

Alumni data collected by English Language Arts Advisory Committee January-February 2019

| Colleges/Universities alumni attend   | Did you take advanced or AP English classes? | Alumni comments regarding how APS could have better prepared students for college writing   |
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| Virginia Tech<br>George Mason<br>William & Mary<br>Mary Washington<br>University of Wisconsin<br>University of Delaware<br>Carleton<br>George Washington Univ.<br>NOVA<br>JMU<br>UVA<br>CNU | Yes  | I believe that APS can definitely improve the way writing is taught. I relied heavily on my mother for writing help as she is a former writing teacher and she taught me about the basic structure of an essay and edited many of my papers to teach me about sentence structure, word choice and more. I always felt that my mom gave me more constructive feedback about my writing than the teachers at APS. Furthermore, if students do not take classes such as AP World History (and most do not) or do not do the IB program, it is easy to come out of APS with a rudimentary understanding of writing. Finally, I learned the most about writing from a history class, not an English course, and feel that English teachers should place more of an emphasis on teaching writing instead of focusing on literature. |
|   | Yes  | More research papers  |
|   | Yes  | Practice more research papers! Prepare writing longer papers in shorter amounts of time! I relied on help from my mother and friends.   |
|   | Yes  | APS should've made us write more short, reflective things. They also should've put more of an emphasis on finding reputable sources and how to site them correctly.   |
|   | Yes  | More formal writing   |
|   | Yes  | Encouraging students to write beyond a 5-paragraph paper; experiment with organizations and writing style, focus on the <u>point</u> of a paper rather than following a set formula.  |
|   | Yes  | Style of writing is not at college passing level  |
|   | Yes  | Fairly well-prepared, but would have been helpful to have worked on argumentative essays more. Received occasional feedback from Mom.   |

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|                        | Yes  | Just a lot more different types of writing. Some of my classmates never wrote anything until the Senior Project and they were freaked out.  |
|                        | Yes  | I had to go to the writing center and get a tutor to help me write. I did terrible on my first papers. It was so hard. I did not know what to do. I did not know what they wanted. The first paper said to analyze types of argument and I did not know what it was talking about.  |
|                        | Yes  | If I had been required to do a research paper in high school, that would have been a good experience and better prepared me for college, though I did feel very prepared overall.   |
|                        | Yes  | I did not know how to write. It was embarrassing. I had never written a research paper and the first semester I had to write 3. I did terribly on my freshman papers. It really held me back a year because I was floundering and lost confidence about my major. I did not know how to cite properly or what to cite. In 11 <sup>th</sup> grade, we had a lesson one day on how to use a website to put articles in APA format. We did not learn how to use citations or why. I wish I had more teaching on how to do research in the first place. Also how to write longer papers. Many of my college classmates had written long papers in high school. How to structure an argument and analysis. My assignments freshman year were very intimidating and I had to go to the writing center all the time. |
|                        | Yes  | Make us write a complete college paper with requirements from college professors. Just get used to writing in this more freeing atmosphere.   |
|                        | Yes  | For all of the emphasis on SOLs & year scores at APS, I find there is no teaching of actual study skills. Lots of test prep, but no basic study skills. I feel I've had to teach those things to my kids myself.<br>Specifics: reading the syllabus to determine exactly how the course is graded, how to spend efforts where they count, how to calculate a GPA (for Pete's sake), that a 3 credit class is more important than a 1 credit class, that outside of APS an A is 93 not a 90, that there is no extra credit in other places for AP classes. No multitasking. A lot of studying is still rote memorization, that'll never change. Writing a paper?<br>Fuhgageddaboutit. She's never written a 10-15 page paper in HS.  |

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| George Mason Univ.<br>NOVA<br>Longwood | No   | I hated writing but they should have made me do a lot more of it and teach me how to do it. Not just writing poems or my feelings or journals about boring books. I don't think they believed we were going to college. They did not get us ready. We just learned how to do the SOL and do PowerPoints. No one in college does PowerPoints. I did not know how to write anything longer than about 2 pages. I did not know what different types of persuasion are. I did not know how to edit. I never did citations. I am pretty mad about it. I am still trying to catch up. |
|  | No   | I did not know how to write a paper. I had to take remedial English writing. I won't be able to transfer when I want to.  |
|  | No   | Just more about writing and what we have to do at college. I want to transfer and am worried about not being a good enough writer.  |
|  | No   | Teach APA and Chicago writing styles. I had never heard of Chicago style but had to learn that format for English class. Most papers were in APA format, which is not what we used. Also, could have used more writing practices in high school because I felt unprepared and struggled in my freshman English class.   |
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