment is specific to the student and his or her field; students are required to search for sources, use vocabulary, and incorporate ideas specific to their fields of study. By completing the textbook, students will have a substantial portfolio of writings including a biographical statement, a research interest essay, and several papers that could be used for assignments and publications within their fields both during their academic career and well into their professional career.

This textbook includes grading criteria and rubrics for students as they progress through the chapters and writing tasks with the tools to emerge as skilled academic writers. Grading criteria and rubrics are conveniently placed as appendixes at the back of the textbook. Students reflect on their growth as writers while developing a writing portfolio that illustrates what they are learning, their strengths and weaknesses, and the problems they are facing.

This textbook is designed primarily for students whose second language is English and for courses where students are being prepared for academic graduate writing. Sample writings are taken from a variety of disciplines and offer ample opportunity for students to read, analyze, and edit for the concepts taught in the textbook. By doing so, students can then apply the concepts to their own writings. Depending on the length of the course, there may be more material than can be covered during the class. Exercises need not be done in the order they appear in the text. Also, instructors may want to repeat certain exercises by having students find and analyze articles or readings written by professors and/or experts in their own fields. Many of the exercises can be assigned as homework; those assignments can then be collected for grading or discussed in small groups or as part of a class discussion. Materials for the teacher can be found online at www.press.umich.edu/esl/.