1.1 Background of the Study

Academic writing plays an important role in the success of students’ learning in university (Urquhart, 2005). In addition, it is not only used by college and university communities as written communication or as one of its programs but also as an intellectual activity, as a method of learning and as an instruction (Weigle, 2002). The common setting that characterizes college writing is educational and academic that is influenced by the specific disciplinary expectations of college, course even grade level (Crème & Lea, 2008:3).

In university and college environment, writing is usually done by students, scholars, teachers and researchers that compose academic communities (Murray & Moore, 2006). The reasons why they want to develop their writing skill are to be successful in academic and able to explore their ideas through arguing, problem solving, analyzing, explaining in the written form. This is in line with Richard and Miller (2008) who say that the general purpose of academic writing includes arguing, analyzing, interpreting, reviewing, reporting assignments and so on. The writing activity for academic purpose can be essays, textbooks’ review, action research projects, dissertation, research paper, syllabi, and paper-works, mini thesis, thesis which have similar methods. However, most of academic writing assignments are academic essays and research papers (Arnaudet & Ellen Barret, 1984) and (Crème & Lea, 2008:184). In addition, Leki (1998), states that
academic assignments emphasize developing an objective tone, responding to already published material, and incorporating the ideas of other writers into academic assignment. This statement has relevancy with the goal of the study, that is, focused on the essay assignment consisting argumentation in the written form or written argument that is claimed as the core of academic writing (Bjork, 2003) and its dominant purposes is to convince and persuade which commonly academic people do in order to ensure that what they have written or conveyed are accepted by the readers.

In order to be able to reach an optimum achievement, it is necessary for lecturers to get to know the nature of academic writing goals determined by their institutions (Holst, 1993 cited in Hyland 2003:67). However, the goals of institutions can vary on the basis of their primary concern. Moreover, they should be able to reflect skills that can be described, practiced, and assessed in the course (Hyland, 2003:68) Further, Hyland (2003:75) asserted that the skills involved in learning to write include the ability to draft, revise, conference, edit, proofread and publish, and to form well-structured effective text. Of course, appropriate strategies and approaches chosen can’t be ignored because they will give benefits for both teachers and students as well. By doing so, the teaching-learning process will be running effectively. However, the process that occurs will depend on the time, types and skills of writing given in the university setting (Hyland, 2003: 68). Furthermore, the approaches selected also influence the students’ success, whether it is focused on the product of writing or on the process or the combination of them.
In terms of academic context, Cremea & Lea (2008:3) state that academic writing is conveyed in formal written language and it is often characterized as hierarchically organized, goal directed and problem-solving process (Hartley, 2008:10) that can drive students to think critically, and analytically during knowledge transforming stage. Therefore, in order to be able to do it, student writers should not only learn the rules, strategies and how the language works but also the organization, mechanics and the process of writing itself. Moreover, the ability to transform knowledge through writing must be consciously and continuously trained, it cannot be taken for granted, not even the students of university (Bjork, et.al., 2003:13).

Based on the fact that shows how complex and various academic writing assignments are, particularly in English, and the fact that academic writing is really needed in tertiary level either for special or general purpose in any colleges in Indonesia, it is necessary to find the colleges which focus on certain fields that have applied academic writing as a single subject in its academics program. These reasons have driven the researcher to seek for the institution that has implemented it. Therefore, it was decided to investigate how an academic essay is taught in one of colleges, namely, the college in Bandung that demands its students to write any papers of subjects taken in English language as one of requirements to fulfill its academic program. Then, getting to know how the students do the assignments given by the lecturer in order to get know the students’ achievement. To get more detail information needed, the researcher has observed several of the English
academic writing class activities in the college mentioned and try to obtain some documents supporting as data related to existing theories.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How is the teaching learning process of academic essays conducted in one of Business and Management schools in Bandung?

2. What aspects of academic writing does the lecturer assess in order to get to know the students’ achievements?

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

Based on the background discussed above, the research aims to:

1. investigate how the teaching learning process (TLP) of academic essays is conducted in one of Schools of Business and Management in the 1st semester of an undergraduate program,

2. investigate the students’ achievement in writing academic essays in particular.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Knowing that academic writing is very crucial to be given as a single subject in university or college, the results of the study are expected to provide contributions at the university levels especially at undergraduate.

1. professionally, it provides more valuable information about teaching & learning
academic essay to those who teach English academic writing in the undergraduate level particularly in the first year,

2. practically, the result of the study can contribute to the development of teaching practice in academic writing in Indonesia.

3. theoretically, it provides literature about the teaching learning process of academic writing, which is important for the development of theory of academic writing research in Indonesia.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the teaching-learning academic essay and the students’ argumentative essay in one of Schools of Business and Management as a matter of fact, there are 5 writing classes (CRW- Critical Reading and Writing) but this study has observed the students’ performance and achievement in one of the CRW classes.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis will be structured as follows:

Chapter 1 contains introduction that covers the background, the purpose, the significance, scope of the study and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides theories that underpin the study including the definition, the characteristics and the types of academic writing, the definition and the types of academic essay, the teaching and learning of academic writing, the roles of the teacher, and writing assessment.
Chapter 3 describes essential aspects supporting the research methodology that covers Research Questions, Location, Participants and Respondents, Methods including Research Design, Data Collection and Data Analysis.

Chapter 4 conveys the results of the research done and followed by the discussions in order to get a clear description of the study.

Chapter 5 describes conclusion of the whole findings including the texts produced by students as representative of the students’ assignment that had been investigated and recommendations for improving the TLP of writing.