

# English 101 Essay #1

## Why Get a College Education?

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*Please see semester schedule for due dates.*

**TOPIC:** A college education was at one time a luxury for most Americans. In the 1960's, 70's, and 80's a family could prosper without the breadwinners having college degrees. Today the job outlook has changed. Former President Obama declared, "Education is the economic issue of our time." Clearly you, the student, are here in college to gain something for your future, but what is it? Is it a certificate, a bachelor's degree, job training, what? Consider the cost of this education and its real value. Is a college education worth the cost? Analyze Weiner's article and include some of your own research and observations in your answer.

**Writing Goal # 1**—THESIS, PROCESS, and RESPONSE TO PROMPT (20 points)

What are your goals for your own education? What potential costs are there? You may use first person in the intro paragraph and the conclusion paragraph, but the body must be objective and analytic. Consider the argument made by Joann Weiner in her article "Do the benefits of a college education outweigh the costs?" You will need to annotate her essay thoroughly and use her arguments as a comparison or contrast with your own ideas. You will need to form a **thesis** or main point for your essay; do this early in the writing process. Your thesis should directly address or "answer" the topic above. Even before your thesis, you will prepare **some form of prewriting** (see Ch. 2 of *TCR*) and then render it into a **formal outline**. From this outline you will compose a first draft of your essay. After peer editing the rough draft, you will write your final draft. The day your final draft is due, you will turn in 1) your final draft 2) an edited rough draft 3) your prewriting and outline 4) your annotated copy of Weiner's essay.

**Writing Goal # 2**—CONTENT DEVELOPMENT, SUPPORT, and ORGANIZATION (20 Points)

Your essay will have a distinct beginning (introduction, including your assertion/thesis), middle (multiple body/discussion paragraphs), and end (conclusion). You must use Weiner's essay to help forward your own ideas. Use at least three quotes from her article and cite the quotes properly (see *TCR* pages 388-393). You must also find one more source of information to support your ideas. Websites are fine. Also, somewhere in your essay specifically address the following: What is your university of choice and what will tuition cost each year? Will there be any grants or scholarships? What is the total you can expect to pay for your education? What skills will you learn that will make you employable? How will your college degree help you stay employed?

**Writing Goal # 3**—COHERENCE, DICTION, STYLE, and VOICE (20 Points)

Proper use of college level English is required. In my classes contractions are allowed, but refrain from using any text speak (lol, wtf, pwned) or informal language (sick!, dumbass, what the hell?). Avoid the use of "you, you're, or your." The use of "I, me, mine..." is acceptable when describing or narrating personal experience. Remember, in the process of writing, your style and voice can be a powerful tool in communicating ideas.

**Writing Goal # 4**—GRAMMATICAL SOUNDNESS (spelling, punctuation, mechanics, verb tenses) (20 Points)

Proper use of college level English grammar includes using the right verb tense, using commas correctly, avoiding run-on sentences, fragments, and spelling words correctly. Students often overlook the time and care needed to "proofread" well. When you proofread, do it on hard copy—a printed copy of your paper. Wait at least 20 minutes after printing before proofreading.

**Writing Goal # 5**—CRITICAL, ANALYTIC, and EVALUATIVE ELEMENTS (20 Points)

The questions How and Why are central to critical thinking. Always analyze how something is done (in this case how will you earn your degree and how you will use it) and why something is done (why get a college education if the cost is so high? Why not follow in Zuckerberg's footsteps and drop out?) Use each of the 3 classic appeals in your essay and underline where you are using each one. Use additional research to help make your argument.

### SPECS

- At least 3 pages in MLA format, not more than 5.
- Prewriting, outline, and rough draft as above (note that a "rough draft" should be a completed essay, 3 pages at least).
- Works Cited not necessary, but do state the author and title of any articles you use in the essay
- **Thesis statement and three appeals underlined.**
- **Submit to turnitin.com and bring hard copies of all required materials stapled together.**

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On final due date, please submit all prewriting, outlines, rough drafts, and final draft