GRADUATION WRITING EXAMINATION (GWE) PRESENTATION

Dr. Otsuji (sotsuji@csudh.edu)
GWAR Director

You can find this PowerPoint presentation on the Testing website
GRADUATION WRITING ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT (GWAR)
Options for meeting requirement:

- Graduation Writing Examination (GWE).

Offered in September, November, February, April and July.

Test may be taken twice and only twice.
Advanced Composition Course. English 350 (3 units).

Upper Division Writing Adjunct. IDS 397 (2 units) and IDS 398 (2 units).
WHAT TO BRING TO THE EXAMINATION

1. Student Identification Card.
2. GWE Admission Ticket.
3. Two dark pencils (with eraser) or pens.
4. Optional: Dictionary/Thesaurus (electronic acceptable)

Note: Blue books will be provided.
SCORING OF ESSAYS

- Each essay is read by two readers.
- A score from 1 to 6 is assigned by each reader.
- The readers are not aware of the score given by the other reader.
The two scores are added together.

The highest possible score is 12 (6+6).

Passing score is 8 or higher (2 scores of 4+).
THREE MAIN AREAS

- Reading Comprehension of Prompt and Focus on Task
- Organization and Development
- Grammar and Punctuation
SCORING GUIDE
(Page 11 in handbook)
At each of the score points, the descriptors of writing performance are lettered.
The letters refer to:
a. response to the topic
b. understanding and use of the material in the prompt
c. quality and clarity of thought
d. organization, development and support
e. syntax and command of language
f. grammar, usage, and mechanics

6, 5 and 4 are passing.
3, 2 and 1 are not passing

(Key words are highlighted)
6 **Superior** A 6 essay demonstrates superior writing, but may have minor flaws. A typical essay in this category:

a. addresses the topic *clearly* and responds effectively to all aspects of the task,

b. demonstrates a *thorough critical understanding* of the prompt in developing an *insightful response*,

c. explores the issues *thoughtfully and in depth*,

d. is *coherently* organized and developed, with ideas supported by apt reasons and *well-chosen examples*,

e. has an effective, *fluent style* marked by *syntactic variety* and a *clear command of language*, and

f. is generally *free from errors* in grammar, usage, and mechanics.
5 **Strong** A 5 essay demonstrates clear competence in writing. It may have some errors, but they are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader. A typical essay in this category:

a. clearly addresses the topic, but may respond to some aspects of the task more effectively than others,

b. demonstrates a sound critical understanding of the prompt in developing a well-reasoned response,

c. shows some depth and complexity of thought,

d. is well-organized and developed, with ideas supported by appropriate reasons and examples,

e. displays some syntactic variety and facility in the use of language, and

f. may have a few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.
4 **Adequate** A 4 essay demonstrates adequate writing. It may have some errors that distract the reader, but they do not significantly obscure meaning. A typical essay in this category:

a. addresses the topic, but may slight some aspects of the task,

b. demonstrates a generally accurate understanding of the prompt in developing a sensible response,

c. may treat the topic simplistically or repetitively

d. is adequately organized and developed, generally supporting ideas with reasons and examples,

e. demonstrates adequate use of syntax and language, and

f. may have some errors, but generally demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
3 Sub-Marginal A 3 essay demonstrates developing competence, but is flawed in some significant way(s). A typical essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

a. distorts or neglects aspects of the task
b. demonstrates some understanding of the prompt, but may misconstrue parts of it or make limited use of it in developing a weak response
c. lacks focus, or demonstrates confused or simplistic thinking
d. is poorly organized and developed, presenting generalizations without adequate and appropriate support or presenting details without generalizations
e. has limited control of syntax and vocabulary
f. has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that sometimes interfere with meaning
2 **Inadequate**  A 2 essay is *seriously flawed*. An essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

a. indicates **confusion** about the topic or **neglects** important aspects of the task,

b. demonstrates **very poor understanding** of the main points of the prompt, does not use the prompt appropriately in developing a response, or may not use the prompt at all,

c. **lacks focus** and coherence, and often fails to communicate its ideas,

d. has very **weak** organization and development, providing **simplistic generalizations without support**,  

e. has **inadequate control** of syntax and vocabulary, and

f. is marred by **numerous errors** in grammar, usage, and mechanics that frequently interfere with meaning.
1 Incompetent A 1 essay demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in writing skills. A typical essay in this category reveals one or more of the following weaknesses:

a. suggests an inability to comprehend the question or to respond meaningfully to the topic,
b. demonstrates little or no ability to understand the prompt or to use it in developing a response,
c. is unfocused, illogical, or incoherent,
d. is disorganized and undeveloped, providing little or no relevant support,
e. lacks basic control of syntax and vocabulary, and
f. has serious and persistent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that severely interfere with meaning.
Papers that reject the assignment or fail to address the question must be given to the Chief Reader. A score of zero (0) may be assigned for essays written “off-topic.”
SUGGESTIONS FOR 60 MINUTE TIMED WRITING
TIME ALLOCATION

- 2 - 5 minutes Read prompt and underline key words
- 5 minutes Make a brief outline
- 40 minutes Write essay
  Skip every other line and write only on the right page
- 5 - 10 minutes Proofread and revise
  Make corrections above lines or add extra text on the left page
If you are a slow and deliberate writer, you will probably not need as much time for editing, because you probably edit as you go along.

If you tend to dash off your writing, then you will need more time to edit as you may have produced more errors in the draft.
PROMPTS

You will be given only one prompt (no choice).

The prompt identifies a topic (the subject matter to be discussed) and specifies a task (what is to be done with that subject) - the prompt will either call for creation of an argument or ask you to compare and contrast a specific subject.
UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC

◆ **Circle** words that indicate the topic of the question.

◆ Glance back at these circled words while writing the essay to double-check that you are remaining on topic. DO NOT RANT and go off topic.
UNDERSTAND THE TASK

- **Underline** the task. The task will use directives, often in the form of imperative (command, directive) verbs.

- Make sure to respond to **ALL** of the tasks (usually 2 -3 tasks).
Common Directives:

- Analyze – Divide the subject into its component parts and present a more in depth look at each part and then explain how each relates to the whole.
- Compare – Develop the similarities between one subject and another.
- Contrast – Explore the difference between two subjects, explaining the importance of the ways they are not alike.
- Define – Establish boundaries for or set limits on a subject. Tell what the subject is by differentiating it from other closely related subjects. Tell what it is not.
Describe – Paint a word picture with sensory details.

Discuss – Literally “talk about” the subject. Be sure to create a thesis that will steer you away from vagueness. Illuminate a specific territory that you can support with details.

Evaluate – Explore the value of the subject. Use relevant criteria to judge the worth of the subject.

Explain – Show or make clear, establish connections, tell why, how or what, depending on the subject.
Identify – Distinguish and list the various parts of the subject.
Illustrate – Explain by example and detail.
Interpret – Share your understanding of the subject. Explain the significance of the idea, event or process in order to explain its meaning.
Summarize – Explain the subject briefly in your own words. Generally this directive is used to prompt you to demonstrate your command of certain facts or ideas.
PRACTICE PROMPTS

Any reading passage at the beginning of the prompt must be considered as part of the prompt and be incorporated into comprehension of topic and task.
There is no doubt that America is a melting pot; by the same token, there is no doubt that most members of specific races and nationalities strive their whole lives to maintain a link with their original ethnic identity and culture. The two impulses, blending into American society and maintaining ethnic identity, are not always compatible. Often, success is interpreted as total immersion in and assimilation by the new culture. Do you agree or disagree with this assumption? Argue for a lifestyle that emphasizes assimilation or a lifestyle that emphasizes the maintenance of cultural ties, and indicate which lifestyle better leads to success in the American culture.
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Argue for a lifestyle that emphasizes assimilation or a lifestyle that emphasizes the maintenance of cultural ties, and indicate which lifestyle better leads to success in the American culture.
In Groups, Make an Outline

Intro - with THESIS

2-3 Body Paragraphs
Topic Sentences
SPECIFIC examples

Conclusion (not mandatory)
From infancy to adulthood, advertising is in the air Americans breathe, the information we absorb, almost without knowing it. It floods our mind with pictures of perfection and goals of happiness easy to attain. . . . We are feeding on foolery, of which a steady diet, for those who feed on little else, cannot help but leave a certain fuzziness of perception.

Barbara Tuchman

Write a well organized and fully developed essay in which you do the following:

- Select and discuss some specific examples of advertising that illustrate what Tuchman calls “pictures of perfection and goals of happiness”;
- Explain how such advertisements can lead to a certain “fuzziness of perception,” a distorted picture of reality;
- Discuss what you consider to be some of the important effects of widespread and pervasive advertising on individuals here in America.
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Select and discuss examples of advertising – Pictures of perfection/happiness

Explain how it leads to distorted picture of reality

Discuss important effects advertising has on individuals
Decide on the paragraphing

With the above prompt, there are two ways to create body paragraphs. You could arrange the body paragraphs based on the tasks:

1) discuss examples of advertising: beer, makeup, models,
2) explain how they are each distorted pictures of reality and
3) Discuss each of their effects
Using the outline, create your introductory, body and concluding paragraphs.

When writing the introduction, *pretend* your reader has not read the prompt so you don’t just dive in to what would actually be a first body paragraph. Set the scene and establish the subject matter. Be sure the topic words you circled appear in the introduction to make sure you are “on topic.”
Advertising pervades our daily lives. We are continuously bombarded with images of blissful perfection that could never be achieved in “real” life. Without us even knowing, these images become the standards by which we measure ourselves which distorts our perceptions of our world. These distortions can lead to serious psychological problems especially for young teens.
Write the rest of the essay, following your outline for the body paragraphs. Be sure to put in details and specific examples. Remember, your reader is not inside your head. Make a point, and then convince your reader on that point. Then make another point, convince your reader, etc.
Keep an eye on the clock. You know how many paragraphs you need to create, so you can budget your time accordingly.

Remember to keep glancing back at the question to make sure you stay focused on the task.

Remember to keep glancing back at your outline to make sure you are following your plan.
In a timed writing situation, you may not be able to put in every last detail that relates to the subject. Wisely choose which details are needed in order to accomplish the task and leave extraneous detail out.

Conversely, if you find you are repeating yourself, stop and try to think of additional supporting detail to develop and prove your thesis. You don’t want to waste time or space repeating yourself.
REVISE AND POLISH

- First ask yourself if you have answered the question clearly and completely.

- Add in whatever might be missing.

- Remember that timed writing is not judged on neatness, but on accomplishment of the task. You can draw arrows, cross out, squeeze in words – whatever it takes.
Next carefully proofread sentence-by-sentence, checking for misspelled words or grammatical errors.

Check for complete sentences, subject/verb agreement, consistent tense, word choice and punctuation.
AFTER THE TEST

- You will receive your results in approximately 4-5 weeks.
- If you did not receive a passing score, you may go to the testing office and put in a written request for the GWE advisor to contact you about why you did not pass.
- You may take the test a second time if necessary.
GOOD LUCK!!