





# Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 606

## Academic Writing for Graduate Students (Revision 2)

**Status:**

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

**Delivery mode:**

Grouped study 

**Credits:**

3

**Area of study:**

Arts

**Prerequisites:**

None

**Precluded:**

None

**Faculty:**

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

**Notes:**

Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

## Overview

This three-credit, paced-learning course engages students in writing at a graduate level and helps them to develop the research, composition, and argumentation skills they need to succeed in graduate programs. It is intended for all Athabasca University graduate students who need to improve their writing skills. It will support and provide practice for those graduate students who wish to enhance their ability to write effectively at the graduate level, and to do so in a graduate course for elective credit.

Writing is a process. Specifically, learning to write in the academy is in part a process whereby students are socialized into the conventions and requirements of their disciplines. This means that when learning to write in an academic context, one must learn the conventions of academic writing through exposure and analysis, through practice in applying those conventions, and through feedback from peers and instructors. This course, through readings that make graduate-level reading and writing processes explicit, and by requiring practice in a number of genres typical to graduate assignments, provides necessary tools for the development of writing skills needed in graduate work.

The course will focus intensively on academic literacy: fundamentals of composition, argumentation, critical thinking, and research skills. Students will practise these fundamentals by drafting, workshopping, and submitting two assignments: a critical review and a literature review. These assignments are divided into smaller tasks that comprise the learning objectives and activities of most of the course's weekly sections. Students will also have opportunities to discuss assigned readings about academic writing with their classmates, and they will reflect on the readings and their own writing process in a personal writing blog.

## Objectives


When a student has successfully completed this course, they will be able to

1. understand and recognize strengths and weaknesses in their research and writing processes.
2. write a critical review and literature review, and understand the purpose of and relationships between these genres in graduate work.
3. identify academic genres (summary, research essay, book or critical

review, literature review, and so on) and develop research and writing strategies appropriate to the genres.

4. assess their own writing for patterns of errors that come up frequently.
5. state and demonstrate the role that critical thinking plays in research and graduate writing.
6. design an editing guide to improve your writing and identify where to find resources.
7. demonstrate the use of informal logic to construct a cogent argument.

## Evaluation

To receive credit for this course, students must participate in the online activities, successfully complete the assignments, and achieve a final mark of at least 60 per cent. Students should be familiar with the [graduate grading policy](#)  at Athabasca University. Please note that it is students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of "F" in one course, or a grade of "C" in more than one course, may be required to withdraw from their respective programs.

The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them.

Activity	Weight
Writing Conference: Students who have been required by the MAIS admissions office to take this course are required to have a one-on-one telephone writing conference with their instructor.	This must be completed by those students required to take this course.
Discussion Forum and/or Blog Posts	30%
Critical Review	30%
Literature Review	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Materials

Swales, John M., and Christine B. Feak. Academic Writing for Graduate


Students: Essential Tasks and Skills. 3rd ed., U of Michigan P, 2012. 

(Print)





The course materials for MAIS 606: Academic Writing for Graduate Students are provided online with the exception of the above textbook.

### Athabasca University Online Materials

**Moodle course page:** This includes a course information guide, study guides, and digital readings. This *MAIS 606* Moodle site is also where students will engage in discussion and debate with the course professor and their fellow students.

**Athabasca University Library:** Students are encouraged to browse the Library's **Website**  to review the Library collection of journal databases, electronic journals, and digital reference tools.

### Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

*Updated September 12, 2024*

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