Bridge International College

Department of Management

Course Syllabus for: Basic Writing Skill

Course Title: **Basic Writing Skill**

Course Code: ENLA 2061

Credit Hours: 3 Credit hours

Unit three- writing essay

Definition-An essay is a focused piece of writing on a particular topic, which contains several paragraphs. The paragraphs in an essay are related to each other and deal with a single subject or point, each paragraph talking about the different aspects of the same subject. An essay treats its subject/point more thoroughly than a paragraph does. The principles of a paragraph construction (**unity, coherence and completeness**) and the stages of paragraph development also apply to essay writing. The size of an essay depends on the nature of the subject/ point, the writer's purpose, the intended reader(s) and the various contextual factors such as course/program requirements. However, the most common size for an essay is five paragraphs (**one introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs and one concluding paragraph**).

Comparison between a paragraph and an essay

Paragraph	Essay
Deals with a specific topic	Deals with a broader subject
Should be unified coherent and well-developed	Should be unified, coherent and well developed
Has a topic sentence that introduces its focus and direction	Has a thesis statement that shows focus and direction
Supporting sentences develop the topic sentence	Supporting paragraphs develop the thesis statement
Has a concluding sentence	Has a concluding paragraph
Involves pre-writing, drafting, checking and improving	Involves pre-writing, drafting, checking and improving
Has a definite structure	Has a definite structure

Academic essay structure

A. Introduction

First paragraph (a single paragraph that indicates the subject/point and direction of the essay. It arouses the interest of the reader and compels him/her to continue reading).

- General statements, explanation, background information
- Thesis statement

B. Body of the essay (a series of paragraphs that support and develop the thesis. Each paragraph contains a topic sentence and supporting details, all connected to the same thesis).

Second paragraph

- Topic sentence
- Supporting evidence, details, examples etc.

C. Conclusion (it strengthens the overall message expressed by the thesis and substantiated by the supporting paragraphs. The conclusion brings the essay to a logical end, emphasizing the main points).

Third paragraph

-Summary of the main points; final comment/suggestions/recommendation

What is thesis statement?

Thesis statement is the controlling idea of the entire essay, and all paragraphs in the essay stick to the controlling idea.

- A short statement which provides an insight into what the essay is going to be about. That is used to enlighten readers on a variety of things, including:
  - The main argument or point to be discussed
  - The purpose of the essay
  - The point of view of the author on a specific point
- A thesis statement usually appears at the conclusion of the introductory paragraph of a paper. It offers a concise summary of the main point or claim of the essay or research paper etc.

Examples of **poor** thesis statements

- In this paper, I will demonstrate how cats are superior to dogs
- Are cats superior to dogs?

Examples of **better** thesis statements

- Cats are superior to dogs
- Due to their wit and self-sufficient, cats are superior to dogs
- Over all, cats demonstrate more independence and loyal to man than dogs

Types of Thesis statements

- **Narrative-**begin with anecdotes or examples
- **Quotation -** relevant or interesting quotes from reputable
- **Explanatory-**tells the reader why the topic is noteworthy
- **Summary-**gives the reader an overview of the topic
- **Rhetorical question-**asks a question your paper will answer
- **Definition-** If you use a term in a certain way, define it for the readers
- **Historical-** give a brief history of the key points of the topic
- **Specialized-** link with the readers to make them want to read on

Steps in writing an essay: Thinking, planning , drafting, revising and editing (Oxford English Dictionary)

Thinking-guess, imagine, to consider, or look upon something.

Planning-questioning, making list, clustering, preparing outline

Drafting- an early version of written work, a preliminary, sketch, rough outline.

Revising- to review, alter and amend, especially of written material.

Editing (proofreading)-to change a text or a document, retouch, fix up.

Writing the basic types of essay(expository, descriptive, narrative and argumentative) by employing the different techniques

N.B: Write a five paragraph argumentative essay on **the importance of education** which has academic essay structure, unity, coherence and good thesis statement for your essay. (10pts)

Types of Essay

Based on the writer's purpose for writing, essays fall into four categories: **expository, narrative, descriptive and persuasive**

A. **Expository Essay**-the main concern of an expository essay is explaining an idea, a point of view, a process or feeling. There for giving detailed information on a subject is at the heart of this kind of essay. It requires the writer to investigate an idea,

evaluate evidences, expound on the idea in depth. This can be accomplished through strategies of definition, exemplification, classification, process analysis.

B. **Narrative Essay**- is telling a story, it relates a series of events arranged in chronological /time order. Narration is often presented from the first person point of view (I, we) although it can be narrated from the third person point of view (he, she , it and they) .

C. **Descriptive Essay**- is a writing that creates a picture of a person, a scene or a process in the reader's or listener's mind. It provides a specific sensory details to paint a vivid picture of the thing being described.

D. **Persuasive Essay**- is the writing that is used to convince or persuade the readers/listeners to agree with the writer's point of view, facts values, conclusions or outlooks.