



## **E NO. 19 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES**

### **Tackling Writing Anxiety**

*Writing can be a difficult and emotional process, and many students struggle with apprehensive feelings surrounding writing. Writing anxiety does not define a writer, but it can make it difficult in certain situations.*

#### **When can Writing Anxiety appear?**

Writing anxiety is situational but can often appear when you are:

- adjusting to a new environment or writing style (e.g. college writing, new field, longer or shorter papers than you are used to)
- remembering negative feelings or criticisms from past experiences
- writing for an assignment that you are unmotivated to do
- writing for an audience that has been difficult or critical in the past
- the deadline is soon

Writing can be an overwhelming, complex process that requires more than just a “breakthrough” moment, but there are specific steps you can take to attain your writing goals.

#### **Steps to Overcoming Writing Anxiety**

Begin with identifying your strengths

- Write them at the top of your page or on a separate sheet of paper to remind yourself of what you do well and to keep yourself motivated!

Collaborate with others

- Work with peers, professors, and CWS tutors at every stage of the writing process that you feel anxious about; whether it be brainstorming or revising, there are people who want to help!
- Create short term and long term goals with others to create more manageable tasks.

Be honest with yourself

- Focus on what you do best rather than what you believe to be your weaknesses
- Recognize that writing is difficult, but doable!
- Think of yourself as an apprentice by breaking down what you already know and what you still need to learn.
- Be honest about your timeline, how much time do you have to master this topic and write your paper? Create a timeline based off of this.

#### **Celebrate your success!**

Store the positive experiences that you have and remember the occasions when you overcame obstacles because it is these moments that help you have the confidence to write in the future.

Unfortunately, it may not be possible to completely eliminate writing anxiety, but these strategies can help! Use your past mistakes to improve for the future. You can always make an appointment with a CWS tutor to go over a paper that has already been graded and work on ways to refine your writing later. When you are faced with a similar challenge in your future, you will be better equipped to tackle it.

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