Writing Assignments:
Getting Started

- **Manage your time**: Don’t wait until the last minute! Get started ahead of time. Remember to allot ample time for research, drafting, and revision.

- **Read the assignment closely**: Print out the grading rubric and highlight important points. Use it as a guide to make sure you stay on topic and answer all questions.

- **Stay organized**: During the research process, make sure to keep track of where the information is coming from. Take notes with the key points from each source and the information you’ll need to format a citation. This will make your life easier when it comes time to format your citations and references.

- **Create an outline**: This will help you develop a game plan before you begin writing. Outlines can be as simple or as detailed as you prefer. Determine what the main points of your paper will be. It is also helpful to set up your headings to help you stay organized as you write.

- **First drafts are a starting point**: Ignore your impulse for perfection as you begin writing. Don’t worry about making mistakes—that’s what revision is for. Sometimes it is easier to write the introduction paragraph last.

- **Mini-assignments**: If you’re having trouble getting started, re-read the grading rubric and focus on short writing sessions. You can get a lot done in a short period of time if you are focused. Take it one paragraph at a time and give yourself breaks.

- **Change of scenery**: Often there are a lot of distractions at home, so try writing in the library or even a coffee shop.
Revision Tips

• **Read out loud:** You can catch many of your own mistakes simply by reading your paper out loud. Don’t forget to use Spellcheck too.

• **Check grading rubric:** Have you adequately addressed all required points? Use the rubric as a checklist. Focus on sections that are worth the most points.

• **Elaborate:** Learn to be a close reader of your own work and identify areas that need to be fleshed out more. Often a sentence or two can provide clarification and enhance your point.

• **Conciseness/wordiness:** Highlight awkward/confusing sentences. Rework your writing to make it clearer and to the point. Don’t be afraid to delete unnecessary words or sentences. Stick to the rubric and stay on point.

• **Word choice:** Would another word sound better or more professional? Are you getting across what you really mean? Aim to be precise with your wording. Use a thesaurus if you are stuck.

• **Play with organization:** Make sure your points/paragraphs are organized in a logical manner. Maybe a paragraph you have toward the end of your paper makes more sense at the beginning or vice versa.