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| **Response paper**  **LAST NAME: GOPALAKRISHNA PILLA**  **FIRST NAME: Geetha Krishnan**  **PROGRAM CODE: DIPH**  **COURSE CODE: ACA-401D**  **PERIOD NUMBER: One**  **INSTRUCTOR: Dr Gulma** | **SEAL-EUCLIDINT-2016** | |
| |  | | --- | | **Edit or delete text to show actual information below:**  The author applied ~~☐US~~ ☐UK conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.  .  The author used Turabian (in-text~~/parenthetical~~)  The author ~~☐did~~ ☐did *not* use Zotero to insert references  The author ~~☐did~~ ☐did *not* use Grammarly Premium (EUCLID provides access)  The author used the following software: (Office 365 on Windows 10) | | |

CONCEPTS OF ACADEMIC WRITING

1. Introduction

I find the period one of the courses on “International Academic Writing” very informative. The instructions are clear and the videos very useful. I like the provision of transcripts of the audio at the background in the video, as it helped me to read through several times the passage, by the time the narrator finished her reading. The idea to help a student begin from the scratch is commendable and useful, as in my case where I have left academia about two decades before, though not writing essays and papers. The material provided in period one makes me believe that it shall help in building my academic writing skills. The course, it seems, is designed to provide the student with a toolkit to support academic writing and support in completing the program successfully.

1. The period one course pack

I loved the introduction to the course material, especially so because of the presence of my most beloved friend Calvin and his meditative tiger colleague Hobbes right at the beginning, explaining in typical style of Bill Waterson that competing a writing assignment is not about creating a compilation of jargons laden sentences, which “inflate weak ideas, obscure poor reasoning, and inhibit clarity”.

The study material comprises of a pdf. document ACA-401 Course pack and a video, where Pr Laurent Cleenewerck gives a video lecture on the basics of templates and styles.

1. ACA-401 coursepack

The pdf. document ‘ACA-401 Course pack’ is a compiled basket of materials comprising 83 pages. It provides for the period one of the courses on “International Academic Writing”, a beautifully ensembled introductory bouquet of information and instructions. Without a table of contents, the “Coursepack” is a mix of documents, a presentation, and lists of useful terminologies and phrases. The pack unveils with a general instruction on essay writing (“Essay Writing: The Basics”) (EUCLID 2015, 2). It clearly states in the very first sentence that “An academic essay aims to persuade readers of an idea based on evidence” and goes on to provide with the basic steps in writing an essay, from Analysing the question to be answered to handing in the final essay appropriately (EUCLID 2015, 2-5).

The ‘Coursepack’ then progresses to a presentation dealing with writing a EUCLID template paper and instructions and advises on avoiding plagiarism (EUCLID 2015, 6-42). There after comes a beautifully drafted note on the thumb rules for writing papers (EUCLID 2015, 43-45). The ten rules of thumb on how to write a paper is an excellent simplified guide to anyone who ventures into writing academic papers (EUCLID 2015, 43-45). I liked the instructions for its simplicity in language and non-confusing explanations on what needs to be done to write a good paper. I found the paper very interesting and has saved it separately for quick reference on my desktop, even if it warns:

“Applying these rules of thumb will require that you spend some time editing your

own prose. But the additional time will be worth it. Your papers for this course will

be better than they would otherwise be, and you will eventually start to edit as

you write”.

The ‘Course pack’ spends considerable effort to impress upon the students the importance of avoiding plagiarism and its ethical aspects. I like the fact that while serving as technical guide the program also tries to impart ethical values to the students. Other than warning the students on plagiarism, the document does well by providing adequate instructions on paraphrasing and citations. Citations are “methods used to indicate where a piece of information came from” (EUCLID 2015, 14). Direct quotations, even though increases precision, when overused shall lead to loss of uniqueness of the document created (EUCLID 2015, 22). The alternative is to paraphrase, redrafting the original in one’s own words (EUCLID 2015, 23). The document also explains when not to cite, which I find a unique way of telling when to cite (EUCLID 2015, 29-30).

I liked the fact that, the use and abuse of comma has been identified as a critical problem in review of a document, and essential and general instructions provided on the proper use of comma (EUCLID 2015, 46). For example, the instruction to ‘not use commas to bracket phrases that are essential to a sentence's meaning’ and to use it otherwise has clarified a long-standing doubt of mine, in this regard. Other than the use of comma, the document “Lit-101 Review” also deals with many nuances of the English language grammar and even typing styles and gives a comprehensive overview of the how to grammatically review one’s document to precision (EUCLID 2015, 46-51).

Another document in the bouquet explains the subtle differences in American and British usages in English language (EUCLID 2015, 54-58). The note titled “Sample corrections to papers” is an excellent guide, should I attempt to review my own essay or while I am reviewing a manuscript for a journal or a document as part of my profession at WHO (EUCLID 2015, 60-65).

The course pack also provides a “Crib Sheet” for the Chicago Manual of Style (EUCLID 2015, 66-77). A quick reference guide for Latin literary terms and abbreviations are also part of the pack (EUCLID 2015, 78-83). This guide in fact corrected many of mis concepts and thus for example clarified to me that ‘ad hoc’ mean ‘improvised’ while till date I believed and used the term ‘ad hoc’ to mean an ‘alternative mechanism’. Whereas, few other words such as ‘a fortiori’ meaning ‘with even stronger reason’ was totally new to me.

1. Basics on templates and styles

The video (Basic ACA-401 Tutorial) provides some further insights into the use of US and UK styles of English language. It demonstrates how to program a document to set its proofing language as US or UK in the Microsoft word platform. The use of full stop before or after an in inverted comma was always a confusing element for me. Now I understand in US it is appropriate to put the inverted comma or a parenthesis before the full stop, whereas in UK it is to put it after. Insertion of in-text citation was also clarified based on these two language preferences, thus in US the reference is given after the full stop and the inverted comma, whereas in UK it may be either given after the full stop or before the full stop, but definitely after the inverted comma. It then allows the student to choose on either of the two. It was not clear to me from the video, whether I have to choose UK English, if I am planning to use the WHO style. Nevertheless, I have decided to opt for the UK formats in my documents prepared for EUCLID.

The video also gives a short explanation on rule of styles and demonstrates how to download a rule of style from the internet with the example of Oxford rule of style. It also explains the difference between rule of style and a paragraph style and demonstrates how to assign a specific rule to individual paragraphs, for example a long quote. It was interesting to note that a long quotation needed to be in a separate paragraph, and it is very easy to distinguish the quote, which can be done by selecting it and use paragraph style “Quote” in MS Word.

1. Conclusion

In conclusion, I consider the period 1 of the course as an excellent starting point for the long journey I am embarking together with my instructors and guides at Euclid University. The message has been clearly delivered in this instance, in simple English, and supplementary video included in the course material. I am sure that I shall be able to follow most of the instructions and use all of the information provided in this session.

works cited

EUCLID University. 2015. *ACA-401 Coursepack: Period 1*. Retrieved from: <http://www.eucliduniversity.net/periods/aca-401d-period-1/>.

Understanding templates and styles for ACA – 401. Vimeo. 14.34. EUCLID University.<http://vimeo.com/157480457>.

Cleenewerck, Laurent and Kabiru Abubakar Gulma. 2025. ACA-401/ACA-401D Course Pack: Period 1. 6th ed. Washington, D.C.: Euclid University Press. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15245536.