

Guidelines for the Research Paper Outline

DUE: Monday, November 12 (at the *beginning* of class!)

Your individual research project for this course is a series of writing assignments that lead up to a 5-8 page research paper: a research topic proposal, an annotated bibliography, an outline, a draft of the paper, and the final paper.

For your research paper outline (worth 3% of your total course grade):

- From the research topic you submitted (and revised if needed), develop an outline that shows how you will develop your topic into a 5-8 page research paper that advances your original thoughts with evidence from your research. Your outline forms a structure for your paper and shows your reader how the evidence you find from your research, combined with your own analysis, takes the reader from your research question to your conclusions.
- Your outline should restate your research question; no need to include the entire topic proposal. You may use short phrases rather than complete sentences to describe your arguments and supporting subdivisions. Each supporting section or subdivision should be distinct, yet related to the argument.
- Your outline must be well organized and tell me how you plan to answer your research question with evidence from your research that supports your own arguments
- You may indicate a source or multiple sources for each subdivision, as appropriate; this may help you remember which sources support which arguments when it comes time to write and revise the draft.
- You can use or adapt this template to organize your outline:
 - I. Introduction – the research question
 - a. Relevance
 - b. Background information and context
 - II. First argument with supporting evidence from your research
 - a. Subdivision one – one piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - b. Subdivision two – another piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - c. Repeat as needed
 - III. Second argument with supporting evidence from your research
 - a. Subdivision one – one piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - b. Subdivision two – another piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - c. Repeat as needed
 - IV. Third argument with supporting evidence from your research
 - a. Subdivision one – one piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - b. Subdivision two – another piece of evidence to support your argument with supporting details (Source)
 - c. Repeat as needed
 - V. Conclusion

- a. Answer to the research question; is there an answer?
- b. Recommendations for further study

- You may have more than three arguments with supporting evidence. Each argument should carry approximately equal weight in your analysis of the research question
- Please either: a) type up your outline as a word processing document and email it to me as an attachment or, b) print it out and bring it to class.
- Please submit the outline as a word-processed document in 12-point font with 1” margins.
- The first draft of your research paper is due on Monday, November 19 **at the beginning of class.**

As always, please ask me if you have any questions! Remember that I have office hours 11:15-12:15 Mondays and Wednesdays in A439.

Grading chart for your outline:

	Insufficient (0 points)	Developing (1 point)	Competent (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
Relevance	The outline does not relate to the research proposal.	Most of the outline is not clearly related to the research proposal	The outline is related to the research proposal, but the research question is not clearly addressed	The outline is relevant to the research proposal.
Focus	The outline lacks a main topic and a research question or problem.	An appropriate topic has been selected; however, the outline does not include a research question or problem.	An appropriate topic has been selected and a research question or problem is included.	An appropriate topic has been selected, and a research question or problem is considered reflectively.
Structure	The structure of the outline is unclear and vague; points to support the main argument are missing or incomplete.	The structure of the outline is inconsistent or incomplete, but some points to support the research topic are present.	Much of the outline is clear, but a few parts are incomplete or undeveloped.	The structure of the outline is clear and points to support the research topic are presented logically.
Sources	None of the arguments are backed up by sources	Few of the arguments are backed up by sources	Some of the arguments are backed up by sources	Most or all of the arguments are backed up by sources
Assignment requirements	The outline is less than a half a page in length.	The outline is about half of one page in length.	The outline is nearly one page in length.	The outline is one page or more in length
Writing mechanics	All sentences & phrases are grammatically incorrect or have errors in punctuation, spelling, or capitalization.	Most sentences & phrases are grammatically incorrect or have errors in punctuation, spelling, or capitalization.	Some sentences & phrases are grammatically incorrect or have errors in punctuation, spelling, or capitalization.	All or almost all sentences & phrases are grammatically correct or are free of punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.