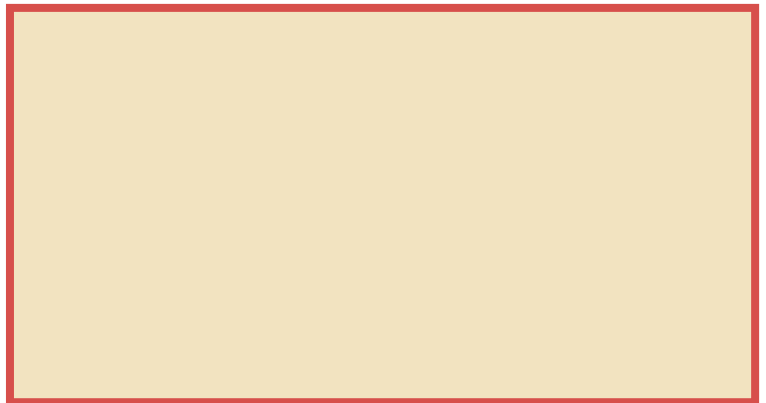


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“The Doctor”
McNair Scholars Program



Understanding the Writing Purpose/Audience

There are two objectives that should enter every writer's mind before any words are written: 1. Understand the writing situation, 2. Know your audience. This article will provide information to clarify and implement these ideas.

by David Caylor, writing tutor

Not fully understanding the purpose behind your writing hinders your ability to communicate effectively, while disregarding who will read your words can lead to writing that alienates. These ideas are especially important when writing to someone you do not know, such as applying for a scholarship, graduate school, or a job.

Understanding the Writing Purpose: A first step in the writing process is always to gain a thorough understanding of what you are trying to achieve through your writing.

Whoever you are writing to has criteria that he or she is looking for when reading what you have written, and it is your job to make sure you meet that criteria. Do not be lulled into thinking that you are always trying to list your other areas of your life that are of interest to your reader.

If you are applying for a scholarship, carefully read the application and note what traits the organization is looking for in an applicant. Understand those traits. Incorporate them into your writing. This also informs them that you can follow directions.

Knowing the purpose behind your writing is also important if you are applying for graduate school or a job. Do not rush the process of writing your cover letter. Review all of what you are trying to achieve as well. If the position calls for an applicant you embody those qualities through your extracurricular activities.

Understanding the Audience: After you fully understand the writing situation, carefully consider your readers. Ensure you are writing on their level by taking the time to research the people you are writing to. You may not be able to convey your message.

If you are applying for a job, check your potential employer's requirements. Investigate his or her areas of interest, hobbies, or anything else that can provide information about how the person thinks or what he or she thinks about. Even though a company may center on your degree or background.

Having a grasp on what your audience knows will keep you from using too much jargon and prevent someone from being confused by what you are trying to explain. Sometimes laymen's terms are the best way to communicate. Altering your language to accommodate your reader also indicates that you are capable of communicating your ideas in various ways. Remember, clear communication impresses anyone worth impressing.

Many times the beginning steps of the writing process are overlooked because they are taken for granted. Understanding what is asked of you or what information you need to convey through your writing needs to be the guiding force behind everything you write. Next, knowing as much as you can about who you are writing to allows you to tailor your message.

Considering these ideas before you begin writing will make your writing more effective. Understanding of what you are trying to accomplish will help you to convey your message.

Book Recommendation: *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century* by David Dreyfus

This is a fantastic book for anyone wanting to improve his or her writing.

3 Devlin Hall, Rm 106
Grad Seminar f&l' 'd'a 'L
Student Money Mgmt, "*Managing Grad School Debt*"

Research Assembly Meeting fl 'l' ('d'a 'L
Ashley Cervantes, "*Parts of a Manuscript*"

11 Devlin Hall, Rm 106

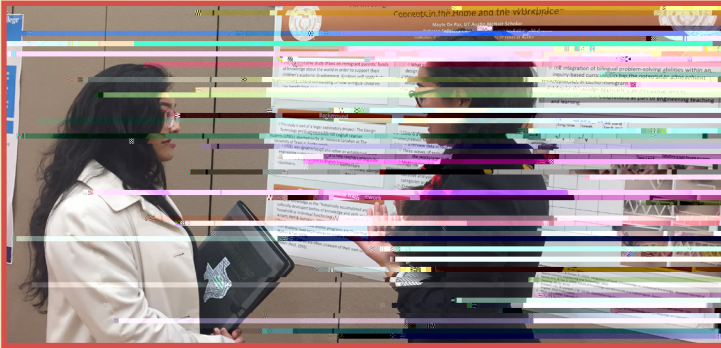
David Wall Rice is Department Chair and Associate
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Grad Connect: *Writing for Publication*

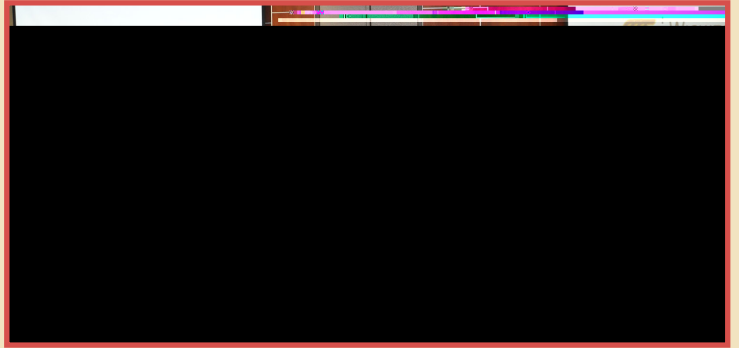
Dr. Michelle Redmond, Research Instructor at the KU

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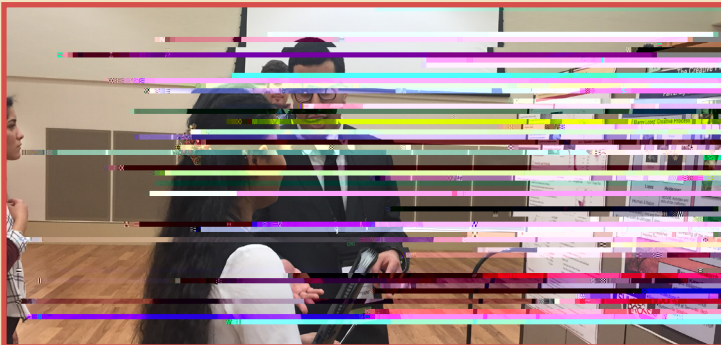
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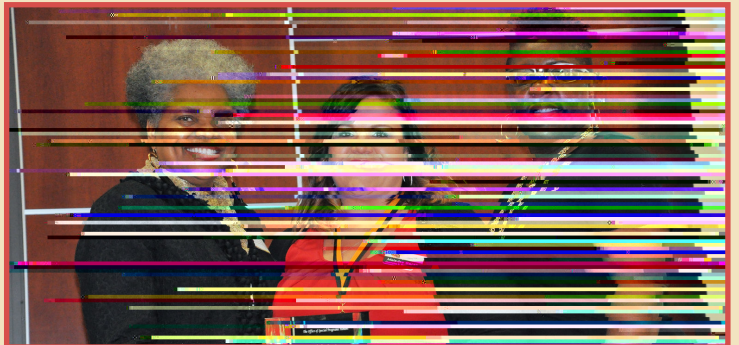
Carol speaks to a McNair student about her research during the 2017 Texas National McNair Conference poster session.



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Aja speaks to a McNair student about his research during the 2017 Texas National McNair Conference poster session.



McNair honored alumni Dr. Meladee Garst, staff psychologist for the WSU Counseling and Testing Center, during NTD.

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McNair Scholars Program

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Inside....

Now Accepting Applications

Grammatically Speaking

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Someone Like Me

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Staff:

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