

Faculty of Community Services

Academic Support & Resource Centre

How to Create an Outline

CHOOSE A WORKING THESIS

- Once you have done some research and thought about your ideas, formulate a working thesis.; this will be the overarching “point” of your paper.
- As you develop your ideas, you can change your thesis to better reflect the purpose of your essay.

MAKE AN OUTLINE

- Tie everything back to your thesis. If a section doesn't directly relate to your thesis, you probably shouldn't include it.
- The process of researching, brainstorming, and making a detailed outline may take ½ to ¾ of the total time you spend working on an essay. Good organization is crucial, and takes time!
- The outline should include most of the information that will eventually go in your essay.

• *Your essay may include:*

1) An Introduction

- Provide a brief introduction to the topic in general
- Define any key terms that you will be using
- State your thesis, and briefly mention the arguments that you will be using to back it up

2) Body Paragraphs

- Each body paragraph needs a topic sentence. The topic sentence should be directly related to your thesis.
- List evidence that you will use within that paragraph. Make notes of sources or statistics that you will use.

3) A Conclusion:

- Restate your thesis and briefly summarize your main points
- What does this mean for your field of study or for your practice?

QUICK TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR WRITING

- ✓ ***Keep your calendar updated:*** If you see deadlines approaching, you are more likely to prepare in advance versus pulling all-nighters; give yourself “soft” deadlines for completing various sections of your assignment.
- ✓ ***Give yourself breaks:*** If you are feeling overwhelmed, it is important to give yourself a break by going for a walk, taking a nap, or having some leisure time; taking a break allows you an opportunity to generate ideas and return to your work in a more critical way.

Try to avoid distractions while you write: Social media, TV, phone, pets, etc.