

# Written Assignments

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# Written assignments

- Different kinds of written assignments — essays, lecture diaries or rather learning diaries, portfolios, reports
- An essay
- An essay is a general name for any written assignment
- It should be thought over carefully when and how to use an essay in a course
- If you use, define what you mean when you ask students to write an essay
- Always related to your course
- Basic scientific writing skills given/taught in each university

# Why an essay

- To write an essay is a basic academic skill
- Give your students an opportunity to practice his/her writing skills
- To communicate knowledge and understanding on the course theme
- An opportunity to reflect what students have learned during the course
- An opportunity to make his/her own contribution to the course theme

# To write an essay

- A question/theme given by the teacher
- In our course UN, Peace and Security the students were/are provided with two optional essay questions, of which students choose. Students are asked to write reflective essays, use relevant material (provided in the course material in the form of written text by the teachers plus extra material in the form of reading lists)
- Students should think over the question given, select and go through and read the material
- Students should develop and evaluate arguments, express their own thoughts, their own visions

# An outline for an essay

- Structuring thoughts
- Creating table of contents
- ... writing an essay
- An essay has
- Introduction – Text – Conclusions – Bibliography
- Writing an essay is a basic academic skill !
- See e.g. <http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay>
- These instructions in this link are very general, but it offers other links – depending on what kind of help your students need

# Assessment

- Set the criteria clearly , explain them
- Helps you when reading the essays and is fair for the students
- Assessment depends too on the idea/function the essays have in the course:
- "The assessment of the essays will examine students' capacity to establish his/her arguments and apply information provided at the module. In a good essay, there are extensive references to the course material, possibly to additional reading and it incorporates students' own critical analysis and views of the topics." (UN, Peace and Security course)

# Written assignments

- Together with other methods, interactive methods gives students an activating and stimulating course (hopefully, possibly)
- It should be thought over whether UniPID should have its own essay writing instructions —
- Perhaps not because essays if properly used are "course specific" and the instructions should be given in each course
- General instructions could of course be provided, no problem with that
- Thank you!