

**Writing Incident Reports and Research Papers for DOD Security**  
(CDSE ED203)

Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE)  
Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA)

**Sample Course Syllabus\***

**1. Course Description / Overview**

The purpose of the Writing Incident Reports and Research Papers for DOD Security course is to prepare students to write reports of security incidents, and formal reports of security-related topics or research. This course will focus on the formal writing and communication tasks that security professionals are required to perform as part of their jobs and in future college or graduate education.

Note: ED202 (eight weeks) and ED203 (eight weeks) are replacing ED201 (16 weeks). If you have taken ED201 before, the course material in ED203 is similar to the last eight weeks of ED201. While ED202 is not a required prerequisite to enroll in ED203, it is recommended.

**2. Target Audience / Prerequisites**

The target audience for this course is DOD civilian and military security professionals from a variety of specializations. This course is designed for the collegiate-level educational experience.

This course has no prerequisites.

**3. Student Learning Outcomes**

The course enables students to:

1. Evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of a written statement from an investigative interview.
2. Write an incident report based on the results of an investigation using the fundamentals of effective writing.
3. Write an academic research paper/report with an annotated bibliography on a complex, security-related topic using the Chicago Manual of Style.

**4. Delivery Method / Course Requirements**

This is a collegiate-level, virtual instructor-led course in writing and communication skills for security professionals. The course consists of readings, prerecorded lectures and presentations, participation in the discussion forum, and written assignments. The assigned course readings

draw from a variety of resources, such as general and DOD-specific writing guidance, articles and essays on writing approaches, and examples of effective and ineffective writing products. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the assigned topic and readings each week and be prepared to participate in the online discussion forum to discuss the readings critically. Access to, and the ability to use a library will be necessary for course completion and success. It is recommended that students become acquainted with their local public, university, or DOD (such as the Pentagon or National Defense University) library. In many cases, these institutions will allow library cardholders remote access to their databases and electronic publications. As many resources as possible will be posted on CDSE's continuous learning environment (CLE) under the References tab at the bottom of the course page.

## **5. General Course Requirements and Late Policy**

Class participation is important and required. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Since the class will be structured around discussion, completion of readings and all class assignments is crucial. It is expected that assignments will be submitted on time (before midnight the day they are due). However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should contact the instructor in a timely fashion and will be expected to post their responses and submit their assignments in the following week. Penalties will apply to students who fail to contact the instructor in advance of missing deadlines. Students will not receive credit for class participation that week. Students will have one additional week to submit a written assignment for credit; however, the instructor will deduct 10% from the final grade for accepting the late submission.

## **6. Academic Integrity Policy**

Please refer to CDSE's Academic Integrity Policy for guidance on adhering to their high standards of academic integrity and security. You must acknowledge that you have read the CDSE policy by posting to the appropriate discussion forum within this course, where you will find a copy of this policy. You will be held to these standards for every writing assignment you submit for this course.

## **7. Grading**

The following provides an approximate breakdown of how each assignment contributes to your overall performance in the class.

<b>Component of Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Participation	20%
Incident Report	15%
Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	15%
Peer Review of Research Paper	10%
Final Research Paper	40%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>
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A letter grade will be assigned to each graded assignment, following the grading scale below:

Letter Grade	Learning Objectives
A+	Exceptional quality of work 97% - 100%
A	Mastery quality of work 93% - 96%
A-	90% - 92%
B+	87% - 89%
B	Above average quality of work 83% - 86%
B-	80% - 82%
C+	77% - 79%
C	Unsatisfactory quality of work 73% - 76%
C-	70% - 72%
F	Failure to meet the minimum standard 69% or less
I	0.00 Incomplete
WF	0.00 Effects GPA
WP	-.-- No effect on GPA

### **7.1 Participation (20%):**

The participation grade includes posting to the eight weekly discussion forums and responding to other students, completing the required readings and lesson presentations, conducting peer reviews, and submitting additional writing assignments and exercises for pass/fail credit. To receive full credit for the weekly discussion forums, students must post responses to all of the required questions and respond to at least one other student's post. Posts should be written in complete, grammatical sentences that provide a thoughtful, relevant, and substantive response to the question or topic. To receive full credit for the peer reviews, students must complete the appropriate peer review forms and offer constructive criticism of other students' writing.

### **7.2 Assignment 1: Incident Report (15%)**

Students will write an incident report based on the scenario provided.

### **7.3 Assignment 2: Research Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (15%)**

Students will develop the premise and thesis of their research paper proposal and develop an annotated bibliography.

### **7.4 Assignment 3a: Research Paper submitted for Peer Review (draft not graded)**

Students will draft their Research Paper and submit for peer review and critique by other students.

### **7.5 Assignment 3b: Peer Review of another student's draft research paper (10%)**

Based on criteria and a format presented in the course, each student will review and provide feedback on the draft research paper submitted by another student.

### **7.6 Assignment 3c: Final Recommendation Paper (40%)**

After receiving feedback from the peer review of their draft research paper, students will revise and edit their papers for evaluation and grading by the instructor.

## **8. Course Evaluation**

You will have the opportunity to evaluate the course by completing an online evaluation at the end of the semester. Your experience and feedback are invaluable to our ability to improve the course for future CDSE students.

## **9. Course Textbooks**

Students must purchase or otherwise obtain the following book.

- Strunk, William, and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Longman Publishers. 2000

## **10. Course Outline:**

During the eight weeks of the course, students will have assigned readings, presentations to review, and discussion forums to participate in. Students will also complete three assignments. The topics for the eight-week course include the following:

<b>Weekly Topics</b>	<b>Topics</b>
<b>Lesson 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Course Overview</li><li>• Presentation of ideas (format/structure of technical reports)</li><li>• Survey of DOD writing products</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annotated bibliography</li><li>• The Chicago Manual of Style</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking a written statement</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking a written statement</li></ul>

<b>Lesson 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incident Reports</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incident/security violation reports</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Research Paper and Revisions</li></ul>
<b>Lesson 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Research Paper and Conclusion</li></ul>