Preface

Our collaboration on this book grew from many mutual conversations about writing. Anneliese works with counseling and psychology graduate students in the United States, and Lauren works with English language learners in higher education from around the world. When we would talk about our shared experiences of teaching about writing, we had lively discussions and debates and swapped pedagogical strategies and encouragement for this work. As these conversations continued—often while burning the midnight oil—we began to realize we had a book on our hands. We were so passionate about writing, specifically about supporting student writing, that we decided that, yep, we wanted to write this book.

A large part of our excitement has been grounded in how we see the students we work with progress from talking about academic writing as though it is something to be avoided at all costs to developing confidence in their own voices as academic writers. We also have talked endlessly about how many of our students enter our classes woefully unprepared for academic writing owing to inadequate support and resources during their earlier education. We also saw students struggle to believe that they could write.

As we became more and more curious about why this lack of preparation for and confidence about academic writing existed for most students, we had many "aha!" moments. We remembered the teachers who encouraged us to write and told us we were good writers. We also remembered our parents, who took us to libraries and cultivated a love of reading—and, therefore, a love of writing. We were not just lucky in these regards; we see these experiences and resources as aspects of privilege that many students whom we work with did not have before they entered our classrooms or

any graduate setting. We noted that we could use this privilege to convey to our current students that they *can* learn academic writing, and even become strong academic writers along the way.

So, in writing this book, we have been guided by our late-night conversations about academic writing, our love of teaching, and our appreciation for our past, current, and future students who open themselves to learning and growing as academic writers. Our aim has been to dispel myths about academic writing and to unlock the "secrets" that seem to exist about it. No one told us about the secrets of academic writing, either, and we "figured it out," just like most people. We want our book to be a part of the solution, so that students do not have to wonder what they missed or whether they are prepared for good academic writing. This book is all about spelling out those secrets and unspoken rules and breaking apart the nitty-gritty steps of academic writing.

To do this, we divided this book into three sections. In Unit I, "Becoming an Academic Writer," Chapter 1, *What Is Academic Writing?,* talks about what academic writing is and is *not.* Chapter 2, *Preparing for Writing Success in Your Discipline,* is geared toward getting you ready to learn the specific academic practices within your discipline or community of practice (CoP). Chapter 3, *Developing Your Own Writing Identity,* helps bring you back to your own writing identity and develop your voice as a writer.

In Unit II, "Developing Academic Writing Skills," we venture into the specific skills that will move your writing forward, making you a stronger and leaner writer. Chapter 4, *Understanding Academic Writer–Reader Roles and Writing Structures,* and Chapter 5, *The Use of Tone and Style in Your Academic Writing,* will help you understand how those within your CoP use their writing to innovate ideas and push the field forward. In these two companion chapters, we talk about how the issues of coherence, writer–reader rules, and audience awareness, as well as rational tone and cohesive style, play into your academic writing. In Chapter 6, *Coaching Yourself to Completion,* we discuss strategies for getting your writing started, moving, and completed, and also talk about specific coaching tips that help you enjoy your writing.

By the time we get to Unit III, "Specific Types of Academic Writing," you will have unlocked a good number of secrets about academic writing and have a solid toolkit of skills and strategies under your belt. Thus it is time to delve into the specific types of academic writing. So in Chapter 7, *Grounding Your Voice in the Literature,* we discuss how to write standalone literature reviews. In Chapter 8, *The Writing Formula for Empirical Academic Writing*, we describe how to write standard sections of empirical (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods) articles as an academic writer. We conclude this unit and the text with Chapter 9, *Publish, Don't Perish,* discussing how you might jump into the publishing world with the support of and trust in what you already know about academic writing.

Throughout this book, we include numerous text boxes, practices, tables, and figures to bring to life the strategies of academic writing. We encourage you to read chapter content and then really engage in these focused learning opportunities. There is also an Appendix—an answer key for some of the practices in which we ask you to identify important academic writing moves within author texts. We have intentionally embedded peer-reviewed journal article exemplars of academic writing so you can see how the strategies we are talking about are explicitly used by published authors. We also begin each chapter with an *awareness focus,* related to the chapter content, and then an *action focus*. These foci are intended to keep you thinking about the overall why-is-this-important points within each chapter. At the end of each chapter, we summarize awareness and action reminders so you have a bit of a snapshot of the chapters as well. Our writing style is honest and straightforward and aims to lead you step by step in becoming a stronger academic writer than you ever might have imagined. You can see that practicality, accessibility, and usefulness were our guideposts in compiling this book. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed dreaming it up and bringing it to fruition.

A brief note about pronouns: With the exception of specific examples, we will be alternating between masculine and feminine pronouns throughout the book to avoid awkward sentences.

CHAPTER 1

What Is Academic Writing?

Academic writing in the behavioral and social sciences is a way of writing that is *distinctly different* from other forms of writing. On the surface, it may appear to have similarities with other types of writing, but the more you learn about it, the more you realize that just about every aspect of academic writing, from purpose to tone, from structure to style, and from audience to word choice, is different. Quite literally, academic writing is more than just another way to write; it is a different culture with its own language.

So, how do you learn academic writing? This is the question that guides this book. We believe that the basic equation for any kind of learning is awareness + action = growth. In your case, this means we believe you will experience positive development as an academic writer if you do the following:

1. Develop *awareness* of academic writing—that is, develop factual knowledge about it as a culture and a language.
2. Take *action* to increase your membership in the academic writing culture and your fluency in academic writing language—that is, consciously and diligently do things that improve your skills and strategies for accomplishing academic writing at a level that is satisfactory for accomplishing your goals.

Accordingly, in this book, our goal is to provide you with a balance of *awareness* (knowledge) and *action* (skill/strategy development steps) in an effort to facilitate growth in your academic writing. Our belief is that expertise in anything—but especially something as specific as academic writing—is primarily a result of extensive practice. As Malcolm Gladwell engagingly illustrates in *Outliers: The Story of Success* (2008), it is 10,000

hours of practice, rather than just inherent ability, that to some extent distinguishes a "phenom" from others in a field. Of course, we do not expect you to make 10,000 hours of practice in academic writing your goal. We just want to emphasize that all time spent *understanding and practicing* academic writing will result in increasing your academic writing expertise.

In this first chapter, our **awareness focus** is helping you to gain an understanding of what academic writing *is*—and what academic writing is *not*. Our **action focus** includes ideas for steps you can take to consciously develop your ability to see written texts through the eyes of an academic writer. Let's begin by exploring what academic writing *is* and is *not* in more detail.

DEFINING ACADEMIC WRITING

Academic writing is more than just another way to write; it is literally a different culture with its own language. In fact, academic writing is more than just one different culture. It is simultaneously one culture and many cultures, which can obviously create confusion for those trying to join the culture(s) and learn the language(s). Academic writing is one culture in the sense that most experienced, successful academic writers (from the same country) would likely agree on several of the general qualities of academic writing. However, academic writing is also many cultures because those same experienced, successful academic writers would also likely look at the same academically written text and provide very different comments and suggestions for revisions based on what is considered the norm in their specific discipline. Thus, even people like your professors, who operate very successfully within the culture and language of academic writing, may have a difficult time of breaking down what is and what is not academic writing in explicit terms, because it is not one thing. It is many things, and they did not *learn* it—they *absorbed* it. Right now, if you were to schedule a meeting with your favorite professor and ask her to define what academic writing is, you might get some vague answers like the following:

- "It is what we use in writing journal articles."
- "You know academic writing when you see it."
- "You know what is *not* academic writing when you see it."
- "Academic writing is formal, neutral language."

Of course, the confusing thing about these types of responses is that they do not really answer your question. You still do not know what academic writing is, and as far as you can tell at this point, neither does your professor. So, how are you supposed to figure out how to do academic writing when you do not know what it is? Perhaps you should ask your

professor another question, such as, "How did you learn academic writing?" This time, you may get more concrete responses:

- "I had to learn academic writing on my own."
- "I learned academic writing when I was working on my dissertation."
- "Academic writing was really varied according to my professors. I picked up a little something from each professor I worked with in graduate school."
- "I am still learning what academic writing is—it seems to change according to journal, colleague, and discipline!"

Although these answers may also seem unhelpful, you can begin to understand that professors have difficulty defining what academic writing is because they likely experienced very little direct instruction in developing themselves as academic writers. Like you, they were expected to produce academic writing that met some mysterious standard defined by their professors, and somehow (they may not know how) they managed to achieve that standard.

The journey to becoming an academic writer is unique and highly individualized for everyone, and inevitably involves some strategic planning, some trial and error, and lots of perseverance. Thus the first major awareness that can help move you forward in your own process of becoming an academic writer is to understand that you are in charge of this journey. It will ultimately be up to you to direct your own process of becoming an academic writer and to figure out what works for you. The key action that can help you to take charge of your journey is to be curious. Curiosity will lead you not only to notice things you need to notice in your journey to becoming an academic writer, but also to seek explanations, resources, and assistance as you manage your journey. For example, curiosity will help you to develop the ability to see written texts as experienced academic writers see them, and this is a crucial step in your process of becoming an academic writer.

ACADEMIC WRITING VERSUS OTHER TYPES OF WRITING

Is a magazine article academic writing? Is a newspaper editorial academic writing? Is an advertising brochure academic writing? What about a blog post? Text message? Tweet? Is an office memo academic writing? A recipe . . . e-mail . . . message taped to your door . . . or a to-do list? We think you get our point. Chances are you said "No" to all of the above. If so, you are generally correct. Each of those types of writing is common—so

common you may read and/or write them every day—but none of them are academic writing.

At the same time, academic writing is not a single type of text. The categorization of something as academic writing generally means that the something in question shares a specific combination of features that are considered representative of the term *academic*. In what might be considered "good" academic writing, these features include but are not limited to the following:

- *Audience awareness*. The intended or imagined audience or reader for the text is clearly envisioned as having some shared knowledge about the content.

- *Argumentative purpose*. The purpose of the text is to argue an overall position or point of view about a topic that is in some way new or unique by demonstrating knowledge about the topic and ability to use that knowledge.

- *Problematizing approach*. The overall position or point of view on a topic typically presents previous positions or points of view as problematic in some way, even when those previous positions or points of view may have been long accepted as common knowledge. The goal of such an approach is generally to create a rationale for considering the topic from new or alternative points of view.

- *Rational tone*. The writer of the text assumes the reader will be either appeased or persuaded by the obvious and carefully explained logic of the argument.

- *Relevant content*. The text includes only academically credible information that is relevant to supporting and forwarding the writer's argument or discrediting information that does not support the writer's argument.

- *Coherent structure*. Regardless of the relative length of the text, it must follow a precise organizational plan on a macro-level, as in the case of the organization of an academic research article, and on a meso-level, as in the case of a single paragraph of an academic research article. The academic coherence is reflected in the way ideas are introduced and broken down for further discussion. In academic writing, ideas are introduced categorically, from general categories to more specific categories to even more specific instances of those categories.

- *Cohesive style*. The writer assumes more or less complete responsibility for the reader's understanding of his ideas and uses linguistic devices such as repetition of key words, parallel structure, transition words or expressions, and a sophisticated variety of synonyms or metaphors to create writing that tightly connects ideas, leaving little

room for misinterpretations. This style includes significant attention to establishing definitions and clarifying relationships between ideas to ensure that the reader sees things in the manner intended by the writer.

- *Complex, but not ornate, grammar and vocabulary.* The writer utilizes different sentence types, alternates between active and passive voice, and generally composes with a wide range of precise and sometimes technical vocabulary. However, the complexity of the grammar and vocabulary does not diminish the clarity of the argument, even for those who may not be necessarily trained in that particular content area.

Successful use of the aforementioned features generally produces "good" academic writing. Understanding how experienced writers in your field specifically accomplish these features and acquiring the ability to do the same helps you develop a writing "voice" that is more credible in your field. See Box 1.1 for a summary list of criteria that make your writing credible in the academic world of behavioral and social sciences. These are components of academic writing that professors, journal editors, and reviewers, among others, are typically expecting in your writing.

Notice that, if you were to apply these criteria to other forms of writing, the individual criterion might be fulfilled, but it would not appear in the same way it does in academic writing. For example, audience awareness is a criterion for many forms of writing, including tweeting. If you want people to read your writing with interest, you have to project an imagined audience through the content and style of your writing. If your Twitter followers are

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BOX 1.1. Criteria for Credible Academic Writing in Behavioral and Social Sciences

- Audience = Academic
- Purpose = Argumentation
- Approach = Problematizing
- Tone = Rational
- Content = Academically credible
- Structure = Highly organized according to logical principles of argumentation
- Style = Highly cohesive to clearly establish connections between ideas
- Language = Clear prose that demonstrates sophisticated and precise knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics

eighth-grade boys who love video games and hip-hop, tweeting a satirical response to a political event probably would not maintain or grow your readership. If you tweet, you must appeal to your audience, whoever they happen to be. Similarly, if you write academically, you must appeal to an academic audience, and you must understand what that audience expects.

You can help yourself in this area by taking some simple actions. You already know lots of things about writing that can be useful to you in figuring out the differences between academic writing and other forms of writing. The information is already there for you in your brain and your past experience. The following is a simple pattern of questions you can use to access what you already know so your awareness of what academic writing *is* and *is not* will grow:

1. What kind of writing text is this—how would you categorize it? Is it a news article, a text message, a blog, a personal e-mail, etc.?

2. Who is the likely imagined or intended audience/reader for this text?

3. What is the purpose of this text? Why did the writer write it? What impact or effect does the writer want it to have on the reader?

4. How did the writer approach the topic of this text? What strategy was used to provide a basic rationale for writing about this topic?

5. What type of information is included in this text? Is it all closely related to one central idea, or does the information introduce many different ideas?

6. What is the tone of this text? What is the attitude of the writer toward the reader?

7. What is the structure or organization of ideas in this text? Does it appear to have some kind of formal structure, is it stream of consciousness, or is it something in between?

8. What is the style of expression used in this text? Are the ideas tightly connected and clearly explained in relation to each other? Are the ideas presented somewhat sequentially but not necessarily explained?

9. What kind of grammar and vocabulary are used in this text? Are the sentences simple or complex? Is the vocabulary sophisticated, requiring a high level of literacy, or is it more conversational?

10. Based on your answers to numbers 1–9, how does this text you are currently evaluating compare to academic writing?

If you regularly practice analyzing any written text you encounter with these questions, before long you will have a very clear idea of how all forms of writing compare to one another. You will also develop a more nuanced

understanding of how the seemingly small differences between texts can make such a huge difference when it comes to producing written texts that readers judge as fitting their intended categories. You will begin to see texts through the eyes of an academic writer. Try your hand at analyzing differences between texts by answering the questions in Practice Exercise 1.1. You can check your answers in the Appendix.

PRACTICE EXERCISE 1.1. Identifying Text Type

TEXT 1

Worried about the past? Stressed out about the future? How do you feel right now? Mindfulness is a practice you can use to move into the **NOW moment**, and that move can make you happier and calmer.

When your mind is busy reliving the past and thinking about what you could have or should have done, you lose energy. The past is a movie you've already seen—seeing it again won't change the outcome! When your mind is busy inventing an unknown future and stressing about what might go wrong, you lose energy. The future is a game that hasn't started yet—you can't play it before it begins! So, stop, breathe in, look around, and notice: **What are you doing right now? How do you feel right now? What do you see, hear, taste, and smell right now?**

Questions for Text 1

1. What kind of writing text is Text 1—how would you categorize it? Is it a news article, a blog, a personal e-mail, a Web page, a brochure, an abstract for a research article, a book review, part of a literature review, part of a Method section, or part of a Discussion section?

2. Who is the likely imagined or intended audience/reader for this text?

3. What is the purpose of this text? Why did the author write it? What impact or effect does the author want it to have on the reader?

4. How did the author approach the topic of this text? What strategy was used to provide a basic rationale for writing about this topic?

5. What type of information is included in this text? Is it all closely related to one central idea, or does the information introduce many different ideas?

6. What is the tone of this text? What is the attitude of the author toward the reader?

7. What is the structure or organization of ideas in this text? Does it appear to have some kind of formal structure, is it stream of consciousness, or is it something in between?

8. What is the style of expression used in this text? Are the ideas tightly

connected and clearly explained in relation to each other? Are the ideas presented somewhat sequentially but not necessarily explained?

9. What kind of grammar and vocabulary are used in this text? Are the sentences simple or complex? Is the vocabulary sophisticated, requiring a high level of literacy, or is it more conversational?

10. Based on your answers to numbers 1–9, how does this text that you are currently evaluating compare to academic writing?

TEXT 2
(Gould, Dariotis, Mendelson, & Greenberg, 2012, p. 968)

Mindfulness practices that utilize yoga and other contemplative techniques are a promising approach for enhancing key aspects of self-regulation (e.g., Chiesa & Serretti, 2009; Greenberg & Harris, 2011; Lutz et al., 2009; Tang et al., 2009). Derived from Eastern contemplative traditions, *mindfulness* involves attending to the present moment in a sustained and receptive fashion (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Yoga, a specific form of mindfulness, involves maintaining focused attention on one's breath and body while performing movements that improve strength and flexibility. Indeed, the Sanskrit root of "yoga" means "to yoke, to join, and to direct and concentrate one's attention" (Collins, 1998, p. 564). Yoga and other meditative techniques have been shown to increase attention and self-regulation and reduce stress and improve functioning in adults (Arias, Steinberg, Banga, & Trestment, 2006; Kirkwood et al., 2005; Ospina et al., 2007; Pilkington, Kirkwood, Rampes, & Richardson, 2005; Shapiro, Brown, & Biegel, 2007).

Questions for Text 2

1. What kind of writing text is Text 2—how would you categorize it? Is it a news article, a blog, a personal e-mail, a Web page, a brochure, an abstract for a research article, a book review, part of a literature review, part of a Method section, or part of a Discussion section?

2. Who is the likely imagined or intended audience/reader for this text?

3. What is the purpose of this text? Why did the author write it? What impact or effect does the author want it to have on the reader?

4. How did the author approach the topic of this text? What strategy was used to provide a basic rationale for writing about this topic?

5. What type of information is included in this text? Is it all closely related to one central idea, or does the information introduce many different ideas?

6. What is the tone of this text? What is the attitude of the author toward the reader?

7. What is the structure or organization of ideas in this text? Does it appear to have some kind of formal structure, is it stream of consciousness, or is it something in between?

8. What is the style of expression used in this text? Are the ideas tightly connected and clearly explained in relation to each other? Are the ideas presented somewhat sequentially but not necessarily explained?

9. What kind of grammar and vocabulary are used in this text? Are the sentences simple or complex? Is the vocabulary sophisticated, requiring a high level of literacy, or is it more conversational?

10. Based on your answers to numbers 1–9, how does this text that you are currently evaluating compare to academic writing?

EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONAL LANGUAGE VERSUS ACADEMIC WRITING LANGUAGE

Although language style is a consideration that we have briefly touched on in discussing differences between academic and nonacademic texts, the topic of language style merits a little more attention because it is such a distinguishing characteristic of academic writing and because it is also such a common mistake for new academic writers. In your—hopefully daily— evaluation of different written texts, you have probably noticed that texts can discuss the exact same ideas using many different words and styles of expression. Some written texts, such as text messages, tweets, and personal e-mails, use a conversational style of language that is very similar if not identical to speaking language. Some, such as news articles and advertisements, use a journalistic or media style of language that is very emotional and intensifying but not terribly sophisticated. Others, such as memos, recipes, and to-do lists, prefer a directive style of language that is instructional. Some, such as academic research articles, use a language we simply refer to as academic language. Academic writing language is something like Latin in the sense that it is a language people learn to read and write, but it is not actually a language they speak.

As new graduate students, it is particularly important that you become aware of the differences between what may be considered acceptable language for talking about concepts during class discussions and what is acceptable language for writing about concepts in written assignments. The language of class discussions is often very conversational, and this can be misleading if you mistake the way something is discussed in class for the way you should discuss it in writing. Learning the language of academic writing, particularly the language of academic writing in your discipline, is essential to your development as an academic writer.

As we mentioned earlier, developing your ability to see written texts as experienced academic writers do is a fundamental building block for developing your own academic writing voice. One of the basic rules for learning any language—academic or otherwise—is that input informs output, or what you can do with language (output) is a reflection of what language

you have absorbed (input). Thus, the more you are exposed to academic writing language in what you read, the more likely it is that this language will become one of your own languages. However, simple exposure is not enough and will not give you the results you want quickly enough. Your exposure to academic writing language needs to be intentional and conscious. You cannot just wait for academic writing language to gradually seep into your awareness; you have to actively pursue the input you need. To increase your intentional and conscious exposure to the academic writing language of your discipline, we suggest that graduate students take the following actions:

- Immerse yourself in academic writing language by truly and carefully reading all of the assignments your professors give. Treat every reading assignment as another opportunity to "learn the lingo" of your discipline.

- Take notes, write summaries, give oral summaries, and even engage in academic discussions using the same kind of language that was used in the academic texts you read to practice the academic writing language you are learning. It might seem like extra work or you may even feel pretentious, but in the long run, you are preparing yourself for academic writing.

- Keep a list of words or phrases or even sentences that seem to be frequently used in your discipline. Every field has its buzzwords, shorthand, and special ways of communicating information to other members of the field. Each time your professors ask you to read multiple articles on the same topic, you are being given the opportunity to notice the similar language all of the writers used to discuss the same topic. If you have something like Adobe Acrobat, you can often cut and paste words or sentences into a separate document, so keeping a list is not all that hard.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACADEMIC READING AND WRITING

Even though we have encouraged you to see academic writing as different from other types of writing, and we still want you to do that, we also want to acknowledge that not all academic writing is the same, despite the fact that it is all academic. Graduate syllabi may include a variety of texts to read, such as textbooks, academic research articles, case studies, monographs, and chapters from edited books, as well as nonfiction and fiction books, editorials, blogs, and Web pages, among others. Some of these texts are considered "academic," and some of them are not. However, when they are read within an academic context such as a graduate course, you can be sure that you are expected to read, discuss, and use them in academic ways.

Although the designation of academic versus nonacademic text could be and has been debated, for our purposes, we propose that academic texts are those texts you read that you probably would not choose to read except in the pursuit of building an academic knowledge base. For example, textbooks, case studies, academic research articles of all kinds, monographs, chapters from edited books, theses, and dissertations are probably not the kind of reading you would randomly select for your personal reading list. Even though their topics might interest you personally, the academic style of expression used in these types of texts might be off-putting for casual reading.

Most of us are intimately familiar with the textbook as an academic text, having used them for probably every course of our student lives. We have probably also seen case studies before, at least in miniature versions, because they are frequently included in textbooks. On the other hand, graduate school may be our first "real" introduction to other types of academic texts such as research articles, monographs, chapters from edited books, theses, and dissertations.

The following is a list of what we consider to be academic texts, along with a few important facts about each that we think are important for graduate readers and writers in the behavioral and social sciences to know. It is not an exhaustive list, but includes some of the major types of academic writing you will come across in your studies.

Textbooks

A textbook is a book-length summary of what is considered standard knowledge in a specific topic area. Standard characteristics include the following:

- They are divided into chapters, sections, and subsections.
- They are typically written in an objective or neutral point of view, although there are exceptions.
- They generally contain common knowledge in a given field and/or information summarized from secondary sources.
- They repeat and deepen ideas and constructs related to a topic.
- They include lots of field-specific vocabulary and definitions.
- They are written in a friendly but formal style that is intended to simplify ideas for the reader, who is presumed to know less than the writer.

Case Vignettes

A case vignette is a story-like illustration of a problem or potential problem in a specific field that varies from a few sentences to multiple pages. Standard characteristics include the following:

- They may be hypothetical or based on real-life situations.
- They generally include both relevant and nonrelevant information.
- They may be written in a report style (i.e., here are the facts) or may follow a fiction (i.e., story-like) style.

Research Articles

Scholars publish peer-reviewed articles in academic journals. All fields are represented by multiple journals that publish research in their discipline. Articles are typically anonymous and peer-reviewed by other researchers within a topic area before they are published to ensure the quality and credibility of the research. A mistaken assumption new graduate students may have is that professors are paid for their articles or paid for reviewing other researchers' articles. Publishing research articles and reviewing them is unpaid work that is undertaken by professors because it is part of the standard work requirements for obtaining tenure, promotion, and other rewards (raises, awards, etc.). Academic research articles can be roughly divided into four types:

- Empirical studies (i.e., the researchers conducted some type of study).
- Conceptual articles (i.e., the researchers reviewed and interpreted multiple empirical and conceptual studies done by others).
- Propositional articles (i.e., the researchers are proposing new theories or directions that are creative but logical considering other empirical and conceptual research).
- Response articles (i.e., the researchers are responding, usually critically, to research or an idea that was published by another).

Academic research journals all have prescribed requirements in terms of style. For example, some may require following the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA), some the *MLA* (Modern Language Association) *Handbook,* some the *Chicago Manual of Style,* and so on. Research articles are generally quite formulaic in their structure and are presented in titled sections and subsections. The general formula is as follows:

- Introduce the topic and the research problem that will be addressed in a brief introduction.
- Explain the necessary definitions and background information required to understand the research problem and its significance in the field.
- Explain what you (the researcher) have done to investigate this problem, as well as what you have found as a result of your investigation.

- Discuss the significance and meaning of what you have found in relation to the problem and your field.
- Discuss the limitations of what you did and how that may have affected what you found.
- Return to the research problem, explain how what you found furthers knowledge about this problem, and suggest what still needs to be done.

Other standard characteristics of academic research articles include the following:

- Careful and intentional reference to multiple sources throughout.
- Inclusion of a primary argument, even though much of the text is focused on using support from secondary sources.
- Dense prose (i.e., each sentence carries a lot of information).
- Frequent use of technical, field-specific vocabulary, often without definitions.
- A formal style that is intended to share "important" information with a reader who is presumed to be a colleague or soon-to-be colleague in the field.

Monographs

A monograph is a book-length version of an academic research article. As such, the structure and characteristics of a monograph are quite similar to a research article except that, of course, writers have more pages—so they may include more details or explain more than would be possible in a regular research article.

Chapters in Edited Books

A chapter in an edited book might not have a standard form. A researcher is usually invited to submit a chapter to an edited book when that researcher has done interesting or unique work in the topic area of the book. The editors usually tell the researcher the point of view they wish to put forth in the book, and the researcher writes a chapter that adds to or supports this point of view using her own research as illustration. In some ways, a chapter in an edited book is similar to an academic research article, but the focus is typically a self-summary of a researcher's work or point of view on a topic area.

Theses and Dissertations

Theses and dissertations are student-written academic texts, which may also be read and used by both student and professional academic

researchers and/or eventually turned into another academic text, such as those described above. These texts usually contain multiple chapters that include introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion. Standard characteristics of these texts include the following:

- Careful and intentional reference to multiple sources throughout.
- Inclusion of a primary argument, even though much of the text is focused on using support from secondary sources.
- Significant attention to explanation and definition.
- Noticeable hedging (i.e., suggestive rather than conclusive language).
- A formal style that is intended to demonstrate the writer's ability to both do research and write research for a reader who is presumed to already be an established researcher in the field.

For new graduate students, increasing your awareness of the characteristics that distinguish the different types of academic texts you are asked to read is important because, of course, you may eventually be asked to produce different types of academic texts. In addition, much of the academic writing you are asked to do will require you to find and integrate ideas from different academic sources. In order to do this, you will need to understand what types of academic sources are available to you and how to read them in ways that allow you to effectively use their ideas in your own academic writing. Thus, understanding how these texts you read were put together can improve your reading and writing.

In general, academic writing is highly organized and patterned. Each type of text may have its own pattern, and each unique text may follow that pattern in slightly different ways, but the essential pattern is recognizable. In this case, the pattern we are referring to is the overall organization and structure of a text, or, as we call it, the *macro-level* organization. This is the level of organization that is based on the large parts, such as sections or subsections, that make up the whole text. Just as you need to learn academic writing language, you also need to learn academic writing structure and organization. Specifically, you need to understand how the parts of any longer piece of writing are structured and organized to support the writer's argument. To improve your understanding of how different types of texts are organized and structured in your discipline, we suggest the following actions:

- Actively and consciously identify the macro-level pattern of each text you read. Then compare and categorize the texts you read according to their macro-level patterns.
- Save "good" examples of different types of texts in your own files so that, when you later have to produce these texts yourself, you will have ready models to inspire and guide you.

The first action of identifying and comparing macro-level patterns can be achieved by asking yourself a few questions about each text you read. It is actually beneficial to ask yourself these questions *before* you read a text as a way not only to identify the macro-level pattern but also to improve your own understanding of what you read. These questions can help you figure out the central ideas and have some understanding of the argument presented in the text before you begin:

1. Who is the likely imagined or intended audience/reader for this text? Where in the text is this imagined or intended audience/reader first indicated?

2. What is the question this text seeks to answer? Where is this question first indicated? Why does the writer believe that it is important to answer this question?

3. What types of sections and subsections are included, if any? How do these sections and subsections relate to the question the text seeks to answer? Do these sections and subsections suggest that this is a particular type of text (e.g., empirical research article, monograph, etc.)? Explain.

4. Based on your answers to numbers 1–3, how does this academic text you are currently evaluating compare to other academic texts you have read? Is its macro-level pattern similar to other texts, or is it something totally new to you?

In the case of a research article, you can generally answer these questions simply by skimming through the introduction and scanning the article for the headings and subheadings. In Practice Exercise 1.2, we have provided information on the imagined audience and research questions for two different research articles. We have also provided you with a list of the headings used in each article. Use the information we have provided, along with your own interpretative skills, to figure out how the macro-structure relates to the research questions and what the macro-structure reveals about the type of research article each text is. You can check your answers in the Appendix.

PRACTICE EXERCISE 1.2. Comparing Macro-Level Patterns

Review the information about audience and research questions provided about Text 1. Then review the headings and subheadings used in the text. As you review this information, consider the following questions:

1. How do these headings and subheadings relate to the questions that the text seeks to answer?

2. Do these headings and subheadings suggest that this is a particular

type of text (e.g., empirical research article, monograph, etc.)? Explain.

TEXT 1: AUDIENCE/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Kim (2014) published an article titled "When Social Class Meets Ethnicity: College-Going Experiences of Chinese and Korean Immigrant Students" in *The Review of Higher Education*. Based on our reading of the introduction of the article (the first three paragraphs), Kim's imagined or intended audience is college admissions officers or college administrators. We inferred this from the use of the following phrases in the first paragraph: "decision to attend college," "college aspirants," "educational aspirations," "college admission processes," "transition to college," "college admission," "college entrance exams," "college education," "college information," and "college application process" (p. 321). For us, the use of so many phrases that focus on college as a next step indicate that the writer expects the audience to be people who are concerned about and responsible for recruiting and/or interacting with students and parents who are looking at college as a next step.

Based on our interpretation of the introduction of the text, the writer seeks to answer the following questions: How do socioeconomic backgrounds affect the involvement of Asian immigrant parents in their children's postsecondary decisions? How do immigrant children negotiate their parents' expectations and involvement in their postsecondary decisions? These questions are indirectly stated in the final paragraph of the introduction. The writer appears to think these questions are important because they have not been as well researched in relation to Asian immigrant parents and children as they have for Asian American parents and children.

Headings/Subheadings

   I. Introduction (not labeled as a heading)

  II. What Accounts for the Educational Outcomes of Asian Immigrants?

 III. Theoretical Perspectives

IV. Methods

    A. Research Site and Study Participants

  V. Data Collection and Analysis

 VI. Ensuring Data Quality and Reflexivity

VII. Limitations

VIII. Findings

    A. College Aspirations: Shaping My Own Future versus Fulfilling My Family's Hopes

    B. Educational Strategies: Co-Ethnic Networks and School Resources

    C. Students' Conflict with Utilitarian Parental Expectations for College Majors

    D. Choosing the Right College: Financial Affordability Versus Academic Prestige

  IX. Discussion and Implication

Review the information about audience and research questions provided about Text 2. Then review the headings and subheadings used in the text. As you review this information, consider the following questions:

1. How do these headings and subheadings relate to the questions that the text seeks to answer?

2. Do these headings and subheadings suggest that this is a particular type of text (empirical research article, monograph, etc.)? Explain.

3. How does the macro-structure of Text 1 compare to the macro-structure of Text 2? Are they the same type of research article? Explain.

TEXT 2: AUDIENCE/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda (2014) published an article titled "Lives in the Making: Power, Academia and the Everyday" in *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*. We believe the likely intended audience for this article includes "academic geographers in the making" (or graduate students of geography). This audience is explicitly mentioned and discussed throughout the introduction. However, given that the introduction discusses the unequal power relations that affect graduate students, the intended audience also likely includes graduate professors who are instrumental in determining how academic geographers are made. In a broader sense, the writers may intend the audience to include graduate students and professors of any subject as the writers refer often to "academia," "neo-liberal" university spaces, and "institutional practices."

As we understand it, the question this text seeks to answer is: How does the neoliberal project and the spaces and times it produces within academia play out on our bodies and everyday life experiences as graduate students, specifically academic geography students? This question is first indicated at the end of the first paragraph. The authors believe this is an important question to answer because academia professes an interest in graduate students and faculty having a work/life balance, but it is not set up to produce or support such a balance. Consequently, the only ways to be successful involve adopting ways of doing and being that are white, masculine, and middle-class, which produces productive versus nurturing academic professionals who are required to ignore or subjugate their own well-being to meet the normal standards of academia. The authors do not consider this to be fair, necessary, or the only way things should be.

Headings/Subheadings

   I. Introduction

  II. Research methods

 III. The neoliberalization of academia as an everyday, embodied experience

 IV. The logics of neoliberal academic life

      A. The embodiment of neoliberal ideals

      B. Work and life within the neoliberal academy

  V. Academic bodies out of place

      A. The "professional" body

      B. The nurturing body

      C. The sick body

 VI. Conclusion: Towards some alternatives

The second action we suggested related to noticing macro-level patterns—saving model texts—is just a trick of the trade that can prove very useful for both your immediate and long-term future. Save examples of what you consider to be excellent academic writing, the kind you would like to emulate, in a special place. For example, you might have a folder with a favorite empirical article (e.g., a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods study), a favorite conceptual article (e.g., not an empirical study), a favorite propositional article (e.g., often theory-based), and a favorite response article (e.g., a critical response to previous research). Update this folder with new favorites as your appreciation of "good" academic writing deepens. Also, save examples of writing in which the writer does something well that you know you will also have to do in your own writing. If you know you are planning on doing a study in which you collect interview-based data but you have never written any kind of academic text using that type of data, be on the lookout for a research article or book chapter in which the writer uses interview-based data in ways you find especially effective. Knowing you have models you selected yourself that are readily available can allow you to decide to attempt new forms of writing more comfortably. You will not feel as lost if you have a model or two, and when you get stuck in trying to figure out how to write something up, you can look at your models for guidance and inspiration. See Box 1.2 for our personal stories of how paying attention to different text types as readers helped us as writers.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ACADEMIC WRITING

Although the journey to becoming an academic writer is unique and highly individualized, there are some predictable challenges that many new writers

> **BOX 1.2. Preparing for Future Writing through Conscious Reading**
>
> I was once asked to read a published article that was basically an example of conceptual research (i.e., a thorough literature review of what had been done in the field with regard to a specific topic). I found the author's style exceptionally clear and easy to follow. Therefore, I decided to save this particular article as a model for how to write a successful paper that was not empirical but rather just based on a review of the literature. This turned out to be a good idea, as I also found out that in graduate school, often, I was required to write papers that were just reviews of the literature. I returned to this paper time and time again just for inspiration on how to accomplish this task, even though the actual topic of the original paper was nothing like my future papers. Over the years, I have added to my collection of "models" of literature reviews so that now, when I am teaching a student how to do a paper that is only a literature review, I can select from a few I consider appropriate to the current level of academic writing ability the student has.
>
> —*Lauren*
>
> When writing my dissertation, I found the "perfect" journal article amid a gigantic pile of articles I pulled. Instead of feeling like I wanted to skim the article after reading the introduction, this author pulled me into her argument with her passion and urgency about the topic. The article, however, still had the same writing moves I saw in other articles. I saved this article into a file and began keeping an assortment of articles in which I can "hear" the author's voice and feel inspired— because I want my own academic writing to be inspired. Becoming a conscious reader also is embedded in how I take notes. I do not just note the main topics, themes, or take-aways from an article. I also draw a box around phrasing that is creative or especially powerful in delivering a point.
>
> —*Anneliese*

face. One of those challenges is related to previous experience. Many graduate students assume that a past history of succeeding in undergraduate academic writing or workplace writing means they will be automatically or at least easily successful in graduate-level academic writing. This is a myth of epic proportions, and the consequences of believing this myth can be seriously damaging to your self-esteem as both a graduate student and a writer. So two points of awareness we would like for you to embrace are the following:

1. Workplace writing, unless you work as a professor in a university, is not academic writing.
2. The ability to write well in an undergraduate context is not an indicator of the ability to write well in a graduate context.

Why does your writing success in one context not translate to graduate school? Writing is context dependent. What counts as good writing depends on several factors, such as the intended audience/reader, the purpose of the writing, and other things. So, for example, the standards for workplace writing vary from one workplace to another and from one boss to another. In addition, the standards for workplace writing are strongly influenced by the education and capabilities of the people who are intended to read your workplace writing. You could be a great workplace writer in one job and not so great in another simply because your boss or intended readers are different.

The undergraduate experience is similar to the workplace. All teachers have their own expectations about academic writing. Also, undergraduates may write in many different disciplines (e.g., history, psychology, political science, literature) even as they pursue a degree in only one discipline, so they may develop very little understanding of how to write academically within one discipline because they are asked to write in so many different ways.

But does being a "good" writer help at all? Of course, the fact that you have confidence in your capabilities as a writer and probably enjoy it to some extent will definitely help you. It will help you the most if you take the action of accepting from the beginning that graduate academic writing is *not* the same as what you have been doing, and if you become a strategic reader of graduate academic texts in the ways we have already outlined.

Another of the challenges that might pop up for you as you move forward in graduate school is related to unspoken rules. Let's say you are actively and consciously reading. You have picked up several tricks of the trade, and you want to show off your new academic ease in the latest assignment your professor has given you. You put together an academic research essay that sounds just like all of those research articles you have read, right down to the proprietary use of the *we* and *our* pronouns in your introduction and conclusion. You are excited to hear what your professor thinks. You eagerly await the feedback but are floored when your professor critiques the overly confident style of your academic expression and challenges whether you as a student-writer truly have enough knowledge to make such grand and sweeping statements.

"But," you say, "*X* author did it this way." Yes, *X published* author did, but you are not *X,* and this work you submitted was not for publication. Welcome to the unspoken rule of academic writing, which states something like the following: *Student academic writers should mimic published*

academic writers, but they are not allowed to transgress boundaries that more experienced writers may be able to transgress acceptably. There are some types of academic expression that are too strong or too assertive for student use, and, in fact, many consider them too strong for anyone to use. For example, too much use of *we, our, I,* and *my* is generally frowned upon in academic writing. There are also some permissible assumptions published academic writers can make that student academic writers cannot make. For instance, a published academic writer may be able to use technical terms without definition in his work, whereas a student academic writer would likely need to define those same terms in her own work.

In general, most published academic writers strive to communicate with a rational or neutral tone, which they achieve through the use of both assertive and suggestive language. For example, a phrase such as "The results indicate . . ." is assertive in the sense that it appears that these results are an indisputable fact that the writer is simply reporting. A phrase such as "This finding may be linked to . . ." is suggestive in the sense that the writer is suggesting rather than definitively claiming a link. Student writers are regularly advised to decrease the intensity of their claims by using more suggestive language, such as modals (e.g., *may, might, could*), adverbs (e.g., *perhaps, possibly*), and disclaimers (e.g., *not in all cases, there are exceptions*). See Practice Exercise 1.3 for a practice opportunity related to some of the unspoken rules of writing. You can check your answers in the Appendix.

PRACTICE EXERCISE 1.3. Noticing Some Unspoken Rules of Academic Writing

You have been given two samples of text from the same research article. One sample is from the Introduction, and one is from the Conclusion. Skim both texts and answer the questions that accompany them.

TEXT
(Cho & Miller, 2014, pp. 340, 349–350)

Introduction

Over the past several years, researchers have framed the phenomenon of AAPI's low mental health service utilization in terms of unwillingness to seek counseling. *Willingness to seek counseling* refers to the degree to which individuals are inclined to engage the services of a counselor for academic, vocational, intrapersonal, social, health, or discrimination problems (Gim, Atkinson, & Whiteley, 1990; Kim & Omizo, 2003). Collectively, studies have linked AAPI's willingness to seek counseling to cultural values, stigma, and attitudes toward seeking professional help (Kim, 2007; Ludwikowski, Vogel, &

Armstrong, 2009; Miller, Yange, Hui, Choi, & Lim, 2011; Vogel, Wade, & Haake, 2006; Vogel, Wade, & Hackler, 2007). Therefore, in this study, we tested the ways in which AAPI individuals' adherence to Asian and European American cultural values related to their willingness to seek counseling directly and indirectly through stigma toward counseling and attitudes toward seeking professional help.

Conclusion

Although our findings highlight the ways in which Asian cultural values related to a diminished willingness to seek counseling, it might be more productive to focus on more proximal (and perhaps more malleable) factors such as perceptions of stigma toward counseling rather than attempting to change AAPI individuals' espousal of cultural values (e.g., asking AAPI clients to adhere more strongly to European American values such as independence). In addition, it might be more helpful for clients to explore potential cultural-values-based differences related to seeking counseling. For example, it might be beneficial to help AAPI clients explore how their espousal of Asian and European American cultural values influences their experience of public stigma, stigma by close others, and their own self-stigma toward counseling and how these factors ultimately influence their decision to seek, continue, and/or terminate counseling. Finally, although it is important to acknowledge the impact of cultural values on the counseling process, exaggerated and simplistic distinctions between AAPI and non-AAPI clients could be problematic (Uba, 1994). For example, rather than categorizing AAPI clients as a monolithic racial group and automatically assuming they adhere strongly to Asian cultural values and do not espouse European American cultural values, it would be beneficial to consider the subtle and complex ways in which individuals espouse cultural values and perceive stigma toward counseling.

QUESTIONS

1. Can you find some immediate examples of authors using personal pronouns to establish authorial voice?
2. Can you find some immediate examples of authors using assertive language? When do they use this type of language?
3. Can you find some examples of authors using suggestive language? When do they use this type of language?
4. Now, compare the introduction and the conclusion. Which contains the most assertive language? Which contains the most suggestive language? Why do you think this is?

The reasons that there are unspoken rules of academic writing rest somewhere with the notions of hierarchy and expertise within the academic community. In generations past, most of the people who published academic writing were tenure-track faculty, and, as such, they had earned a certain amount of prestige and writerly discretion in the academic writing culture. Of course, the more published a professor was, the more prestige and discretion he may have been granted within his specific discipline. Thus our best guess (and it is truly a guess) is that, even in today's world, in which graduate students may publish their academic writing, certain manners of expression are allowed or not allowed in direct relation to the writer's need to project a certain amount of prestige in order to be considered worthy of publishing an academic text. However, projecting prestige is not necessary or advisable in graduate-level academic writing. It may have the unintended effect of making the writer seem less rather than more worthy.

How do you obey an unspoken rule—is that not like a dog chasing its tail? Well, it can certainly feel like you are chasing your tail; and it can be quite frustrating because, of course, no one is really going to tell you clearly what to do. We stick by our suggestion that you take action by becoming a strategic reader of academic texts. This will improve your academic writing. The general idea is that the more you read academic writing, the more you absorb how to communicate like an academic writer. The more you absorb, the more you are able to approximate the writing you see in published academic texts. However, as we mentioned earlier, you need to take charge of this absorbing process to ensure that you are moving along the continuum from student-writer to something more than a student-writer. One action we suggest for taking charge of this process is to gently encourage your professors to become more transparent about unspoken rules. You can do this by asking them for what they feel is a "good" model any time they give you a writing assignment. Some professors may offer models when they describe writing assignments, but if professors do not offer a model of a writing assignment, ask them privately or via e-mail if they have a "good" example of the type of writing assignment they wish for students to submit. If they share an example, take time to analyze the sample. You might consider asking yourself questions like the following to increase your understanding of the features that distinguish it:

1. How is this text organized? What are the sections and subsections?
2. What is the purpose of each section and/or subsection?
3. How is the purpose of each section and/or subsection achieved? What content is included? How is the content organized? How is the content expressed from a stylistic perspective?

Each of these questions can help you to understand what counts as good writing to an expert academic writer, namely your professor. If your

professor considers this a "good" example, chances are the writing style and skills demonstrated in the assignment are reflective of what matters to that professor and/or in your field.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND REMINDERS

As we have said in this chapter, we believe there are two fundamental equations that should guide you in developing your academic writing skills: awareness + action = growth and input informs output. We are including a reminder list of awareness and action suggestions from this chapter in Summary Table 1.1 so that you have a handy place to refer to them quickly.

SUMMARY TABLE 1.1. AWARENESS AND ACTION REMINDERS

Be aware . . .	Take action . . .
You will need to take charge of your own journey to becoming an academic writer.	Adopt an attitude of relentless curiosity for figuring out how academic writing is different from other writing.
Academic writing has its own language and style.	Intentionally and consciously expose yourself to as much academic writing language as you can through reading.
You will be asked to read many different types of academic texts. Those texts share some features, but they also each have their own distinctive features.	Actively look for overall macro-level organizational patterns in texts and notice how those patterns compare between texts.
Although you may be or have been a successful writer in many other contexts, you may not experience immediate success as a graduate-level academic writer for various reasons.	Accept that graduate academic writing is a *new* task that will inevitably pose some challenges for you, and strategically use academic reading to inform your knowledge of academic writing.
You are not a published researcher (yet), but your writing needs to move toward approximating the writing of published researchers.	Proactively request models or samples of "good" assignments from your professors so that you can figure out what "good" writing looks like.