

Discipline-Specific Writing Guide: Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership (MAOL)

Emphasized Writing Skills and Typical Assignments

The MAOL Program emphasizes **reflective writing**, as well as **critical and creative thinking**, but students in this program are assigned a variety of written work. Some major assignments emphasizing reflective skills include op-ed articles, personal reflections, and personal leadership credos. Students also complete:

- literature reviews
- formal research proposals
- research papers
- business plans
- case analyses

Some Key Questions to Guide Writing

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Preferred Patterns of Organization, Use of Headings, Style or Tone

Students in MAOL are given different assignments requiring a broad range of writing styles. One of the key strategies MAOL students are expected to master is **adapting language and communication styles to a variety of audiences**. Students writing formal reports should use concise language and be more impersonal than those writing reflections.

Favored Research Methodologies

Since the leadership field is interdisciplinary, a wide range of research methods used in the social sciences and harder sciences, such as business and economics, are employed. Students may conduct research using **qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods**, but they typically use qualitative investigation methods for their final leadership action projects.

Authoritative Sources/Evidence

Research reported in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals is considered to be the most authoritative evidence.

The MAOL program recognizes research accepted in a number of fields, including:

- anthropology
- business
- communications
- economics
- education
- political science
- psychology
- sociology
- theology

Documentation Style

APA (American Psychological Association)

Master's Level Writing

“Master's level writing must display **coherence, logical development**, and a **depth of interpretation** that moves beyond simple reporting. Essentially, we expect our MAOL students to display both **critical and creative thinking skills** in written form with **accurate citations.**” –Rebecca Hawthorne

Sample student work and evaluation grids are frequently available through Blackboard.