SLUWE
Saint Louis University Writing Exam
The SLUWE is a 50-minute test which ALL incoming international students take. The test aims to...

Measure your **academic skills**:

- **Writing** (ability to write an academic essay)
- **Reading** (ability to read an authentic passage)
- **Grammar** (ability to use a variety of structures)
The SLUWE is a 50-minute test which ALL incoming international students take. The test aims to...

Determine the best **placement** for you at SLU:

- **College Composition** (EAP/ENGL 1500 + additional courses)
- **Writing & Grammar Strategies** (EAP 1400 + additional courses)
- **Pathways** (part-time EAP + part-time additional courses)
- **Academic English** (full-time EAP)
“How does my SLUWE score determine which courses I can take?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your SLUWE score is...</th>
<th>then you will take these courses:</th>
<th>Additional Courses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>EAP 1500 or ENGL 1500</td>
<td>Up to four additional courses, as advised by your academic adviser in your program of study</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-</td>
<td>EAP 1400</td>
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EAP = English for Academic Purposes  
EAP 1500 = College Composition open to international students only  
ENGL 1500 = College Composition open to all SLU students  
EAP 1400 = Writing and Grammar Strategies for international students who need one extra semester of writing before College Composition
"How does my SLUWE score determine which courses I can take?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your SLUWE score is...</th>
<th>then you must take the institutional TOEFL PBT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3+ (or below)</td>
<td>• Depending on your test scores, you may be placed in:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pathway</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Academic English</td>
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Pathway = 1 or 2 semesters of part-time EAP classes  
Academic English = full-time EAP; length of the program is variable

(For more information about the Pathway and Academic English programs at INTO Saint Louis University, click [here](#))
These test scores determine your placement in the university, so prepare carefully. If you stop working on your English, you may not do well on the SLUWE when you arrive.

A score of 3+ or below places you in the Pathway or Academic English program.

Keep working on your English! Just as an athlete would not stop training after qualifying for the Olympics, so you should not stop your English studies after being accepted to Saint Louis University.
SLUWE Learning Module

Learn about the **Instructions**
Learn about the **Prompt**
Learn about the **Article**
Learn about the **Writing Score**
Learn about the **Reading Score**
Learn about the **Grammar Score**
Learn from a **Sample Essay**

(Click the links to jump ahead to a specific section)
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN ABOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS

Click the checks
to return to the
SLUWE Learning
Module main page.
This is how the SLUWE looks:

Instructions

Prompt

Article
Look at the instructions carefully:

You have **50 minutes** to read the article below and answer the prompt. Use a **five-paragraph essay format** and write legibly. You will be evaluated on your writing, reading, and grammar skills. Expected approximate **length**: 1 ½ to 3 pages, double spaced (skip lines).

**Reminder:** **Plagiarism**, copied parts, or use of quotations mean an automatic reduction of your grade. Do not copy any part of the prompt or use quotations from the article.

Familiarize yourself with **the instructions** before you take the SLUWE. The instructions are the same on every exam, so you can save time if you are already familiar with them.
The SLUWE is **strictly timed**. You must read the article, write a response, and edit your grammar in 50 minutes.

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### SLUWE Time Management

Knowing how to use the 50 minutes of the SLUWE test can make a big difference in your score! The chart below includes one possible way to manage your time, you should consider your own strengths and weaknesses and adjust this “schedule” to suit your testing style best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Time</th>
<th>My Time</th>
<th>SLUWE Checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 50:00-35:00 (15 min) | ______ | Read the article  
 Make brief notes  
 Develop my thesis and opinion about the issue |
| 25:00-30:00 (5 min) | ______ | Write the introduction paragraph  
 Write the thesis statement |
| 30:00-25:00 (5 min) | ______ | Write summary paragraph #1  
 Mention at least 1 expert by name |
| 25:00-20:00 (5 min) | ______ | Write summary paragraph #2  
 Mention at least 1 expert by name |
| 20:00-10:00 (10 min) | ______ | Reread thesis statement  
 Write analysis paragraph  
 Include one example from the article or personal experience |
| 10:00-5:00 (5 min) | ______ | Write conclusion paragraph |
| 5:00-0:00 (5 min) | ______ | Reread SLUWE, correcting any grammar or spelling errors |

A chart like this can help you manage your time during the test.
Successful SLUWEs use a five-paragraph essay format:

I. Introduction
II. First body paragraph (summary)
III. Second body paragraph (summary)
IV. Third body paragraph (analysis)
V. Conclusion
The SLUWE **introduction** paragraph includes three main elements:

- An **introduction** of the article title, article author, and article topic
- A **background sentence** that explains the topic and the debate
- A **thesis statement** that presents your position on the topic

*A hook or attention-grabber is optional!*
The **second paragraph** of the SLUWE is a summary of one position in the debate or one aspect of the issue. Include these two main elements:

- A specific **topic sentence** that
  - focuses on the main idea of the position
  - uses transitional words and phrases that connect to previous paragraph

- An accurate **summary** of the position that
  - includes main ideas from the article
  - directly refers to a person, group, or example from the article (in your own words) as evidence
The **third paragraph** of the SLUWE is a summary of the opposing position in the debate or another aspect of the issue. Include the same elements:

- A specific **topic sentence** that
  - focuses on the main idea of the position
  - uses transitional words and phrases that connect to previous paragraph

- An accurate **summary** of the position that
  - includes main ideas from the article
  - directly refers to a person, group, or example from the article (in your own words) as evidence

Click the checks to return to the SLUWE Learning Module main page.
The **fourth paragraph** of the SLUWE requires you to take a clear position on the issue. This analysis paragraph has two main elements:

- **A topic sentence** that clearly states your position (without copying the thesis statement)
- **Support** for your position
  - Include an explanation—answering the question “Why?”—to explain your opinion on the issue
  - Provide evidence (from the article or from your own knowledge and experience) that can prove your thesis is reasonable
The **conclusion** paragraph brings your essay to a satisfying close and includes two main elements:

- A summary of your position on the issue
  - Use the main idea from your thesis, but do not copy your thesis word-for-word

- A **broader statement** about the topic
  - Suggest what might happen in the future
  - Offer a possible solution
All SLUWEs must be between 1 ½ and 3 pages long. Graders will not read past the third page. Skip lines when you write your response. This gives you space to make corrections and changes when you are in the editing stage of your exam. This is how your written SLUWE looks:

Use clear and legible handwriting throughout. Show a distinct indent at the beginning of each new paragraph. Write only on the lined portion of the page, not in the unlined margins to the left, right, and bottom of the paper. Be sure that you double space, leaving a blank line so that you can make changes to your text when you revise.
It is very important that you use **only your own words** in your essay; the SLUWE evaluates your ability to **paraphrase** and **summarize** information.

- Any time you do not use your own words, you will lose points.
- You can lose points for using quotations (even if cited correctly), and for plagiarism (copying phrases and sentences from the prompt or the article).
- If the plagiarism is serious, you may earn a score of zero.
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN ABOUT THE PROMPT
This is how the SLUWE looks:

Instructions

Prompt

Article

You have 20 minutes to read the article below and answer the prompt. Use a 1-year paragraph essay format, aim at 820 words. Your writing should be logical and be well-structured. You will be evaluated on your writing, reading, and grammar skills. Expected word length: 1,300 to 1,600 words.

Consider: plagiarism, copyright, and proper citation. The main focus should be on answering the prompt.

How would you like to work from home instead of at the office? Many employees now have the option to do so, but not everyone can do so in a private setting. Comment on the positive and negative aspects of telecommuting.

Telecommuting

By Lisa Fields

As communication technologies grow more accessible, telecommuting is becoming the primary alternative to traditional work schedules. Instead of going to an office or shared workplace, telecommuting employees complete their week at home, communicating with their employers mostly by phone and email. According to a recent survey, about 20% of people work telecommuting, and nearly 25% of global workers would work from home if given the opportunity. These companies that offer telecommuting believe the employees who practice it enjoy both benefits and drawbacks.

Companies have found the telecommuting movement to be an effective way to boost productivity, and productivity. According to a recent survey, about 20% of people work telecommuting, and nearly 25% of global workers would work from home if given the opportunity. These companies that offer telecommuting believe the employees who practice it enjoy both benefits and drawbacks.

Telecommuting employees do not want to leave jobs, companies do not want to spend money on office space, or pay for transportation costs. Telecommuting also has been found to be an effective way to reduce stress and improve work-life balance. Companies that offer telecommuting are more likely to hire and retain employees with high turnover rates, and telecommuting allows companies to reduce their in-office costs. Because telecommuting employees do not need to waste time on daily commute, companies are more likely to hire and retain employees with high turnover rates, and telecommuting allows companies to reduce their in-office costs.

Telecommuting has benefits for employees, too. With telecommuting, employees can save money, as they no longer have to pay for transportation, meals, and professional expenses. Telecommuting can also be beneficial for employees who have family responsibilities, such as parents who need to be home for their children and want to adjust their work schedules to meet the needs of their children. Telecommuting also reduces the risk of family conflict. Telecommuting can also be beneficial for employees who have family responsibilities, such as parents who need to be home for their children and want to adjust their work schedules to meet the needs of their children. Telecommuting also reduces the risk of family conflict.

Telecommuting is not the only alternative to traditional work schedules. Some companies are offering flexible work schedules, where employees can choose their own hours and work environment. Others are using telecommuting as a way to reduce their in-office costs. Because telecommuting employees do not need to waste time on daily commute, companies are more likely to hire and retain employees with high turnover rates, and telecommuting allows companies to reduce their in-office costs.

In conclusion, telecommuting has become a popular alternative to traditional work schedules. As communication technologies continue to evolve, it is likely that more and more companies will offer telecommuting as a way to reduce their in-office costs and improve employee satisfaction.
The essay **prompt** is different at every test. Read the prompt carefully because it often includes **key terms** and **definitions** that will help you **understand the topic** of the article and your writing task.

**Telecommuting**  
by Lisa Fischer

How would you like to work from home instead of from instead of in an office? Many employees now have the option to do so, but not everyone sees this as a positive practice. Summarize the positions below in your own words. Then, explain your own stance.
The first part of the prompt can help you understand the topic of the article. For example, you may not know the word “telecommuting” but by reading the prompt you can understand that it means “working from home.”

**Telecommuting**  
by Lisa Fischer

How would you like to work from home instead of from instead of in an office? Many employees now have the option to do so, but not everyone sees this as a positive practice. Summarize the positions below in your own words. Then, explain your own stance.
The **second part of the prompt** shows the **organizing principle** you should use in your response. This prompt indicates that you must compare the positive and negative views of telecommuting. This helps you know the main idea of your first two body paragraphs in your essay.

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**Telecommuting**
by Lisa Fischer

How would you like to work from home instead of from instead of in an office? Many employees now have the option to do so, but not everyone sees this as a positive practice. Summarize the positions below in your own words. Then, explain your own stance.
The **final part of the prompt** asks about your view on the issue. This prompt indicates that you must explain your own views about telecommuting. This should be the subject of your thesis and the main idea of your third body paragraph.

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**Telecommuting**  
by Lisa Fischer

How would you like to work from home instead of from instead of in an office? Many employees now have the option to do so, but not everyone sees this as a positive practice. Summarize the positions below in your own words. Then, explain your own stance.
Prepare for the SLUWE
LEARN ABOUT THE ARTICLE
This is how the SLUWE looks:

Instructions

Prompt

Article

Click the checks to return to the SLUWE Learning Module main page.
The article which you will read and to which you will respond is different at every test.

- Adapted from current news media
- Presents a current social issue
- Uses various logical organizations
  - cause / effect
  - problem / solution
  - pro / con
- While reading, use these strategies:
  - Notice keywords in the prompt that may indicate the logical organization of the article
  - Consider your own view of the issue
  - Annotate the article and write margin notes
    * Notes are not graded
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN ABOUT THE WRITING SOURCE
Your writing skills are evaluated in four areas:

- Paragraph organization
- Evidence and support
- Introduction paragraph and thesis
- Conclusion paragraph
Paragraph organization:

• Paragraphs are organized logically
• Paragraphs are unified (about one main idea)
• Topic sentences effectively control content in each body paragraph
• Meaningful transitions between and within paragraphs
Evidence and support:

• All examples have a clear link to the thesis
• All examples are accurate
• All examples are specific
• Writer explains how examples support the topic sentence/thesis statement
Introduction paragraph and thesis:

• Introduction specifically introduces both positions
• Effective use of logical connectors to link ideas
• Paragraph leads to a clear and direct thesis (your stance on the issue)
Conclusion paragraph:

• Conclusion is a logical end to the essay
• Conclusion is sufficiently developed
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN ABOUT THE READING SCORE
Your reading skills are evaluated in four areas:

• Summary
• Thesis and analysis
• Main ideas and details
• Relevance
Summary:

• Both summary paragraphs use two or more accurate references to the article

• Both summary paragraphs use references to the article in a balanced, developed manner
Thesis and analysis:

• Thesis statement includes a specific link to the article topic
• Analysis paragraph directly deals with the article topic
• Analysis paragraph features no unrelated information
Main ideas and details:

• Both summary paragraphs list main ideas from the article

• Both summary paragraphs list supporting ideas from the article

• Both summary paragraphs avoid repetition
Relevance:

- Essay demonstrates specific, accurate awareness of the relevance of main ideas
- Essay demonstrates specific, accurate awareness of the relevance of supporting ideas
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN ABOUT THE GRAMMAR SCORE

Click the checks to return to the SLUWE Learning Module main page.
Your grammar skills are evaluated in four major areas:

- Sentence structure
- Verb usage
- Word usage
- Repetition
Sentence structure:

• Complex and compound sentence structure
• Variety of sentence lengths
• Variety of clause structures (including adjective and noun clauses)
• Variety of connectors and transitions
• Appropriate comma use
• Few to no fragments, run-ons, comma splices
• Accurate use of signal phrases
Verb usage:

• Uses present perfect and progressive, past, and future with few errors

• Uses “should” for opinions

• Few verb form errors
Word usage:

• Correct endings with most words
• Appropriate pronouns
• Accurate academic vocabulary
Repetition:

• Almost no repetition of phrases
• Few canned sentences and expressions
• Synonyms add variety
Prepare for the SLUWE

LEARN FROM A SAMPLE ESSAY
On the following slides, you can see two sample responses to the “Telecommuting” article.

* These SLUWEs are not perfect, but your essay does not need to be without errors in order to earn a passing score!
Technology development has created a new alternative to work: not going to the office. According to Lisa Fischer, telecommuting is becoming a big discussion in some companies. Some people think that this is a better way to improve their work, but others disagree that this could bring benefits. For some workers, the drawbacks are too many to make telecommuting a good idea.

Working at home can increase the productivity of the employee because, as Keren Gottfried says, the person can choose the time of the day she knows that is better for her motivation. This is the best solution for those who have family commitments too, because they save the time that should be spend driving to work, and organize the schedule according to the rest of their family. The companies have benefits too, saving money they would spend training new workers because their employees are happy with their jobs.

However, not everybody thinks this way. Jackie Reses argues that the involvement with others during the work time improves the ideas and decisions that workers need to make. Also, working with coworkers and supervisors can pressure employees with deadlines and the desire to improve a career. Jennifer Glass says that working at home is not so good for the employees, because if you have to do extra work, you do not get any extra pay or promotion.

Working at home can be great but it depends on each workplace and the personality of the person, too. For example, a poorly organized person can have a bad time working at home. She can spend all day trying to work but not concentrate. Then she needs to work at night too, to finish everything that is due. This way the person worked day and night, while she could have gone to the office, produced a lot during the day and had a free night.

The technology is always trying to create new ways to make our lives more comfortable. But not everything is good for everybody. Each person needs to evaluate what is better for herself according to her own personality, ideas, career, and the plans for future. The decision about telecommuting needs to be a group decision of the employee and the company. At the end, you need to think about yourself, your qualities, and what would be the best option for you.
Sample SLUWE #2

Technology is the biggest factor in most people’s life. Since the appearance of emails, and other methods of communication, workers have been able to work at home. This article states the benefits and disadvantages of telecommuting for the company and the employees. I believe telecommuting has more disadvantages.

Telecommuting has been favored by big companies because it increases employees’ productivity. Keren Gottfried says that one benefit from telecommuting is that employees are able to work when they want. Companies also save more money if employees work at home. Michael Hansen states that this is possible because employees that work at home are willing to give up 30% of their salaries. Telecommuting also benefits employees in many other ways. For example, employees who work at home will no longer be required to pay for transportation, food, and work clothing. Employees with kids will be able to spend more time with their families. Another benefit for telecommuters is that they can use the time saved to do extra work.

Many companies may prefer telecommuting but other big companies disagree. A big company like Yahoo states that going to the workplace is more beneficial. The interaction with other people motivates employees to do more work. Yahoo also states that motivation is not the only thing that is beneficial but teamwork and creativity also increases in the workplace. Jackie Rose, an employee of Yahoo, says that many of her company’s best ideas came from unplanned conversations at work. The workplace is better for some companies because they think that being in the workplace makes employees finish their work before the due date. People who dislike telecommuting have also seen other problems. For example, some employees work more than others because they fear they will lose their jobs. Jennifer Glass, a sociologist, states that telecommuters feel so much pressure that the company can give them more work without having to pay extra.

Telecommuting presents benefits and disadvantages for the company and the employees. In my opinion, telecommuting is bad because not all telecommuters will have the patience to do their work at home. I also agree that the workplace can help employees come up with better ideas and discussions. Although being able to spend more time with the family is nice, the weekends and holidays are for this kind of resting.

Telecommuting is both a benefit and a disadvantage for employees. It helps companies save money, and employees save time. However, the workplace is better for many companies because their employees can finish their work before the deadline and teamwork improves. Would you ever telecommute?
During International Student Orientation, ESL professors will explain the SLUWE in even greater detail and answer any questions you have before the test. Plan to arrive on campus in time to attend this important study session!

If you have questions before you arrive, you can email SLU’s English Language Center at elc@slu.edu
Saint Louis University is committed to helping you do your best. Below are a few suggestions:

**Continue practicing your English!** Passing the TOEFL is one step. Student who achieved a TOEFL score high enough for direct admission yet did not continue to practice have needed to start in the ESL Program until their English improves again.

**Review this presentation.** This will help you become familiar with the SLUWE.

**Take a practice test.** You can use the “Telecommuting” article, or email elc@slu.edu and request another practice test.
Good luck on your SLUWE!