

# Frequently asked questions about the course Writing a Technical Source Paper

Writing a Technical Source Paper is designed to complement a course in some technical discipline, such as math, science or a vocational subject, that the student takes concurrently.

This course does not replace the technical course, but guides students through the process of writing papers for that course using published sources to support the writers' points. The course also teaches students how to summarize evidence and cite sources so readers can verify the accuracy of their information.

I'm sure you have questions about the course. Some of the more frequently asked ones are answered below.

## What does the course cover?

Students learn how to plan a paper, how to present evidence, and how to use the American Psychological Association (APA) format, which is commonly used in technical disciplines. They will learn strategies and tools suitable for most nonfiction writing situations, which will make them more efficient writers.

Students will have at least one written assignment a week during the course. Students will write three 400- to 800-word sourced papers and one longer research paper of 1,500 to 3,000 words.

## Who should take Writing a Technical Source Paper?

I developed Writing a Technical Source Paper for upper level home school students whose interests lean toward pragmatic activities. Students whose interests are in fields like science, medicine, engineering, business are likely candidates for the course.

Students must apply to take the course so I can see what their interests are, how they would fit into the class, and how I might be able to work with them.

(I also offer a [similar course for students with interests in the humanities](#).)

## What are the instructor's qualifications?

Linda Aragoni's first paid writing job was a manual on steam turbine installation for General Electric. She went on to write other manuals and books in engineering, science, medicine, and education. She has taught online courses 27 times at three online institutions. [Click for Linda's full CV](#).

## How much credit can students earn?

A half year of high school English credit is appropriate for this course.

## How are the writing course and technical course integrated?

Students must submit contact information for the companion course instructor as part of their application. Wherever possible, I will attempt to coordinate my instruction with that of the technical course instructor; however, I cannot adjust the course to the requirements of any individual technical course instructor.

I will teach students writing skills so the companion course instructor can concentrate on teaching the technical content. Students should work with their technical course instructor to identify appropriate writing topics as early in the fall as possible.

## How large are the classes?

Writing a Technical Source Paper classes have 8 to 16 students. If fewer than 8 students pay their security deposits by the deadline, the class will be canceled.

## Can students do the work at their convenience?

Writing a Technical Source Paper is not a correspondence course. Students must attend the live online sessions when they are scheduled. Students vote for the time slot they prefer when they apply for the course; majority rules. The calendar at the right uses a yellow background to indicate dates of the live sessions.

I deliberately scheduled the live sessions so that students have their most frequent instructor contact early in the term. During that time they are learning a process for preparing a paper and doing short writing activities (usually less than a dozen sentences). As students' writing assignments get longer, I reduce the number of live sessions, allowing students to use that time for writing.

Students can use the online class forum throughout the course at their convenience. I will check it regularly to answer questions and give informal instruction.

## What equipment must students have?

The live sessions will be held at [WizIQ.com](http://WizIQ.com). Students need a free WizIQ account and

- Computer with Internet access (preferably high speed) and enough memory that they can keep a text editor (like Notepad) open during online sessions
- Speakers and microphone,
- Keyboard

- E-mail account they check regularly

## Why must students attend an orientation session?

The orientation gives students a chance to see what the course format is like, try out their equipment, and ask questions before they pay any money. Students can hit the ground running when the technical source paper course opens. The orientation will be the last week of July or the first week of August. Date(s) and time(s) to be determined.

## Do students have to buy any books?

No. All required materials will be available online.

## How do you grade?

I assign an end-of-course grade based on students' ability to employ a strategic writing process and on how well they handle the conventions of academic writing. Students are expected to get feedback on the content of their paper from their instructor in the companion course.

## What does this writing course cost?

Tuition for Writing a Technical Source Paper is \$300, which covers the cost of the orientation, 15 live classes, asynchronous forums, and evaluation of written work. All payments go through PayPal.



A security deposit of \$100 is required by Aug 15. The remaining \$200 is due by Sept 5. If a student withdraws prior to the first class session, \$75 of the deposit will be refunded.

## How do I apply?

Students fill out a [simple online form](#) no later than June 1.

## Important dates:

- June 1 last day to apply.
- June 15 students will be notified about their acceptance and the orientation schedule
- Orientation last week in July or first week in August (dates, times TBA)
- Aug. 15 security deposit due
- Sept. 5 remainder of tuition due

