



ESSAY FUNDAMENTALS

COURSE FORMAT

Anticipate approximately 5 hours of work per week for 4 weeks consisting of readings and viewings, writing assignments, short quizzes, and group discussions. The group discussion and peer review assignments should involve a constructive exchange of ideas, increasing understanding of the course material in a collaborative forum. Grading on assignments is subjective and wholly focused on providing constructive written feedback. At the conclusion of week 4, learners will have completed an academic essay and hopefully gained confidence in their writing ability.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The intent of **Essay Fundamentals** is to provide students with the tools needed to be successful essay writers. Writing is a skill constantly used throughout life, regardless of MOS or rank. The skills taught in this course are applicable across the spectrum of writing tasks, including writing professional correspondence, emails, resumes, and so on. Writing is often seen as an art, and it is. However, the scientific aspects of writing, the formula of an essay and the writing process, are often overlooked. This course intends to teach these scientific aspects, for the essay formula and writing process can be applied to a variety of writing tasks and, if adhered to properly, will improve the readability and effectiveness of the product. Finally, Essay Fundamentals is a course for any skill-level of writer, student, or instructor.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Essay Fundamentals is structured in a way that mimics the writing process, beginning with prewriting techniques and ending with editing skills. The course has the following four lessons:

- **Lesson 1, Prewrite**, presents the parts of an essay and how to begin the writing process. Prewriting skills will help learners begin an outline and draft the ever-important thesis statement.
- **Lesson 2, Write**, presents the next step of the writing process, the actual writing. The bare-bones of the outline are beefed up with the meat of the argument: the analysis and support.
- **Lesson 3, Revise**, details perhaps the most important step of the writing center. Revision is non-negotiable, and must be done. This lesson explains effective revision strategies.
- **Lesson 4, Edit**, is the final lesson, which covers the polishing stage of essay writing: editing. This is where grammar rules come in, not to mention logic, tone, syntax and other writing considerations. The writing assignment that runs throughout the course will culminate in this lesson, resulting in a complete essay.

ASSESSMENTS

The assessments in this course are designed for the learner to self-gauge their writing ability. However, upon passing the course, the learner will receive a certificate of completion. Learner written assignments will receive substantial notes and a grade estimate which should reflect the grades given in other academic, college-level courses. This course is pass/fail. Learners must complete all assignments and participate effectively in order to pass.

FACULTY BIOS

Ms. Lorena MacMillan is the Editor and Writing Instructor for the Enlisted College Distance Education Program (ECDEP), College of Distance Education and Training (CDET). Here, she edits all ECDEP course material, works with ECDEP students on essay writing skills, and is one of the course developers of the Essay Fundamentals scholarly elective for CDET's College of Continuing Education Program. In 2016, she graduated with an M.A in Literary Studies from Aberystwyth Universtiy, Wales. While there, she

worked as the lead editor for the *Aberystwyth University Post-Graduate Journal*. Currently, she also works for the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) as adjunct faculty for the Written Communications department where she teaches Writing 111 and Writing 112 both onsite and online. For these courses, she teaches professional and academic writing skills to service members perusing their undergraduate degrees. In addition to her work for CDET and UMUC, she is pursuing a PhD in English Literature at Anglia Ruskin University, U.K.

Mr. Nick Ekkizogloy is an industrious and impassioned writer and editor with eight years of experience editing curriculum for the Marine Corps. He earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Montana and a BA in English Literature from the University of Georgia, publishing over 10 stories and essays in internationally circulated literary journals. He helped build the CDET writing centers, the online writing centers that educate thousands of Marines engaged in PME and others through writing courses on MarineNet. Nick enjoys helping writers find their authorial voice, and he believes that once someone gains confidence in their writing, there is no limit to the personal and professional goals they can achieve.

