Attention to Audience

All writing projects have an *audience*, and the audience determines the style in which projects are written.

Some projects are less formal than others, such as newspaper and magazine articles; other projects require mastery of specific academic discourses, and the language contained in these projects rely heavily on language specific to the area of study. For example, the audience of a psychological study would not be the same as the audience of a business report. The language used in these projects would differ significantly because each audience is looking for something different from these documents.

One of the most efficient ways to develop a style specific to an area of study is to read samples from it to become familiar with the conventions of that particular field. Our writing center has gathered resources from many fields of study that are helpful for students from various fields of study represented throughout our university for this purpose.

Here are some elements that may differ from one writing in a given field of study to another:

- Terminology used within the text
- Paper Format
- Length of Paper
- Level of formality
- Purpose for writing
- Number of authors
- Documentation style

Remember, learning to write within any given discourse is a process. Just as you have learned the difference between song lyrics and a letter home to Mom and Dad, the difference between a scientific report and an e-mail, or the difference between a play and a short story, you will learn the differences between various documents in various areas of study. With enough exposure to the language and format, it will become easier to compose within several fields of study.