Essay assignment #1

Topic: How to write an academic paper in your field.

You will write an essay explaining how academic or professional writing is done in your field of study. You might wish to write as if you were writing to younger students or future students in your field. The essay is to be based on the genre analysis assignment, but you will expand on it. Your paper should be at least 4 pages, plus references on a separate page. For the essay, examine at least three articles from your field. If your field seems broad, you may like to focus on a specific subfield or area within your field. You will need to address some of the following (discuss those aspects that are relevant, and in whatever sequence and form that seems appropriate).

• What kind and how much writing is expected of students in your field, and specifically in your department. If possible, also discuss the kind of writing that would expected in a career in the field, or when one enters graduate school.

• Describe the kinds of research topics and questions that are considered important in the field. What are basic terms, theories, and terms that one would need to know? Describe the academic worldview or paradigm, and how that affects the writing style and form.

• What kind of work constitutes research in your field, how is the research done, and why is it preferred in the field? How is it written up? How does the type of research affect the writing style and form?

• What background knowledge do writers assume that their readers already know?

• Explain the general purpose and tone of the writing, and the more common paragraph forms, and why they might be commonly used.

• Organization, arrangement, and types of sections used; do various academic articles consistently follow the same structure, or do they vary? How are introductions and conclusions done?

• Format, style, and grammatical conventions – e.g., verb tenses, sentence types, transitionals, grammatical cohesion, etc.; why are some grammatical styles or features are commonly used?

• Argumentation style; logical flow; for example, what kind of evidence or argumentation is used for support? How much does the argumentation depend on the writer’s own analysis, his/her own original research data, or other cited information?

• How does one make the writing informative, persuasive, and relevant to others? How does one achieve good logical coherence and flow?

• How might academic writing in your field in English differ from such writing in Korean (or other languages)?

• Contrast and compare the writing in your field with writing in other related fields

Be sure to cite the articles from your field that you will be using as examples to illustrate important points (generally, at least two articles per group member). We have not discussed citation formats, so if you are not familiar with these, you may simply imitate the citation and bibliography style that you see in your articles.

1 E.g., the theories, main issues of interest, one’s motivation or goals, the general research orientations (theoretical, qualitative, quantitative), and the specific research methods (quantitative experiments, interviews, theoretical arguments, etc.).

2 E.g., analytical, process, descriptive, narrative, example, contrast/comparison ¶’s.
due dates
[1] 1st draft
[2] final version

Grading criteria
The following will be considered in evaluating the final version.

Organization
Excellent use of format elements with all points connected and indicated with transitions and/or other cohesive devices. The various aspects listed above that you address need to be organized well into a paper that a reader can readily follow and understand. A clear thesis, main ideas, body sections, and conclusion are developed.

Contents
All major points elaborated; argument is developed in a clear and logical manner with proper use of sources and leads to insightful generalizations and conclusions. Thoughtful, informative discussion of topics is presented, by describing how writing is done, and why (not just a mechanical “how to” manual).

Source use
Appropriate, intelligent, thoughtful use of sources (the sample articles), using them appropriately to illustrate ideas and points.

Style
Appropriate academic vocabulary, writing level, tone, and sentence structures.