

Writing in Graduate School and Using the Writing Center

As **graduate students**, you are preparing to enter conversations on issues that matter in your field. Academics in your field engage in these conversations as they write for publication and present at conferences. Each academic community has its own writing practices and expectations. When you read and write in your graduate courses, you will also begin to develop understanding of these practices and expectations and build confidence in your own writing. Below we describe **strategies** that may help you in this process.



Three Most Effective Writing Practices for Graduate Students

One-to-One Conversations

Entering a new discourse community involves new communicative practices and attending to new audience expectations in reading, writing, and research. When you participate in conversations about disciplinary content with classmates and professors, you are also being introduced to these communicative practices—not just disciplinary content. Conversations in the **writing center** can also build your critical awareness as a writer and student researcher as you begin to recognize and appreciate the ways scholars in your field think and communicate.

For excellence, the presence of others is always required.
--Hannah Arendt

Reading with Purpose

In your first year, reading assigned texts in your courses with attention to *how* they are written, as well as the information presented, can provide an opportunity for you to observe communicative practices in your field. As you read, notice how, for example, authors articulate their purpose, signal their own argument, or extend the argument of others. Notice what you like about their writing, or what leaves you confused. Talking about what you notice with your professors, classmates, and writing tutors can also provide you with critical tools as you begin your own writing.

Seeking Feedback

Conversations with professors and classmates about texts and about your own ideas allow you to develop effective communication practices and learn to seek and respond to feedback. Seeking feedback in class provides opportunities for you, as a reader, to deepen your understanding of content and, as a writer, to develop ideas for research projects.

At JSU, we all write!
And *all* writers need feedback!

Opportunities for Graduate Students in the Richard Wright Center (RWC)

In the RWC, you can

- [make an appointment](#) to have a **one-to-one conversation** with a trained tutor about your ideas and about writing conventions in your field and to **seek feedback** on your writing, speaking, and research projects;
- enroll in an [8-week course “Writing in Graduate School”](#), which begins by discussing **reading with purpose** and disciplinary conventions--email us to learn more;
- participate in [workshops and roundtables](#)--visit the website for topics, dates, and times. You can also invite us to do a workshop on any research and writing issue with your cohort or study group.

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