**Creating Writing Plans with S.M.A.R.T. Goals**

**What is S.M.A.R.T.?**

Creating a writing plan seems like a daunting task for many graduate students but can be easily managed with the use of goal setting tools. S.M.A.R.T. goals are a way of setting up a plan for yourself with an understanding of your own writing style and process. This worksheet will guide you through how to approach a writing plan for a graduate-level writing assignment, starting with the requirements and end date, and detailing smaller, more manageable tasks to help increase confidence and boost efficiency.

**SPECIFIC**

What objective needs to be accomplished? What steps will you take to achieve it?

* Who:is the audience? Is this a group project?
* What: are the requirements of the assignment?
* When: is it due?

**Note down as much information as possible about the objectives of the project or build an outline of all the tasks required.**

**MEASURED**

Setting quantifiable goals helps make your project more manageable. After you have determined your objectives, detail all your goals and break them down into short-term and long-term goals with deadlines.

* “I will write one paragraph a day”
* “I will write for an hour every morning”
* “I will collect ten sources by September 30”

**Do you write for short or long periods of time? Do you have to take your paper step by step? Can you write multiple pages at a time? Write down goals that are weekly and monthly. Set some tentative due dates or deadlines.**

**ACHIEVABLE**

Writing plans are most effective when the goals are realistic. This means that it fits a writer’s personal habits and lifestyles and is achievable in the context of writing with the load of graduate school. Noting realistic goals also allows you to accomplish more off your to-do lists.

**Think about goal setting as a way that understands which goals are achievable and which goals may be too ambitious. Noting realistic**

**Minimum goal:**

**Realistic Goal:**

**Reach Goal:**

**RELEVANT**

Graduate-level writing is highly contextualized. You may be writing an argumentative paper for a course, applying for a grant, or starting to think about your master’s thesis.

**Who is the audience for your paper and what are the conventions of the discipline or genre you are writing in? This may be a moment to note down specific restrictions determined by applications, prompts, or citation styles.**

**TIME-BOUND**

Timing is one of the most important parts of building a writing plan. Working backwards from the end goal of the project can help set the pace of writing. Time-based writing plans involve long-term and short-term deadlines.

**Keeping in mind your measurable and achievable goals, what are some hard and soft deadlines? Assess the time needed to complete each task for the project.**