

Academic Writing

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Academic & Career Advising

The University of Winnipeg is in Treaty One territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation.



Agenda

1. Academic Writing at University
2. The Writing Process
3. Plagiarism



Academic Writing at University



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Academic Writing...

- Is for Scholars, by Scholars
 - Requires reading, thinking, and writing a certain way
- Deals with Topics/Questions that are...
 - Of interest to the academic community
 - Relevant and Appropriate
- Presents an **Informed Argument**

Constructing an Informed Argument

1. Consider what you know
2. Consider what you think
3. Find out what is known
4. Reconsider what you think
 - your own ideas, a new perspective
 - frame them in a critical not personal way
5. Develop your rhetorical stance



The Writing Process

The Writing Process

Having a process that works will help you:

- Organize Your Thoughts
- Use Time Productively and Efficiently
- Avoid Frustration, Procrastination, and related Stress/Anxiety

What is your writing process?



The Writing Process: Preparation

- STEP 1: Choose Your Topic
 - Select the general topic of your research paper.
 - PRO TIP: Choose a topic that interests you.
- STEP 2: Preliminary Research
 - Start researching your topic.
 - Look for what kinds of sources are available and what research has been done before.
- STEP 3: Research Question
 - Come up with a research question that you would like to explore, based on the sources that are available to you.
- STEP 4: Research
 - Do further research, narrowing in on sources relating specifically to your research question.
 - PRO TIP: Keeping detailed notes which include citation information will make the writing process easier.

ESSAY NOTES

SOURCE:

SCOPE (WHO/WHERE/WHAT/WHEN/WHY):

MAIN ARGUMENT(S):

METHODOLOGY:

STRENGTHS:

WEAKNESSES:

NOTES:

The Writing Process: Preparation

- STEP 5: Thesis Statement
 - Your thesis is the answer to your research question.
 - It should clearly lay out your argument.
 - It should be based on the evidence you have found.
- STEP 6: Outline
 - Create an essay outline which organizes your arguments into a logical sequence.
 - Every argument should relate to your thesis.

Basic Outline

Introduction

- Grab the reader's attention
- State your thesis

Body

- Build points and develop ideas
- Support main claims
- Miscellaneous observation not enough:
 - summarize, evaluate, analyze

Conclusion

- Re-emphasize main idea
- Remind reader of main ideas and how components fit together

Introduction

- Hook
- Background & context
- Thesis

Body paragraphs

Topic 1

Fact 1 + evidence
Fact 2 + evidence
Analysis

Topic 2

Fact 1 + evidence
Fact 2 + evidence
Analysis

Topic 3

Fact 1 + evidence
Fact 2 + evidence
Analysis

Conclusion

- Summarize the question or thesis
- Discuss the significance of the topic
- Reveal unanswered questions
- Call-to-action (if applicable)

Sample Outline Format

Topic:

Introduction:

- State thesis

First Category/Argument:

- subcategory
- subcategory

Second Category/Argument:

- subcategory
- subcategory

Third Category/Argument:

- subcategory
- subcategory

Conclusion:

- Re-state thesis and the points used to prove it.

Topic: The Outdoors and Nature: Benefits to Children

Introduction

- In many Canadian cities, there are few green spaces available to children. This has a detrimental effect on the health of our children. Children who spend significant amounts of time outdoors in natural spaces are healthier.

I. Cognitive Benefits

- increased attention span
- greater desire to learn and explore
- more opportunities to increase learning in the outdoors

II. Social/Emotional Benefits

- greater interactions with other children
- fewer behavioural issues
- more positive attitude

III. Physical Benefits

- higher levels of physical activity
- lower incidences of illness

Conclusion

- Children who spend more time outdoors have higher learning abilities, socialize better, and are physically healthier. We need to ensure there are green spaces available so that children receive these health benefits.

Methods of Organization

Chronological order:

- separate process into major steps

Classification:

- separate material into major categories

Increasing importance:

- most important last

Cause and effect:

- indicate relationships between things/events

Compare and contrast:

- indicate similarities and differences



The Writing Process: Crafting Your Essay

- STEP 7: First Draft

- Use your outline and research notes to write your first draft.
- PRO TIP: Even if you do not write out full citations, keep track of where you are getting your information from.

- STEP 8: Edit, Edit, Edit

- Be on the look out for grammatical errors, logical inconsistencies.
- Ask yourself whether you have given enough evidence to convince the reader of your thesis.
- Ask for help from outside sources: Family/Friend, The Writing Centre

- STEP 9: Final Draft

- Always do a final read-through after incorporating editing suggestions
- Make sure nothing has been overlooked in the process
- Check for any formatting errors, such as inconsistent fonts, numbering (footnotes), etc.

Tips for Writing

- Start early
- Find a comfortable space
- Break large tasks into more manageable pieces
- Take breaks
- Be you
- Just WRITE



Writing Resources

On Campus:

The Writing Centre (3rd floor Graham Hall)

- Free tutoring in writing
uwinnipeg.ca/writing-centre/

Library (4th floor Centennial Hall)

- Documentation style guides in Reference Section
- Staff will help with research

Homepage: library.uwinnipeg.ca

Library Research Guide:

libguides.uwinnipeg.ca/research

Other Research Guides: libguides.uwinnipeg.ca
(organized by subject area)

Online:

Purdue OWL

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>





Plagiarism



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What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which students present published or unpublished work (written, digital, or other) of another person or persons, or one's own prior work, in its entirety or in part, as their own original work. (Academic Calendar)
- Acts of plagiarism may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - not giving recognition to the author for phrases, sentences, thoughts, code, or arguments incorporated in written work, software or other digital sources, which can take the form of incomplete footnotes, endnotes, references and/or bibliographies; not using quotation marks or referencing appropriately when quoting directly; submitting in whole or in part, someone else's work as one's own;
 - not referencing appropriately when quoting indirectly, to indicate the source of the ideas and work of another;
 - submitting the same work for evaluation to more than one course without the consent of each instructor to do so;
 - two or more students submitting identical or virtually identical work for evaluation when the work was intended to be completed individually.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

- Follow the prescribed citation method (MLA, Chicago, APA)
- Keep organized notes during the research process
- Use quotation marks for direct quotes
- Use proper citations to give credit whenever you paraphrase another person's ideas
- Only put items on your reference list/ bibliography that you have used in your paper*

When in doubt, CITE



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