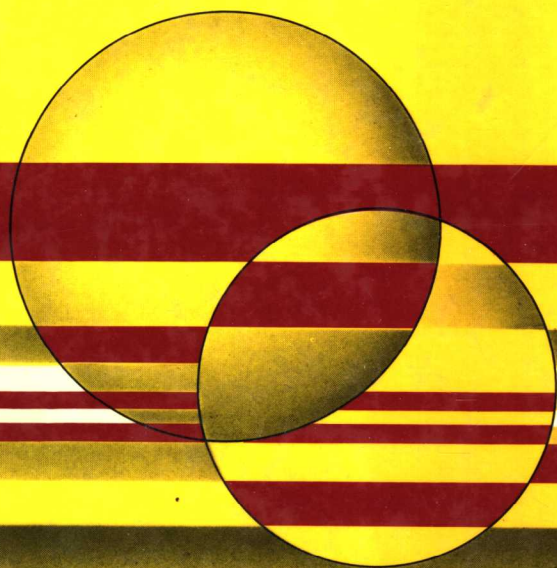


# The McGraw-Hill College Handbook

Richard Marius & Harvey S. Wiener



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# THE MCGRAW-HILL COLLEGE HANDBOOK

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# Preface

## To the teacher

A handbook is a tool for good writing, and we have tried to make this one sharp and efficient. We aimed for clear writing, accurate explanations that are easy to understand, and informative and engaging exercises.

We expect this book to be used in freshman composition classes and in other classes in writing, language, or literature offered in English departments. We value literature, long the staple of freshman writing courses, and so we draw many examples from it. But we believe that students should learn how to write for courses in all departments. Our book therefore uses examples from history, psychology, economics, physics, biology, business, engineering (to name a few), to illustrate our conviction that good writing exists in many fields. Indeed our society requires clear presentations of accurate information if people are to make sensible decisions. And no matter what form it takes—journal articles, books, speeches, newspaper reports, television scripts—most information comes to us, either directly or indirectly, through the medium of writing.

To emphasize this need for good writing in all fields, we have included a student research paper on a scientific topic in addition to a paper about a novelist's early years. Because a handbook should incorporate current standards, the scientific research paper uses the 1984 MLA style of referencing; while the literary paper illustrates the earlier (1977) MLA style.

We expect *The McGraw-Hill College Handbook* to serve as a guide for students throughout their college careers and in their personal and professional lives thereafter. For this reason, we have included an appendix on "Writing with Word Processors," even though these wonderful writing implements are just beginning to come into general use.

We also expect that students will enjoy reading this handbook even as they learn from it. We have tried to be serious without being solemn and challenging without being abstruse. Sometimes we have even tried to be humorous, but we have never intended to be condescending.

*The McGraw-Hill College Handbook* focuses as much on process as it does on product. Too often in the past handbooks have spent too much time

showing students a correct writing product without telling them how to get there. We have worked hard on our chapters on process to give a realistic account of how writers write. Hardly any writer writes without studying the subject carefully beforehand and then writing several drafts on the way to publication. Students who follow our trail through process will arrive much more confidently at a piece of work that will make them proud of their efforts and their accomplishments.

We have also looked for a middle ground between the extreme positions about rules for writing. We have tried to be neither too rigid nor too flexible in our presentation and interpretation of the rules. We do not believe that writers are inspired to write by learning the rules first; people want to write because they have something to say. As they continue to write, most people want to know how to communicate more clearly and effectively. Therefore we have shown how good writers communicate with different audiences. We also observe that good writers sometimes break some of the “rules” of writing; but we make a distinction between those rules that can be broken now and then and those that cannot. We do not teach that the rules of writing are carved in granite; but neither do we teach that they are written in sand. Our philosophy is that writing is guided by principles rather than rules, and we have tried to state those principles clearly and to illustrate them by the work of good contemporary writers.

## **To the student**

The best way to use this book is to keep it handy as a reference. From time to time, pick it up and browse through it at random. When your teacher refers you to a section of the handbook, study the section and do the exercises to fix the principles in your mind. By all means, read Chapters One and Two on the writing process before you begin writing your first paper.

The index at the back of the book and the plan of the text outlined on the inside back cover will help you locate information that deals with your special problems and your special interests. The correction symbols and the directory of special features on the inside front cover will help you find special sections quickly.

The ability to write well can give you both pleasure and power. You owe it to yourself to discover the joy of writing, the excitement of expressing your ideas, your feelings, your thoughts, your discoveries, your arguments, about everything from the daily events in your life to the demands of a perilous yet promising future. As you learn to write well, you will also discover that people are more likely to respect and accept your opinions, because you can express yourself in writing that engages and persuades your readers.

No handbook can make writing easy; good writing always takes hard work. But we hope that *The McGraw-Hill College Handbook* can make writing less difficult for you and can give you both guidance and pleasure along the way.

## Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many people who helped us with this book along the long way from its conception to publication. Teaching English composition is probably the most difficult job in any university. Perhaps it is the very difficulty of our profession that makes its members feel so strongly the sense of mutual obligation and respect that binds us all together. We have been the beneficiaries of those helpful sentiments from the many teachers in the field who have reviewed the manuscript of this book at its various stages, and we could not have done our work without their searching commentaries and their generous encouragement. These reviewers include:

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We have worked with several McGraw-Hill editors along the way. Bill Talkington brought us together one night in New York and started us along the journey. As English editors in the College Division, Phil Butcher and Jim Dodd steadfastly supported the book's progress over the years. Cheryl Kupper edited with intelligence and thoroughness an earlier version of the manuscript, and Annette B. Hall carried the work on for a time.

Allan Forsyth finally came on to take the book firmly in hand and to guide it to a conclusion. He has read it all again and again, making myriads of suggestions in his strong, unmistakable handwriting, speaking to us sometimes almost daily on the telephone, encouraging us, sifting ideas, asking us to cut here and to add there, driving us to meet deadlines, and bringing five hard years of work to a good end. It is to his credit that after such labor, we all still like each other.

David Dunham and Joseph Campanella have shepherded the manuscript through the production process, somehow keeping the book on schedule while incorporating our last-minute efforts to correct and to improve it. Mel Haber's design has proved to be both practical and handsome.

Our thanks, too, to Seiji Yamada for allowing us to use elements of one of his term papers in Chapter 33.

To these people, and to all the others who have made contributions to this project, our gratitude. And to our families we give our loving thanks for being with us all the days.

Richard Marius  
Harvey S. Wiener

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# PART ONE

## The Writing Process

- 1** Planning, Developing, and Revising Papers
- 2** Building Paragraphs

