Glossary

Academic disciplines Branches of learning that have developed different traditions, perspectives, and questions but that all depend on orderly intellectual habits of reason and consistency.

Acknowledgment An expression of thanks for help received during the composing process. This help might include responses to drafts, conversations about the evolving ideas, moral support, or typing. (See **Documentation** for the types of help that cannot merely be acknowledged but must be documented in a footnote or an author/date reference.)

Analysis A close examination and interpretation of an artistic or intellectual endeavor.

Argument In logic, a set of statements that include a **Conclusion** that is said to follow from or be supported by evidence, called a **Premise**.

Argumentation A form of writing or speaking that employs logic to support or refute a position.

Audience The intended readers for a piece of writing.

Bibliography A list of sources of information on a particular subject.

Case study (or history) A report of information derived from the close observation and recording of behavior.

Claim A conclusion, an inference that follows from evidence.

Cognitive style An individual's way of perceiving and thinking about experience.

Collaborative learning Studying together with classmates; learning from people who are at approximately the same level of learning as you are.

Conclusion An inference that follows from evidence. (See **Premise**.)

Controlling question A focused inquiry to which your paper will be an answer.

Critical thinking Thought processes that are characterized by careful analysis and discernment, not necessarily by faultfinding.

Critique A close examination, interpretation, and evaluation of an idea, experience, or work of art.

Description A form of writing or speaking that gives a detailed account of something, creating a mental image through appropriate use of words.

Discourse Communication of ideas or information by speaking or writing.

Documentation A record of sources used in research: direct quotations; other people's judgments, ideas, opinions, inferences; facts that other people have discovered; experiments performed by other people. This record must provide enough information so that readers can check the original sources. The two major forms of documentation are the use of footnotes and the use of the author-date method.

Draft A rough or preliminary version of a piece of writing.

Exposition A form of writing or speaking that explains and analyzes.

Expressive writing (reflective writing) Writing that has as its primary aim the private expression of feelings and responses; for example, diaries, private journals, reaction papers.

Figure A drawing, graph, picture, flow diagram, computer representation, or other graphic form used to present the results of research. (See **Table**.)

Ground A premise, the evidence on which a conclusion in an argument is based.

Heuristics Strategies to help you discover ideas and to learn more about a topic; opposed to rules in that heuristics can lead in many directions and do not guarantee a single right answer.

Humanities Branches of learning concerned with questions of human values; for example, history, philosophy, languages, linguistics, literature, archaeology, jurisprudence, history and criticism of the arts, ethics, comparative religion.

Incubation A period of rest or change of activity when you allow your ideas on a particular project to take form while you consciously do something else.

Index An alphabetical list that points to where books and articles are to be found; an alphabetical list that points to particular pages in a book.

Informative writing Writing that has as its primary aim the communication of information to others.

Journal (a) A notebook for private writing. (b) A scholarly periodical.

Lab practical A special quiz designed to discover whether science students are familiar with laboratory procedures and results.

Laboratory report A paper that describes, documents, and communicates the completion of an experiment in a science laboratory.

Liberal arts The branches of learning in an academic college program,

including the humanities and the social and natural sciences; distinguished from more technical subjects by an emphasis on questions, rather than on fixed answers.

Literary writing Writing that has as its primary aim the achievement of beauty in language or form.

Long-term memory The capacity to store information, ideas, facts, and images in the mind for an extended period.

Memory The capacity to retain facts, ideas, or images in the mind. (See **Short-term memory** and **Long-term memory**.)

Narration A form of writing or speaking that tells, or gives a sequential account of something.

Natural sciences Branches of learning concerned with the systematic study of nature and the physical world; for example, biology, chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy, zoology, botany.

Peer criticism, peer review Exchanging helpful comments on work-in-progress with people who are at approximately the same level of learning. Students respond to the work of other students; scholars in a discipline review the work of other scholars.

Peer groups Several classmates meeting together to review drafts or to discuss ideas.

Pentad A heuristic developed by Kenneth Burke; five different perspectives for looking at a topic: as an action, actor-agent, scene, means, purpose.

Persuasive writing Writing that has as its primary aim convincing others to do or to believe something.

Plagiarism The act of using sources without documentation or of accepting help without acknowledgment; taking the ideas or writings of someone else and passing them off as your own. (See **Documentation** and **Acknowledgment**.)

Premise The evidence on which a conclusion in an argument is based.

Primary source First-hand direct account of information or experience; a work of art or original philosophical text. (See **Secondary source**.)

Private writing Writing that you do for yourself as a personal record or as an aid to learning, not as a form of communication to others.

Problems Focused questions to which you do not yet know the answer.

Reader-based prose Linda Flower's term for writing which centers on the needs of readers to understand concepts and information; usually structured analytically, with ideas developed and explained in a context; often a revised version of **Writer-based prose**.

Review A summary, close examination, interpretation, and evaluation of an artistic or intellectual endeavor.

Scientific method A systematic way to examine phenomena in the physical world through questioning, observing, and experimenting.

Secondary source An explanation, interpretation, or summary of a primary text; a second-hand account of information or experience. (See **Primary source**.)

Short-term memory The capacity to take in new information and to retain it briefly without practice.

Significant The odds are less than 5 to 100 that the results are due merely to chance.

Social sciences Branches of learning that are concerned with the systematic study of people and how they behave and live together as families, tribes, communities, and nations; for example, psychology, anthropology, political science, sociology, economics, education, business administration.

Summary A condensation of the substance or main idea of a longer piece of discourse.

Table A graphic representation that consists only of words, numbers, and lines. (See **Figure**.)

Warrant Stephen Toulmin's term for a general principle of inference that justifies the connection between a **Ground** and a **Claim** by showing the relevance of the ground to the claim.

Writer-based prose Linda Flower's term for writing in which you talk to yourself on paper, explain ideas to yourself; usually structured as a narrative, with ideas abbreviated rather than developed, centered on the writer's feelings and procedures, rather than on the needs of a reader. (See **Reader-based prose**.)

Zero draft, discovery draft A preliminary version of a piece of writing in which you generate sentences and paragraphs before you find a workable structure for your ideas.