

NationsUniversity®

Writing Guide

This guide was developed to assist students at NationsUniversity with writing assignments. Much of this information is also available in ENG 2 English Composition.

If you have written previously at the college level, you may feel you do not need some of the beginning topics. However, since NU students come with diverse educational experiences, the need exists to provide a common understanding of expectations in writing essays, reporting activities, and giving reflections. Use the Table of Contents to select sections that are most beneficial to your study.

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Introduction

Degree students are expected to demonstrate a measure of competence in writing. Although activities focus on action, this guide will help you become more proficient in expressing thoughts in writing. The purpose of writing assignments is to allow you to

1. Demonstrate the ability to synthesize concepts, and
2. Show evidence of critical thinking.

The two most common problems students have in written assignments are (1) failure to focus on all the components of the assigned topic and (2) failure to do original work. The first problem is easily solved by reading the assignment carefully and addressing all parts of it. A key is to read the assignment more than once, address the topic, making notes, and writing the purpose of your paper in a sentence or an outline. Many assignments and essays do not need to be researched. If the assignment is called a “reflection” or if it asks for your *opinion*, then *your thoughts* are expected.

Writing assignments often include a grading criteria and a rubric so you will understand what is expected. Here is an example of a rubric for reflections in the beginning course, BRS 16.6.

- The writer uses personal knowledge or experience
- Ideas are original and are not copied from another source
- The topic is clearly focused and connected to the reading
- The development of the topic is thorough and purposeful
- Supporting details or examples are given
- Key details are insightful and well considered

I. The Process: Overview

Writing at the academic level requires careful planning, organization, research, and several drafts. The following basic steps apply to most types of academic writing.

A. Pre-writing Activity

1. Brainstorm, narrow your topic, and analyze the writing prompt in the assignment.

2. Gather details or facts about your topic. If you are writing from first-hand experience, then draw from your memory. Organize your thoughts into a list or outline.
3. If you draw your information from a dictionary, books, journals, magazines, the Internet, videos, or news programs, you must give credit to these sources, even if you put the information in your own words.

B. The First Draft. Develop a first draft by writing your ideas quickly. It is important to get all your ideas on paper.

C. Revising. Read your paper and note ways to improve it. You may wish to reorder the material, correct misspellings and grammar, or add content. Cut out duplications, unnecessary words, and irrelevant material. The result will be a second draft. Repeat the process multiple times until you craft the paper into your best work.

D. Submitting to a Reader. When you feel you have done the best you can, ask a friend to read your paper and evaluate it in terms of its language, flow of thought, and argumentation.

E. Editing. Evaluate your reader's comments and make needed corrections.

F. Submitting to a professor. Submit your paper in keeping with the instructions found within the course syllabus. Your professor will read your essay carefully and provide you with a specific critique. You will find the critique helpful as you prepare future compositions.

As a word of encouragement, you should know that every good writer expects to rewrite many times. Writing is a skill. Like every skill, mastery takes practice, practice, and more practice. If you discover a particular weakness, such as making your thoughts flow smoothly, finding synonyms, or illustrating, then work on the areas of weaknesses.

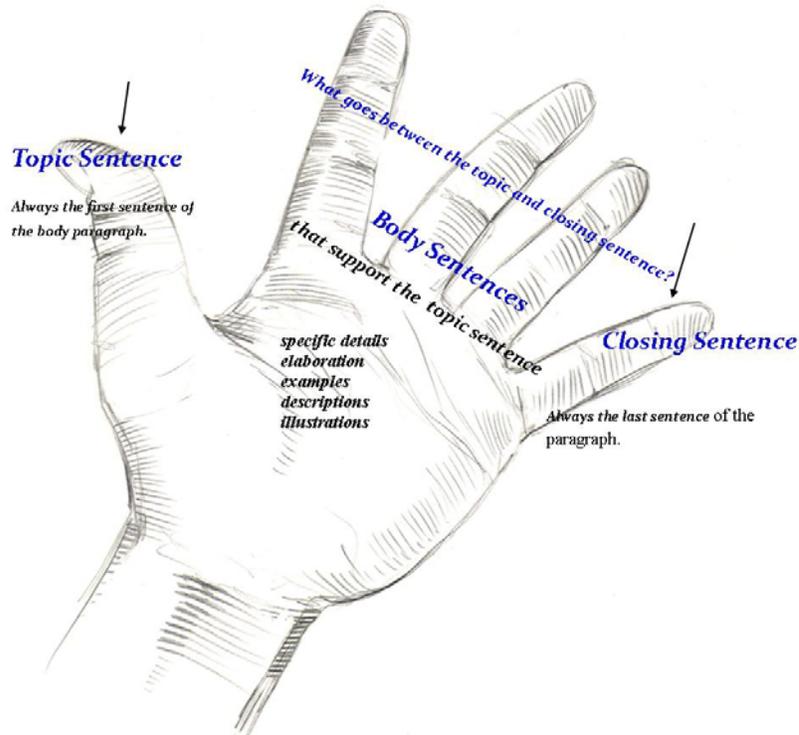
II. Paragraphs

The writing format of essays, textbooks, novels, magazines, etc. is based on the paragraph, a group of sentences about one subject. The parts of a paragraph work together to develop one main idea. Paragraphs are organizers that guide the reader from one topic to the next. It is important that each paragraph contain one main idea with supporting details. Begin a new paragraph when you move to a new idea. A paragraph may be indented in the first sentence or separated from the new paragraph with a line space.

A. Parts of a Paragraph

1. A *topic sentence* informs the reader of the subject or topic of the paragraph and usually is the first sentence in the paragraph. An introductory sentence before the topic sentence may be appropriate, especially if this is the introductory paragraph of an essay.
2. *Body sentences* provide specific details, elaboration, examples, descriptions, or illustrations. Supporting sentences constitute the evidence your topic sentence needs to demonstrate it is a true statement. Several options are available for the writer to choose for evidence. Choose the option that best fits the statement.
 - *Facts* offer proof or evidence to support the topic sentence.
 - *Statistics* also offer evidence to support the topic sentence.
 - *Examples, illustrations, or instances* demonstrate a point
 - *Details* are specifics that elaborate on the topic sentence.

- 3, A *closing sentence* reminds the reader of the topic and transitions to the next topic. Note the figure below.



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B. Patterns

A simple pattern of sentence arrangement in a paragraph can help inexperienced writers. These patterns are *not* required, nor should they be used all the time, but the following two examples may help you understand this concept.

Example 1

¹John has a pretty yard. His grass is ²very green and always carefully mowed. ³His trees are neatly spaced on the outside edges of his yard, and the lilacs are in full bloom. ⁴The flower beds on either side of the house are full of yellow daffodils and red tulips. ⁵In the springtime, these features of John's yard make it quite attractive.

- 1--topic sentence
- 2--details
- 3, 4--examples
- 5--closing sentence

Example 2

¹It's fun to watch movies on a bleak and rainy weekend. ²Comedies are especially entertaining and can brighten an otherwise dreary day. ³Last Saturday it was pouring. ⁴We rented some movies of the Three Stooges and had a great time watching them with our friends, Jake and Rebecca. ⁵Our rainy weekend became bright with laughter and smiles.

- 1--topic sentence
- 2--restatement of the main idea with details
- 3, 4--illustration
- 5--closing sentence

See Purdue OWL for more help on the structure and development of paragraphs.
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/606/1/>

III. Essays

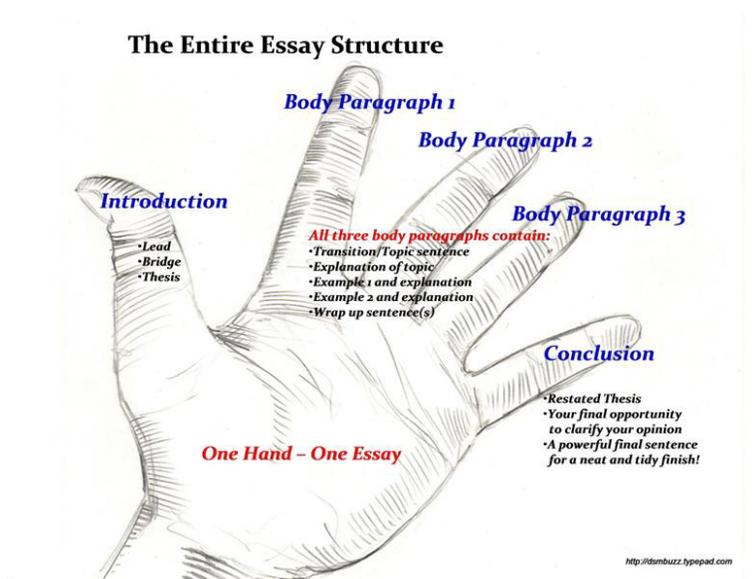
A. Definition

Leading essayist, Aldous Huxley, once said, "Like the novel, the essay is a literary device for saying almost everything about almost anything, usually on a certain topic. By tradition, almost by definition, the essay is a short piece, and it therefore impossible to give all things full play with the limits of a single essay" (*Collected Essays*, Preface).

Essays are often written from the writer's personal point of view. They can be stories or recollections, observations of daily life, reflections of the writer's thoughts, literary criticism, political statements, or learned arguments. Essays, for the sake of this course, are written in prose. This module focuses on two types of essays: the descriptive essay and the narrative essay.

B. The Five-Paragraph Essay. This is the most common essay format and is the recommended format for writing a paper for NationsUniversity. It follows a defined format, making essay-writing easy to organize.

1. *The first paragraph* introduces readers to the thesis, or the main idea of the essay. The thesis usually is stated in the "thesis statement," generally the first or last sentence of the first paragraph, and is a clear and limited statement. It should contain the three subtopics that develop the main idea.
2. *The body of the essay* consists of the second, third, and fourth paragraphs. Each paragraph restates a subtopic, often in original form and develops the subtopic in three or more sentences. These paragraphs lead the reader to see the importance of the subtopic and how it relates to the thesis. Topic sentences in each of these paragraphs support the thesis.
3. *The fifth paragraph* is the conclusion. It restates the thesis and the three subtopics. It is important for the fifth paragraph to be a powerful summary because it is the final chance to convince the reader of the importance and validity of the information presented. However, a conclusion is not a mere summary. The conclusion states the implications for the presentation. The purpose of the first paragraph and the fifth paragraph are closely related, and it is not uncommon for a writer to construct them at the same time and edit them as necessary after the body of the essay has been written. See the figure below.



C. Transitions

A transition word, phrase, or sentence makes the essay flow from one paragraph to the next and helps the reader follow the logic and sequence of the information presented. Typically a good place to use a transition word or phrase is at the beginning of a paragraph, giving the reader a clue about the new idea developed in the paragraph. A list of transition words is given in the chart below.

Time	Comparing	Contrasting	Adding Information	Concluding or Summarizing	Other
during	likewise	but	again	as a result	for this reason
meanwhile	also	yet	besides	therefore	because
first	in the same way	otherwise	for example	in conclusion	in fact
then	similarly	however	for instance	in summary	the following example
next	as	although	along with	simply stated	
until		even though	in addition	finally	
after			another		

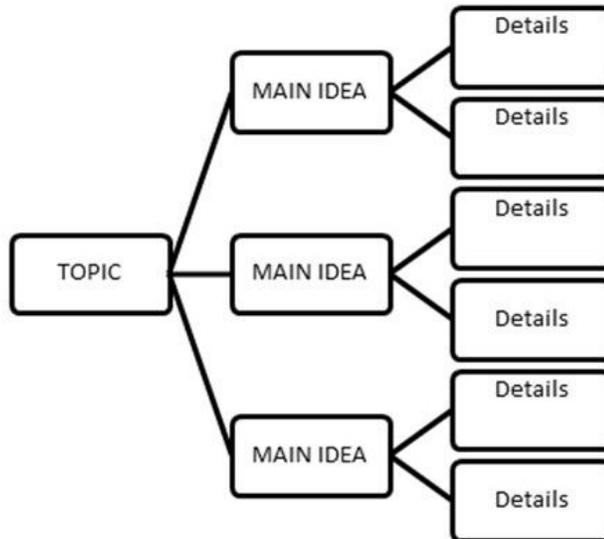
D. Organization

- 1. Graphic Organizers.** Frequently when students write their first essay, they choose a topic and begin writing the first paragraph without organizing their thoughts first. Graphic organizers provide structure that help the writer in organizing thoughts. Graphic organizers are helpful to many students to use before creating an outline.

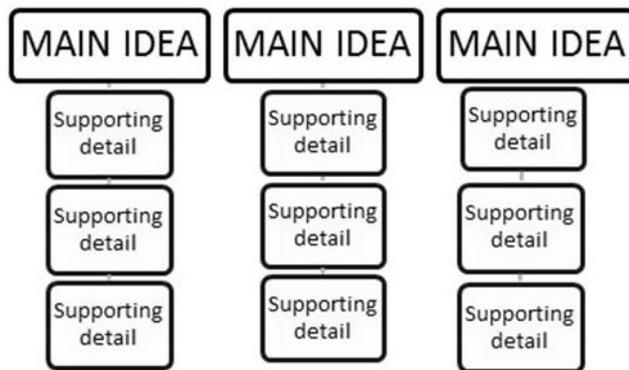
In the Pre-writing stage, you should put your thoughts down quickly. Organizers will help. A graphic organizer can be as simple as boxes and arrows that connect random thoughts or as precise as a pre-made chart. The newest versions of Microsoft Word have several charts

that can be inserted into a document and used for thinking and organizing. Here some examples found in 2010 version.

Example 1



Example 2



Example 3

Introductory paragraph
(Attention grabber)

Thesis statement

Body of the essay

- 1st main idea/topic sentence, with supporting details
- 2nd main idea/topic sentence, with supporting details
- 3rd main idea/topic sentence, with supporting details

Concluding paragraph

- Restate thesis
- Restate 3 subtopics
- Concluding statement

2. Outlines

The outline format typically uses a hierarchy of numbers and letters to indicate importance. Notes in a Word document can be placed in outline form with bullets, numbers, or the new term “multi-level” system in Word 2010. This is an example of an outline numbering system.

- I.
 - A.
 - 1.
 - a.

E. Active Verbs

The active voice of a verb is typically stronger and more vivid than the passive voice. In active voice, the subject of the sentence *performs* the action. Example: *Every girl passed the driving examination.* *Every girl* performed the action in this sentence. Using the passive voice often makes a sentence too complicated or wordy. In the passive voice, the subject *receives* the action expressed by the verb. In formal writing, the active voice is preferred to the passive.

<i>Avoid</i>	<i>Use</i>
<i>Passive verbs</i> Heart attacks can be caused by high stress. The driving examination was passed by every girl. The floor was mopped by a custodian.	<i>Active verbs</i> High stress can cause heart attacks. Every girl passed the driving examination. A custodian mopped the floor.
<i>Wordy phrases</i> Despite the fact that we ran out of food, everyone seemed to have enough. It is important that they finish all the questions. It is possible that school will be cancelled.	<i>Precise words</i> Even though we ran out of food, everyone seemed to have enough. They must finish all the questions. School might be cancelled.

The Purdue Online Writing Lab provides excellent examples and instruction on active and passive voice. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/539/01/>

The word bank of active verbs can be helpful in writing.

Instead of is”	Instead of “said”	Instead of “look”	Instead of “know”	Other
consists	assert	reveal	realize	determine
includes	observe	discover	reveal	discuss
contains	mention	examine	understand	investigate
involves	state	appraise	imply	establish
hold	consider	scrutinize	infer	verify
control	clarify	focus on		develop
retain	point out	inspect		
comprise	imply	explore		

IV. Formal Writing and Informal Writing

Writing in English is typically separated into two main styles: formal and informal. Formal writing is defined as adhering to traditional standards of correctness and without casual, contracted, and colloquial forms. The way one writes in academic or business settings (formal) is far different from the way one writes to a friend or relative (informal). The tone, vocabulary, and syntax change according to the audience the writer is trying to reach.

Writing that is to be submitted to NationsUniversity should use a formal writing style. Use the kind of language you would use when giving an important speech, not the kind of language you might use when talking with close friends. The following guidelines should help you maintain a formal style of writing.

A. First-Person Pronouns

Do not use first-person pronouns (*I, me, my, we, us*). Using these expressions in analytical and persuasive essays can make the writing wordy, can make the writer seem less confident of his or her ideas, and can give the essay informal tone. Use of first-person pronouns is unnecessary in the kinds of essays you will write. Readers will know that they are reading your thoughts, beliefs, or opinions, so you do not need to state, “I think that,” “I believe that,” or “in my opinion.” Simply delete these expressions from sentences, and you will be left with stronger sentences.

Example

Instead of saying, “I think that this character is confused,” say, “This character is confused.” The second sentence is less wordy, sounds more formal, and conveys a more confident tone.

Instead of saying, “I can sense the character’s confusion,” consider saying, “Readers can sense the character’s confusion.”

The use of *one, the reader, readers, the viewer* in place of first-person pronouns makes your tone more effective, but be careful not to overuse these expressions. You want to sound formal, not awkward and stiff.

B. Addressing the Readers

Avoid addressing the readers as “you.” Addressing readers using second-person pronouns (*you, your*) can make an essay sound informal and can bring assumptions into an essay that are not true. A student once wrote in her essay, “If you wear a tube top, guys might think that you are easy.” Males reading the essay would wonder why the student would think they would wear

female clothing. As with first-person pronouns, second-person pronouns can be replaced by words such as *one*, *the reader*, *readers*, and *the viewer*.

C. Contractions

Avoid the use of contractions. Contractions are shortened versions of words that use apostrophes in place of letters such as *can't*, *isn't*, *she's*, and *wouldn't*. The more formal, non-contracted versions are *cannot*, *is not*, *she is*, and *would not*. You might be surprised by how much better a sentence can sound if non-contracted versions of the words replace the contractions.

Example

Instead of saying, "The character isn't aware that he's surrounded by people he can't trust," say, "The character is not aware that he is surrounded by people he cannot trust."

D. Colloquialism and Slang

Avoid colloquialism and slang expressions. Colloquial diction is used in everyday speech and includes, such words as *guys*, *yeah*, *stuff*, *kind of*, *okay*, and *big deal*. Highly informal diction, such as *freak out* and *dissing*, falls into the category of slang. While slang words often are vivid and expressive, slang comes and goes quickly. This is a good reason why slang should be avoided in formal writing. Both colloquialism and slang expressions convey an informal tone.

Example

Instead of saying, "The guy was nailed for ripping off a store," say, "The man was convicted of robbing a store."

As you avoid informal language, be careful not to use words that suggest ideas that you may not intend. Saying "the gentleman was convicted of robbing a store" would probably leave readers wondering why the man who robbed the store is considered to be a *gentleman*. Likewise, "the lady was convicted of robbing a liquor store" would probably cause readers to wonder why a woman who robs a liquor store is considered to be a *lady*.

E. Nonstandard Diction

Avoid nonstandard diction. Nonstandard diction refers to expressions that are not considered legitimate words according to the rules of Standard English usage. Nonstandard diction includes *ain't*, *theirselves*, *hissself*, *anyways*, *alot*, (the accepted version is "a lot"), and *alright* (the accepted version is all right). Most good dictionaries will identify such expressions with the word "nonstandard." Because nonstandard expressions generally are not regarded as legitimate, they will be considered inaccurate word choices in your writings for NationsUniversity.

F. Abbreviations

Avoid abbreviated versions of words. For example, instead of writing *photo*, *phone*, and *TV*, write *photograph*, *telephone*, and *television*.

G. Short and Simple Sentences

Avoid the overuse of short and simple sentences. While the writer might use formal diction in such sentences, too many short and simple sentences can make an essay sound informal, as if the writer is not recognizing that the audience is capable of reading and understanding more complex and longer sentences. Short and simple sentences can be used effectively in formal writing, but heavy reliance on short sentences reflects poorly on the writer and gives the writing

an informal tone. The chart below will help define formal and informal English.

Levels of Language	Formal English	Informal English
Purpose and tone	Serious, academic, businesslike, standard writing	Casual, conversational, friendly email, texting
Precise word choice	Few contractions, no first-person pronouns, no slang or colloquialisms	Contractions, first-person pronouns, slang, simpler
Sentences	Carefully organized, longer, complex, compound	Varied length, abbreviated phrases (photo)

With formal diction, you can express yourself clearly, accurately, and effectively, without relying on language that you might use in less formal situations. Educated people have several different writing and speaking voices, and one voice is no more “genuine” than another. Instead, the different voices reflect choices based on the writing or speaking situation. Through your word choice in writing essays, you demonstrate that you are aware of your audience—a group of well-educated people whom you do not know. Imagine the kind of language that you might use in a job interview.

Do not confuse formal diction with presumptuous diction (the kind of language that seems intended mainly to impress readers) or jargon (the kind of language only familiar to people within a specialized field, such as computer technicians). You should also not sound “artificial” as you use formal diction. Instead, consider that different situations require different uses of language and that educated people are able to adapt their use of language to a variety of writing and speaking situations.

V. Writing a Thesis Statement

In an essay the topic sentences support the *thesis statement*. They work together to provide the main points or evidence to prove the thesis statement. There should be a relationship between the sentences in a paragraph to the topic sentence. The paragraphs should work as specific support or evidence for the thesis statement.

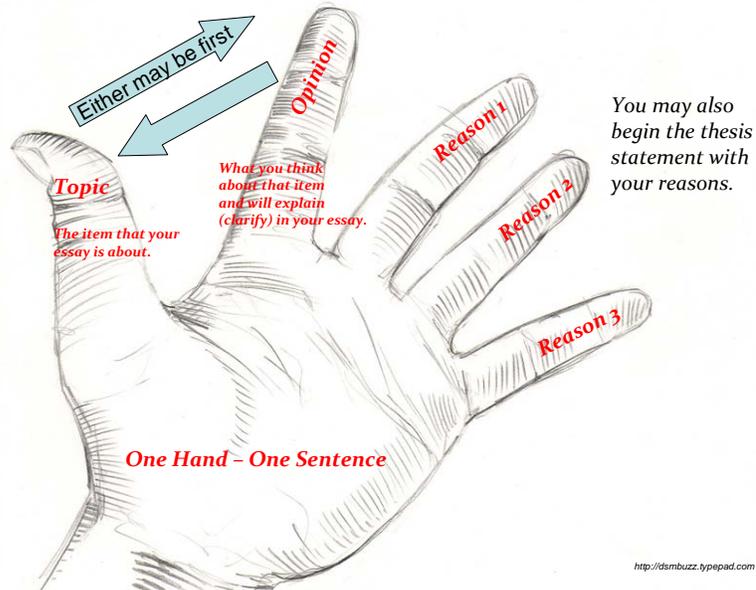
The thesis statement is an assertion, not a fact or observation. It takes a stand and is the main idea of the paper or essay. Beginning writers often make the mistake of choosing a broad subject and have difficulty creating a thesis statement. The more narrow the topic, the easier it is to support. The statement should be specific and contain one main idea. As you begin writing an essay, you may find it necessary to revise your thesis statement several times to narrow the topic.

Your first paragraph should contain the thesis statement, but begin with an introductory sentence that will grab the reader’s attention. This would be the most general statement in your paragraph and the next sentences would be more and more specific. The last sentence would contain the thesis of the essay.

This link provides an example of the development of the first paragraph as well as organizing the paper and writing a conclusion.

<http://www.roanestate.edu/owl/HowtoBegin.html>

Step 1: Thesis Statement must include these elements:



An additional sight with multiple examples of thesis statements and how to narrow or focus the statement can be found at this sight. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/1/>

The Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin also provides detailed instructions for writing at the university level. Begin with the first bullet, "Stages of the Writing Process" to receive step by step assistance. <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/index.html>

VI. Plagiarism

Creating your own ideas does not come naturally to most people. With so much information available in the 21st century on the Internet, the first response of many students is to just copy and paste to their own document whatever can be found, add a few comments, or change some words and then turn in the assignment.

A writer needs to use another level of thinking to take information someone else created and integrate it into his or her own ideas. You many have found that many of the courses in NU curriculum require a different level of thinking also. Let's consider a model for thinking that has been used since 1956. Educators and educational psychologists have used Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain in teaching and learning to illustrate the various levels of thinking. Refer to this website now to gain an understanding of Bloom's six levels of thinking.

http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm

You will notice that the lowest level of the pyramid is Knowledge or Remembering. This is the simplest form of learning in school – memorize the facts and take the test. You should have found by now that the exams at NU are not this type of learning. You have to *understand* and be able to *apply* your knowledge, and then *analyze* and *evaluate* it for most of the exams in our courses.

A. Synthesis

Harvey and Goudvis explain that “synthesizing happens when we merge the information with our thinking and shape it into our own thought” (19). In Bloom’s original taxonomy *synthesis* was on the fifth level, but in the updated version synthesis is replaced with the verb “creating” and is at the top of the pyramid. Perhaps creating is the simplest way to describe the process of synthesis. When you read various information for your research and then reflect on what it means, the new ideas you develop are a result of synthesizing. However, just explaining information is not the same as synthesizing. It may be that the information you read in your research is not new to you, but the way in which it is presented causes you to change your thinking.

How can I synthesize? Your notes are a critical first step. If you are in the habit of copying every word you read and taking notes, then you may be wasting your time and effort. Eliminate that step by copying what is essential. Do not write complete sentences; use one of the note-taking strategies found in our Study Guide.

You can modify the Cornell notes for synthesizing information. Draw a line down the middle of the paper and write *Facts* on the left side and *Process* or *Thinking* on the right side. As you take notes on the facts, write down your questions, observations, and thoughts in the right column. The thoughts and questions will help you synthesize the information. Your notes are your resource for synthesizing the research information.

B. Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting

Integrating material you read with your own thoughts requires an understanding of three skills: *paraphrasing*, *summarizing*, and *quoting*. These skills are the foundation for writing any paper in which a writer uses the ideas of another writer. You will need these skills in the longer essays in Unit 2 and 3 in this course as well as the research paper in Module 3. Learning the difference between a paraphrase and a summary is essential to avoid plagiarism. If you take notes correctly and document your sources, you will find it much easier to write your paper without plagiarizing. When you use the Internet, reference books, or a Bible to research a topic you *must* give credit to the ideas you find there – *even if you put the idea into your own words*. Copying and pasting portions of a text from the Internet is *plagiarizing* and is not acceptable at any university. The NationsUniversity Honor Code explicitly prohibits plagiarism. A copy of the code is found in this section of the course and can also be found on our website in the Student Handbook.

As you take notes and find an idea that is important enough to use exactly as the author stated it, copy it exactly and then record the page number for the citation in your paper. A direct quote should not be fewer than 4 typed lines. The reference by Harvey and Goudvis in the first paragraph under “What is Synthesis?” is an example of a direct quotation and cited according to MLA (Modern Language Association) guidelines. To credit the ideas that you paraphrase or summarize, cite the source in the text of your paper. As you take notes, record all the essential information about your reference. See the section on citing sources for specifics on using MLA.

1. Paraphrase. A *paraphrase* is simply restating the author’s words in your own words. It may be easier to understand a paraphrase by describing how to create a paraphrase.

2. Guidelines for writing a paraphrase

- a. Read the passage.
- b. Take notes – not complete sentences, but abbreviated main ideas and each detail.
- c. Write the paraphrase the next day *without looking at the original*.
- d. Use only your own words.

If your notes are not complete sentences, you usually will not be able to duplicate the

author's exact words or phrasing. An example of note-taking is provided before Assignment 2 to provide specific help.

3. Summary. A *summary* is a brief account containing the main points of something read or heard. News stories are examples of summarizing events. Writing a summary is also a study technique that helps you know how much you retained and understood in your reading. Summaries are a useful tool for practicing writing skills and reading comprehension.

4. Guidelines for writing a summary

- a. Read the written selection once to become familiar with the text.
- b. Reread the selection and take note of key words, phrases, and ideas.
- c. Identify the main idea of the selection and include it in your opening sentence.
- d. Include only the important information and keep it in the same order as it appears in the selection.
- e. Use only your own words. A summary is **not** a commentary, an opinion, or information in addition to what is found in the text. A summary answers the questions, "What is this about?"

Comparison of Paraphrase and Summarize

Paraphrase	Summarize
Use your own words	Use your own words
Text is about the same length as original	Text is much shorter than original
Write main idea and supporting details	Main ideas shorter, simpler language
Be sure to keep in all ideas	Only most important details

5. Direct quotes. A *direct quote* within the text of your paper requires the use of quotation marks and a specific style to indicate where the information originated. Universities and academic journals require a specific style to format crediting sources. NationsUniversity uses Modern Language Association (MLA) style for its English courses. The most common styles used today are APA, MLA, and for research in Bible, Turabian. All four styles are similar in many ways and basically differ in punctuation and order of the information.

VII. Using Source Material

Most courses in the B.R.S. program do not require extensive research papers. In the M.R.S. and M.Div. programs, several courses that require essays. Read assignments carefully to discover if research is required. Many times you are asked to integrate your thoughts with the material or explain a passage in your own words.

In the assignments that do require some research, follow a style to cite your sources. The previous section carefully outlined three ways to avoid plagiarism: paraphrase, summarize, and direct quote. You must give credit to your sources, meaning document where the information originated. At the academic level there are several styles for documenting sources. Most religious universities prefer the Turabian style; many doctoral programs require APA style. In our General Education courses in the B.R.S. program at NationsUniversity we require the MLA style (Modern Language). You will see in the following section on formatting papers that you may use any one of these three styles for courses in Religious Studies.

Our purpose is not to make documenting sources complicated; it is to ensure that the documents our students produce are not plagiarized and represent the integrity of our Honor Code.

A. Citations

If you are using, Microsoft Office, 2010 you have a distinct advantage in citing sources. There is a References tab at the top of your document that inserts a citation for you. Select the style you want to use from the Style list. Place your cursor at the end of the sentence where the citation should go *before* you put your ending punctuation. It will give you a screen for filling in all the essential information that will create a bibliography or Works Cited page. When the author's name is inserted, click over the highlighted text to edit. Then you can type in the page number you want listed. Notice in the example below that there is no punctuation between the author's last name and the page number. After the ending parentheses, add the appropriate ending punctuation. The example is shown in a different color font for our purposes here. Do not change the color of your font in your paper.

1. In-text citation example using MLA style

"When studying the early church, it is easy to conclude it was a 'hymn-singing community' (Martin 39). The gospel was not preached in a cold, impersonal way; instead it was presented as the Good News of Jesus Christ and those who heard and accepted it did so with joy and emotion. A natural consequence of their enthusiasm was the expression of faith and praise through song (Martin 40).

Two citations are shown in this paragraph. The reader should be able to find complete information on the resource on the "Works Cited" page at the end of the paper.

2. Works Cited page using MLA style (Example)

Works Cited

Anderson, George. "Worship in the First Century." URL: <http://www.fakewebsite.com/worship> (March 10, 2001).

Davis, Paul J. "What We Can Learn from the New Testament Church." *The Christian Chronicle* May 12, 2002: 16.

Martin, Ralph P. *Worship in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmann Publishing Company, 1964

Notice the entries are listed alphabetically. The first line of each entry begins at the margin with any subsequent lines indented. (Note: The works cited on the sample page are not real sources. They were created as examples.)

The samples represent an Internet source, a newspaper article, and a book. There are many variations on the types of sources: more than one author of a book, an edited book, using two sources, etc. For students without resources to the Internet, our primary request is that you document the sources as best you can using these examples.

The links provided in the following section give very specific help for your citations. Consult those links, especially if you have a source that does not follow a simple format. If you have a book with two authors, a magazine or newspaper, a book with several authors or an electronic source with paragraph numbers, the MLA site gives examples and instructions.

B. Locating reliable information

As you begin your research, finding the right sources for gathering information is very important. In today's world, the easiest place to begin is the Internet. General information can be found

using online encyclopedias or almanacs such as Britannica or Encarta. Search engines are also helpful as a starting point.

Though the Internet can be a useful research tool, students must be aware that most anyone with a computer and web access can put information out there for all to see. Therefore, all of the information on the Internet is not accurate and reliable. When choosing Internet sources, it is important to pay attention to the domain name extensions, e.g., .edu (educational institution), .gov (government), or .org (non-profit organization). These sites represent institutions and are most often more reliable; however, even these sites can have political or religious bias that must be separated from the facts.

Students should be selective when using .com (commercial) or .biz (commercial business) sites. Some can be useful but many simply contain advertisements or draw the user into areas that require payment for usage. Internet users should also be wary of the millions of personal home pages on the Internet. The quality of these varies, and their accuracy and reliability should be carefully checked before using them as resources. When using the Internet for research, it is helpful to bookmark pages so that they can be easily accessed again.

Printed materials available in libraries are also important sources to use in research. Books, almanacs, atlases, government publications, newspapers, and magazines are all sources that can be found in the local library and used for writing a research paper. If you do not have access to a local library, visit our online library.

You may feel that you are so familiar with the Internet that you don't need any advice in researching information. But you are researching for academic writing. The expectations are different; you need to consider reliable sources. The following website contains a slide show that is helpful in guiding you as you search the World Wide Web.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/558/1/>

This source provides excellent information to help you evaluate any source as you read information for your paper <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/3/>. Don't skip this important piece of your preparation.

A special note. Wikipedia is a free-content encyclopedia that allows contributors to edit articles at any time. It has become one of the largest reference websites with visits of over 400 million a month. We don't recommend that you use this website for your main source of information. However, it can guide you to other sources and can give you a general idea about your topic. It is not a primary source of information and relies on volunteers to correct misinformation. Wikipedia itself offers guidance on the use of its site for research.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Researching_with_Wikipedia. Read this link carefully before you begin your research.

C. Gathering and Organizing Information

You may choose your own method for organizing your research, but the most frequently used method has been 3x5 note cards. Notecards provide an organizing advantage. When you are ready to organize the paper, you can separate the information into the categories you created for the outline. You may want to use cards of different colors and categorize by sources of information, blue for Internet, yellow for publications, etc. If you do not have access to cards you can make your own or use a notebook. The essential piece of advice here is to make a plan. If you do not, your research paper will likely take much longer to organize and write.

- 1. Recording source information.** As you gather your information it is essential that you record the details of your sources. Make it a habit to record the information before you take notes. You should gather more information than you will need, but at this point you don't

know exactly what you need. You will waste valuable time searching for source information if you fail to record it as you search. Write down complete bibliographical information

Author
Title
Place of publication
Publisher
Date of publication
Page numbers

Websites: URLs (<http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu>) are not required by MLA when citing a website source, but they can be included. The main point of including information about a website is so the reader of your paper can easily locate that website and retrieve the original information. To cite a website you need the same information as listed above except that page numbers are not typically found on websites. You need as much information as you can locate:

Author
Title
Web (use the word “web” if you do not include the URL)
Your date of access

Example for a Works Cited page:

Cornell University Library. “Introduction to Research.” *Cornell University Library*. Cornell University, 2009. Web 19 June 2009.

You will use this information within the text of your paper and the Works Cited page that must be included with the paper. An article is useless without the bibliographical information because you cannot cite its source.

- 2. Taking notes.** The second important task in research is taking notes. Refer to the tutorial on NationsUniversity website for suggestions in how to take notes. You likely have devised some note-taking method by this time in your university experience that works best for you. We cannot emphasize enough that note-taking is not “copy and paste. The results of copy and paste are *plagiarism*. Write down only the important words and facts. If you find a statement that you think you will want to quote in the paper, copy it exactly. Don’t forget to record the page number of the quote. Devise a system for your source information, so you don’t have to write it over and over. Make a card for the source and label it with a letter or number (Example A). Then label your note card of information with the appropriate symbol (Example B). Your notes can also be made in the form of a worksheet or saved electronically. If you choose to print a hardcopy of important articles you find on the Internet, you still need to take notes. This is the best way to avoid plagiarism. Refer to the skills you learned in Unit 2 of Module 2 of this course to paraphrase, summarize, and quote instead of “copy and paste”.

Example A

Example B

<p>SOURCE CARD</p> <p>I.</p> <p>Pyles, Thomas <i>The Origins and Development of the English Language</i> New York Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. 2008 Pages 10-20</p>	<p>NOTECARD</p> <p>I.</p> <p>History – 3 periods: Old Eng. A.D. 450-1066 Middle Eng. 1066-1485 Modern Eng. 1485 to present p. 65</p> <p>Old Eng from Anglo-Saxons---German, Celtic lang, Norse (Vikings) p. 69</p>
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- 3. Organizing material according to importance.** While researching, bear in mind the length of your assignment. Research carefully and gather ample information. In this stage of gathering information, however, it is best to collect more information than you think you will need. As you develop your outline, you can weed out information that is repetitive or does not fit with the thesis of your paper. At some point during this stage you should draft a thesis statement. As you gather more information you will likely need to revise your thesis.

VIII. Formatting

A. Document Size

Use letter size document in your Word document (8.5 x 11). Margins should be 1 inch on all sides. All text should be double-spaced. Use a 10 point size font.

B. Identification

In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list:

Your name
Course Title, Module 2, Unit 1, Assignment #
Assignment Title
Date

C. Header

Subsequent pages should have a header that contain your last name and page numbers in the upper right hand corner, one-half inch from the top.

D. Spacing

Double space between the essay's title (not bolded or underlined, etc.) and the first line of the text.

E. Indention

If you chose to indent each paragraph, using the Tab key once. As an alternate to indention, leave as space between paragraphs.

F. Citation Form Sources

Use these links from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Toronto to get specific information on how to cite within the text and create a Works Cited page.

1. <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocMLA.html>
2. <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>
3. Notice in the sample paper that the Bible references are at the end of a sentence, in parentheses, and a period after the parentheses. These very specific details that you need to follow when writing your essays in this module as well as Module 3.

G. Works Cited page

1. Begin on a separate page at the end of your essay.
2. Use MLA formatting standards. If you are more familiar with APA or Turabian styles and are not taking one of the English courses, you may use any of the three styles.

IX. Writing

The **goal** of a research paper is not to just summarize the opinions or facts of a topic but to use the information you gather to present ideas with a unique perspective. Your research should investigate sources related to your topic, evaluate the validity of the sources, and then integrate them as evidence into your paper. Most research papers ask the writer to take a position on a specific topic. If your course requires a research paper to argue a position, then you need to understand inductive reasoning.

A. Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning uses reason and logic to show that one idea is more valid than another idea. Its purpose is to persuade the reader to accept a particular point of view or take a specific action; thus the label, argumentative. The argument establishes a claim and then proves it with sound evidence and reasoning based on facts, examples, and expert knowledge. Your writing and organization should guide the reader through the reasoning process and offer a clear explanation of each point. When you choose the support for your argument, you need to avoid faulty reasoning.

B. False Reasoning

1. *Hasty generalizations* are conclusions drawn from weak or insufficient information.
2. *Either/or fallacy* refers to the assumption that a problem or situation has only one possible cause or resolution where there may be several.
3. *False cause and effect* is an assumption is made that event A caused event B simply because A came first.
4. *Emotional appeal*. This can be in the form of positive or negative concepts and typically uses "loaded" terms. Almost any adjective could be turned into a loaded term depending on the way it is used. Strong negative or positive adjectives describing a situation, person, concept, or idea could be used in an argument that would appeal to a person's emotions. Example: *If you were a true American, you would vote in every election.* Using the word "true" appeals to a person's loyalty rather than logical thinking.

C. Narrowing a topic

Depending on the course and the professor you may be given a topic for research or you may be given the freedom to choose your own topic. Interest in your topic will affect the effort and enthusiasm you put into your research. You might begin by brainstorming topics that interest you and then think of a specific question that you would like to answer by researching. Prior knowledge, the knowledge you have before you begin researching a topic, is not necessary but some understanding of the topic will help you know where to begin. You may want to explore a topic by first reading general information from reference materials. Perhaps you have always wondered about a science concept or why a certain historical event occurred. These are beginning points to explore as you determine a topic.

Once you decide on a broad topic, e.g. "Religion," you should begin to narrow it down to a very specific aspect.

Make a list of topics and then write subtopics. For instance, if we begin with "religion", how many times can we narrow the topic?

Religion narrowed to types of religion (Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Hinduism, Islam)

Choose one religion: Islam

Narrow again with subtopics

1. Islam history and origin
Still a broad area and would be difficult to cover in one research paper
2. Islam influence on politics in _____(name a country)
Could be narrowed again by focusing on a specific type period
3. Islam leaders in the 21st century and their influence
Even focusing on the leaders in this century is broad because it does not focus on a specific part of the world. We know that even within Middle Eastern countries there is a great variance in leadership styles and influence.
4. Influence of Islam on education of girls
This is narrow but could be even more specific to the influence in a specific country and time period. Current practice might be very different than even 10-20 years ago.

Look for a problem to be solved if you are still struggling for a topic. Environmental issues can be found in any country as well as economic problems or human rights issues. Look for information on a topic to understand all sides of the issue you choose. You will need to know the history of the topic, the counterarguments, and strong support for your perspective. If you are taking a religious studies course, your topic may be related to an issue that people struggle with, or it could be a theological topic.

D. First Draft

You may be wondering, What is the difference in the five paragraph essay and a research paper. Length is one major difference. Instead of just one paragraph as an introduction you may have three. With a research paper you can use more than one paragraph to develop your evidence. In the induction or argument paper you will need a counterargument (claims made by the opposite side of the issue). The following sections will guide you to develop a thesis statement, a tentative outline, organize your research information, write a first draft, revise the outline.

Read through the following outline to understand the structure of the research paper. Use it to

guide you in your organizing and development.

E. Outline or Format of the Research Paper

Title

Typically easier to choose after first or second drafts

Purpose

Grab attention

Option

Ask a question

Possibilities

Use words or concepts from the paper

Introduction

The introduction of the paper should

Define terms or concepts when necessary

Reveal plan of organization

Present relevant background or contextual materials

Lead sentence

Should develop interest in your topic and capture the reader's attention.

Possible leads

Question

Quotation

Statistics to grab attention

Personal anecdote

Example

Thesis statement

The most important sentence in your paper

Answers: "What am I trying to prove?"

Not a factual statement, but a claim to be proven

Usually in the introduction

Gives the reader the main idea of the paper

Body paragraphs

Build on the claims made in introduction

Offer brief explanation of history of topic in first body paragraphs

Order of paragraphs options:

General to specific information

Most important to least important

Weakest claim to strongest claim

Counterargument

Addresses claims of opposition argument

Options to presentation:

Include counterargument with each main point (within each section)

Present after main claims have been made (near the end of the paper, before the conclusion)

Conclusion

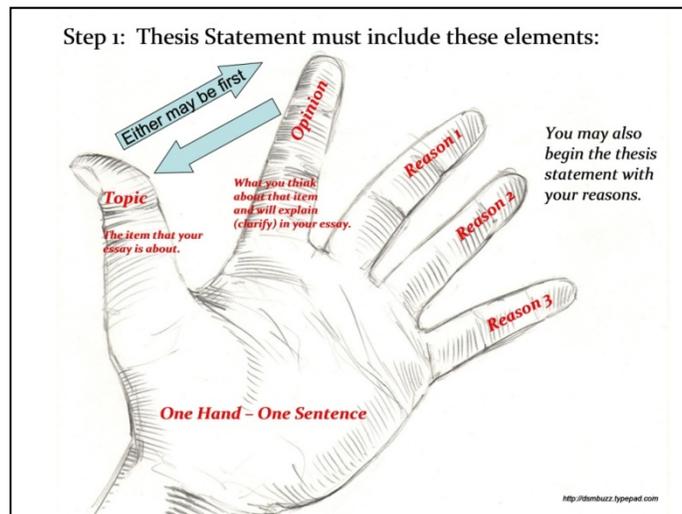
Reemphasize main points

Make a prediction on future of your topic or give a call to action

Avoid new arguments – this is for summing up your arguments

F. Thesis Statement

After some critical thinking about the topic and the purpose of your paper, draft your thesis statement. This may take several attempts as you consider the argument you plan to present in the paper. The thesis statement is considered a declaration of the writer's belief. The body of the paper will consist of facts and arguments to support and defend this belief. Refresh your memory by looking back at Module 2, Unit 1 to see the definition and example of a thesis statement.



G. Developing a Tentative Outline

In previous assignments you have organized your essay with an outline, and you may wish to refresh your memory by reading over those outlines again in Module 1, Unit 1 and Module 2, Unit 1.

All points in the research paper must relate to the same major topics of the Roman numerals in the outline. (Note: The assignment for this unit is to submit your sentence outline to your professor.

The purpose of an outline is to help you think through the selected topic carefully and organize it logically before beginning to write. A good outline is the most important step in writing a good paper. If the points covered in the outline transition logically from one to the other, the transitions in the paper should as well. The outline should include an introduction, a body and a conclusion.

H. Organizing Research Notes

Before beginning to write a research paper, you should organize your notes according to the outline created. The data gathered should be critically analyzed, and you should choose the best available sources, check for accuracy, and verify that all information is factual, up-to-date, and correct. Opposing views should be noted if they support the thesis. This is the most important step in writing a research paper, for here you should analyze, sort, and digest the information gathered and learn something about the topic which is the primary purpose for doing a research paper. It is through good organization that you will effectively communicate your thoughts, ideas, insights, and research findings.

Information that is not relevant to the topic should be discarded. The information to be used should be noted in your own words. All ideas borrowed or quotes used must be carefully cited within the body of the paper, and a Works Cited page must be included with the final draft. (See Module 2, Unit 3 for instructions on how to cite within the paper and for creating a Works Cited page.) This is another helpful website for citing sources: <http://webster.commnet.edu/MLA/sample.shtml>.

I. Writing the First Draft

The introduction is the broad beginning of the paper that answers the reader's questions:

What is this?
Why am I reading it?
What do you want me to do?

Answer these questions by:

1. *Set the context* – provide general information about the main idea, explaining the situation so the reader can make sense of the topic and the claims you make and support
2. *State why the main idea is important* – tell the reader why s/he should care and keep reading. Your goal is to create a compelling, clear, and convincing essay people will want to read and act upon
3. *State your thesis/claim* – compose a sentence or two stating the position you will support with *logos* (sound reasoning: induction, deduction), *pathos* (balanced emotional appeal), and *ethos* (author credibility).

After your introduction is written begin with the first topic of the outline. Read all the relevant notes gathered regarding that topic. Put them in order based on your decision of how to present the material. Refer back to the outline format at the beginning of this unit. To write your paragraphs you will need to summarize, paraphrase, or quote directly each idea as outlined. Continue the process through each topic. Remember this is your first draft, so you do not need to have everything written perfectly.

Incorporating quotations of others

One of the problems first time research paper writers encounter is how to use the quotes, paraphrases, or summaries that support the thesis of the paper. The writer of an extensive research paper may assume that the reason for the statement or paraphrase is obvious to the reader but that would be a false assumption. The research material needs to be incorporated into the text of the paper or the paper soon becomes a collection of quotes and summaries with no connections. The writer's words need to be a part of the sentence that includes a quote. Here are some possible ways to introduce or incorporate a quote.

X states, “_____”

As the noted scholar X explains, “_____”

In her article/book _____, x states that “_____”

InX's perspective, “_____”

After using the quote or summary, explain what the quote means in a general sense or in the context of your thesis.

The basis of X's argument is that _____

X clarifies the _____ position by providing _____ (examples, proof, support)

Not all experts agree with X regarding this point, but her argument_____ -

Additional verbs that can introduce or summarize a quote:

argues	discusses	points out	investigated	asserts
concludes	verifies	explored	suggested	observed

J. Revising the Outline

You may be wondering what is the difference in the five paragraph essay and a research paper? Length is one major difference. Instead of just one paragraph as an introduction you may have three. With a research paper you can use more than one paragraph to develop your evidence. In the induction paper you will need a counterargument (claims made by the opposite side of the issue)

Outline or format of research paper

I. Title (typically easier to choose after first or second drafts)

- A. Purpose- Grab attention
- B. Option- Ask a question
- C. Possibilities- Use words or concepts from the paper

II. Introduction

- A. The introduction of the paper should:
 1. Define terms or concepts when necessary
 2. Reveal plan of organization
 3. Present relevant background or contextual materials

B. Lead sentence should develop interest in your topic and capture the reader's attention. Possible leads:

1. Question
2. Quotation
3. Statistics to grab attention
4. Personal anecdote
5. Example

C. Thesis statement – the most important sentence in your paper

1. Answers: "What am I trying to prove?"
2. Not a factual statement, but a claim to be proven
3. Usually in the introduction
4. Gives the reader the main idea of the paper

III. Body paragraphs

- A. Build on the claims made in introduction
- B. Offer brief explanation of history of topic in first body paragraphs
- C. Order of paragraphs options:
 1. General to specific information
 2. Most important to least important
 3. Weakest claim to strongest claim

IV. Counterargument

- A. Addresses claims of opposition argument
- B. Options to presentation:
 1. Include counterargument with each main point (within each section)
 2. Present after main claims have been made (near the end of the paper, before the conclusion)

V. Conclusion

- A. Reemphasize main points

- B. Make a prediction on future of your topic or give a call to action
- C. Avoid new arguments – this is for summing up your arguments

Example Outline (research paper follows)

Foreign Language Education

Introduction: Although national agencies recommend the teaching of foreign languages, American schools have not been accomplishing the task.

Thesis: Although some Americans oppose the policy, American schools need to mandate early foreign language education, just as European schools do, in order to fully prepare American students for success academically, culturally, and professionally.

I. European methods of early second language instruction have been very successful.

- A. Many European countries begin foreign language instruction by age eight.
- B. Facility in more than one language enables students to participate successfully in the global culture and economy.

II. Studies show that cognitive benefits of early language acquisition include superior language facility, improved academic performance, and long-term mental agility.

- A. Early learners achieve the best facility in other languages.
- B. Knowledge of a second language improves other academic skills.
- C. Cognitive benefits have been shown to extend into old age.

III. Practical life benefits also abound with early language acquisition.

- A. Job opportunities for multi-lingual speakers are available.
- B. Modern language study encourages cultural awareness of other nations.
- C. Widespread language facility is helpful in international relations and international security issues of the war on terror.

IV. Some Americans still oppose the teaching of foreign languages.

- A. Some believe the dominance of English in world communication precludes the need for Americans to study languages.
- B. Some believe only highly intelligent people can benefit from language study.
- C. The cost of early language programs is the only legitimate argument against early language study.

Conclusion: American schools need to implement early language instruction to provide American students with the academic, cultural, and economic advantages which European students enjoy.

Research Paper Example (This example is not double-spaced here, but your paper should be.)

First Name, Last Name

Instructor Name

English 2

Date

Early Foreign Language Education

Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language. (National Standards 7)

This is the philosophy statement of the K-12 Student Standards Task Force. Unfortunately, this statement is not reflective of the current state of foreign language education in the United States. Currently, a typical American high school graduate will have completed only two years of a foreign language. This is significantly less than what is necessary to attain proficiency. In order to fully prepare American students for the future and provide them with the necessary skills and resources to be successful, extensive foreign language education in the United States should be a mandatory requirement beginning as early as elementary school.

In preparing itself to develop foreign language programs in America, the United States government must look at the examples of foreign language education methods that have been successfully implemented in other countries. Many countries mandate that languages be included in the composition of their educational requirements. In Europe, many countries follow the guidelines set forth by the Council of Europe's *Modern Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A Common European Framework of Reference* (Pufahl). According to a study conducted by Ingrid Pufahl, Nancy C. Rhodes, and Donna Christian, a number of countries require foreign language education beginning in elementary school, some commencing as early as when the children reach eight years of age. These researchers state that "In all European countries and in Canada, Kazakhstan, Morocco, and Thailand, at least one foreign language is compulsory for all students" (Pufahl). It is not uncommon to find European students who are fluent in multiple languages. For example, in Germany there are many college students who have been exposed to several languages from the time they were in grade school. They are typically fluent, or at least highly proficient, in their native language, English, and one other European language, and sometimes more (Kraft).

European Union countries are closely intertwined both economically and politically, and the knowledge of multiple languages serves its citizens well by preparing them to interact in an increasingly globalized world. Having the command of more than just their native language enables Europeans to communicate effectively with people from other cultures. By implementing higher standards in language education, Americans too can be better equipped to interact in the global economy. Extensive foreign language education will positively impact global communication and economic competition with foreign countries,

as well as provide better career opportunities (Center for Applied Linguistics). As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, Americans must follow the lead of successful foreign countries by thoroughly educating students in foreign languages for the entire duration of their school years. In doing this, Americans will be given more opportunities to take part in the international world.

Foreign language education has long been available in the American high school environment, but there is significant evidence supporting early learning. In Glastonbury, Connecticut, the public school system has implemented a foreign language program that has demonstrated the benefits of foreign language education when it begins at a young age. This program has been in place since the 1950s and has experienced great success. The Glastonbury program begins compulsory teaching of Spanish to students in first through fifth grade. Once the students reach sixth grade they may opt to study French as well. By the seventh grade they may add Russian to their courses of study, and Latin by the ninth grade. Since this language education program has been in place, Glastonbury graduates have achieved great success in society, stating that the exposure to foreign languages and cultures has provided them with great opportunities (“Case”). This example of a successful foreign language education program in the United States illustrates just some of the benefits children receive when exposed to multiple languages early in life. The Glastonbury Foreign Language Program also emphasizes that children are much more capable than teenagers and adults to acquire a second language at a rapid rate. They are more adept at learning multiple languages, and can become much more proficient in a language through continued study than language students that begin their studies at a later age (“Learning”).

When learning a foreign language, accurate pronunciation and fluency are two important goals. In its brochure *Why, How, and When Should My Child Learn a Second Language?*, the Center for Applied Linguistics states:

Some studies have shown that the human brain is more open to linguistic development during the years between birth and pre-adolescence and that children who learn a language before the onset of adolescence are more likely to develop native-like pronunciation. When children have an early start to a long sequence of language instruction that continues through high school and college, they will be able to achieve levels of fluency that have not been possible in the past due to the late start of most language programs.

These facts make for a strong case in the advocacy of early language learning.

One of the most significant arguments for foreign language education geared specifically toward children is the dramatic increase in cognitive abilities that occurs when children are exposed to new languages. The knowledge of a second language has been shown to improve academic skills. Some of the specific benefits are as follows: improvement in school performance and problem-solving skills, higher scores on standardized tests, high academic achievement, and increased understanding of one’s native language (Center for Applied Linguistics). Psychology Research Specialist Lisa Chipongian reports in an article for the website BrainConnection.com that bilingualism develops cognitive skills such as classification, concept formation, analogical reasoning, visual-spatial skills, and creativity. She also states that bilingualism assists in development of meta linguistic abilities, abilities which involve the understanding and processing of language, such as language structure, ambiguity recognition, language processing, and grammar correction (Chipongian).

In addition to improved academic skills, the cognitive benefits of early foreign language education include higher levels of brain density and lower levels of mental decline in old age. Studies have been conducted comparing monolinguals, bilinguals who learned another language before five years of age, and bilinguals who learned another language in later stages of life (Hitti). The comparisons revealed that the bilinguals had denser gray matter than the monolinguals. The studies also showed that the bilinguals who had learned a second language earlier in life had “greater proficiency in reading, writing, talking and understanding...speech” (Hitti). Other studies have suggested that bilingualism protects against mental decline with advanced age, keeping in line with the well-known idea that senior citizens who maintain stimulating brain activity are less likely to develop dementia (BBC News). Such enhancement in cognitive

abilities provides an extremely important basis for developing more intensive foreign language programs in the United States.

The cognitive benefits of learning foreign languages are plentiful, but just as important are the practical life applications that can come from knowing languages other than one's native tongue. As the world becomes more and more of a global village, knowing multiple languages will provide more job opportunities and increased cultural understanding. Globalization is affecting a majority of American companies and professions, making the knowledge of one or more foreign languages a necessity in the modern workplace (Rivers ix). Job opportunities that need bilingual employees are in abundance. Positions in the travel and tourism industries, international businesses, government services, bilingual services, and teaching fields are just a few examples of jobs that are available to people who are proficient in a foreign language (Rivers 3). In her book *Opportunities in Foreign Language Careers*, Wilga M. Rivers states that "Americans are encountering situations every day in which knowledge of another language can facilitate their work and make their contributions more effective" (3).

With globalization and expanding international business, it is also necessary for people in these fields to have a cultural understanding of foreign nations. Understanding other cultures is vital when conducting business globally (Rivers 8). The culture of a foreign region and the learning of its language go hand in hand. Language reflects culture in many aspects. Every language has a unique culture, value system, and method of behavior in every-day interactions (Rivers 8). The concept of culture is also interconnected with the linguistics taught in foreign language classrooms. During the course of study of another language, a student develops a cultural understanding of the foreign people themselves, not just a grasp of the language (Peterson). This cultural understanding better equips students to interact in a global environment. For example, knowing the cultural norms for addressing others, making expressions of gratitude, or making requests can assist in conducting successful intercultural communication (Peterson). According to Wilga Rivers, "What we should be aiming for, in perfecting our knowledge of another language, is understanding the ways in which it is used by its native speakers in particular situations to establish desired relationships" (Rivers 7).

Another global factor to consider in the importance of knowing foreign languages is international relations, especially in light of the current war on terror. It would serve the country well to have people who are well-trained in the foreign languages of enemies and allies alike. Knowledge of how terrorists think and of how allies perceive the United States is important in wartime. A well-established understanding of these foreign languages and cultures is vital to this concept (Garamone). The necessity of knowing foreign languages in an increasingly globalized environment underscores the need for implementing foreign language education at an early age to ensure that students in the United States are not deprived of any opportunities due to a lack of knowledge.

While the case for early foreign language education is strong, there are still factions in America that oppose its implementation. Many people feel that because English is the dominant language in the international communities of business, science, and technical industries, that it is not necessary to learn other languages. While the widespread dominance of English may be the case, many foreigners prefer to conduct business in their own language, as they feel that this places them on more even footing (Rivers 15-16). If the situation was reversed and Americans were forced to conduct business in an unfamiliar language, they would definitely feel as if they were at a disadvantage. Out of respect for speakers of foreign languages, Americans need to be proficient in more languages than English alone. Writing of some foreign feelings of resentment toward Americans' monolingualism and the advantages Americans have, Wilga M. Rivers states that "emotional reactions can be eased to some extent when the English-speaking negotiating or cooperating company or agency demonstrates a willingness to use other languages, recognizing the right of their partners to discuss important matters in the language with which they feel most comfortable" (17). While English is the dominant language in the modern international world, there are definite benefits to knowing more languages than English alone.

Another opposition to early foreign language education in the United States is the idea that languages are only for highly intelligent people. As has already been shown in the Glastonbury Foreign Language

Program, all the children benefited from learning other languages, and basic intelligence was not a factor in their capability of acquiring multiple languages. Children's brains actually develop to a greater extent when they are exposed to other languages, helping them to excel in school and on standardized tests (Center for Applied Linguistics, Chipongian, Hitti). Superior intelligence is not a prerequisite for learning a foreign language.

The one viable argument in opposing the implementation of early foreign language education programs is the cost to the United States government in developing and funding such programs. Recommendations to bring American foreign language education standards up to par with Europe and other foreign nations include getting an early start in elementary school, developing a detailed framework of guidelines, educating language teachers to meet necessary qualifications, and integrating technology into education methods (Pufahl). These initiatives would be extremely costly to the American government, and thus affect taxpayers. However, significant evidence has been supplied illustrating the wide range of social, cultural, practical, and cognitive benefits that foreign language education provides. When viewed from this perspective, one can clearly see that the benefits far outweigh the costs. The future generations of American citizens deserve every opportunity that may be available to them. This is a worthy cause in which all Americans should be willing to assist.

At this point in time, the United States has not taken the necessary steps as a country to ensure that all American students "develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language" (National Standards 7). In order to do so, the United States must further develop its language programs to be on an even plane with the European Union and other foreign countries that are successfully implementing such educational standards. The cognitive benefits of learning a second language, especially early in life, are astounding: greater academic skills, increased cognitive development and creativity, and higher brain development. Knowing foreign languages better prepares Americans for life in the modern global world by providing more job opportunities and a cultural awareness and understanding of the world outside United States borders. The United States must prepare its younger generations for the future, ensuring they have the necessary skills and resources to succeed by implementing mandatory foreign language education programs beginning in elementary school.

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K. A Letter from a NationsUniversity professor

The following letter is from the professor who grades the exams in M11. It addresses plagiarism and what is expected in our Bible courses. Please pay close attention to the “last problem” addressed in the letter.

Dear M.R.S. students:

The purpose of this message is to help save you wasted time and effort. Although M 11 is not the only course in which you have written assignments, it is clearly the most writing intensive course in the M.R.S. program. Therefore, the matters I want to address apply to many courses, but most especially to M 11, which all of you must eventually take.

There have been three fundamental problems which have resulted in many rejected and returned essays from students in the M 11 course: 1. Essays which fall well short of the 2,000 word standard mentioned in every assignment you do for that class; 2. Failure of essays to focus on ALL components or parts of the assigned topic; 3. Failure to do original work.

The first problem is the most easily corrected. Each essay assignment instructs you to write an essay of about 2,000 words. Like all word processing programs, mine gives me an immediate word count as soon as I open a document; therefore, the first thing I check is the word count. Many students like to submit the essays for an entire module at one time. That is fine, and I encourage you to do that if you can. But please note that each essay must meet the length requirement. If one essay is 2,500 but another only 1500 words long, the short one will be returned to you to resubmit after adding more content.

The second problem is not much harder to take care of either. Just be sure to read the assignment carefully and address all parts of it in your essay. I have had some excellent essays which had to be returned with a failing grade because the student neglected to write on the assigned topic or cover all aspects of the assignment. If an essay generally addresses the topic but omits some portion of it I don't require it to be re-written, but I do lower the grade.

The last problem is the one which causes the most difficulty. It is imperative that you do your own work and not submit the words of someone else as your own. “Plagiarism” means using someone else's words and ideas and passing them off as your own. The word comes from a Latin word meaning “to kidnap.” The idea is clear: someone is kidnapping, or taking, someone else's thoughts and words for their own use. The most common form of this is taking materials from the Internet that address the assigned essay topics and then “cutting” and “pasting” passages from these Internet materials into the essay. Plagiarism is a word which should be familiar to you since it is among the academic behaviors prohibited in the Honor Code published on the NU website.

When an essay is received, it may be run through an on-line service called Grammarly.com. This site checks all texts in student essays against its vast data base of on-line materials. It looks for matches between the essays' text and the material in its data base. A score is then generated based on the percentage of the text which is duplicated in the data base. Of course, the point of this is to reveal cases where students have relied too heavily on the words of others found in materials on the Internet rather than their own words in writing their essays. In other words, they have plagiarized.

There is an easy way to avoid plagiarism – quotation and citation. When you use the exact words of another person, you must surround those words with quotation marks, then give a citation of the source from which they came. In other words, provide the necessary information which would allow your reader to find the place where you got that material. If you do those two things, you cannot be accused of plagiarism. Even if you do not use the exact words of another, but have used their ideas expressed in your own words, you must still provide a citation of the source or sources you used.

However, there is a larger issue involved in writing essays for M 11 beyond avoiding plagiarism – we want you to write primarily your own thoughts using your own words. These essays are not research papers; you do not need to see what others have said about the topics and report your findings. The essays are to be your own reflections on the materials to which you have been exposed in the courses you have taken before attempting the M 11 course and the materials you read for this course. Therefore, when you rely heavily on the ideas and words of others, even if you properly use quotation marks and citations, you are still defeating the purpose of these assignments and will not receive the kind of grade you need to successfully complete the course. Whether or not those words are placed inside quotation marks and properly cited, if the “score” generated by Grammarly.com exceeds 15%, I will return the paper and ask you to “fix” the problem.

However, you need to take into account the amount of quoted Scripture for purposes of meeting your “word count.” You cannot satisfy the 2000 word goal merely by quoting a lot of Scripture. Adequate reflection, analysis, and understanding of the Scripture must be demonstrated. It is quite acceptable to merely provide a reference to a passage of Scripture without quoting it.

The key to approaching these assignments is to remember that we are looking for evidence that you have understood and assimilated the information in the M.R.S. program so that it has now become your own – so you can use it for the purposes you had in mind in enrolling in the M.R.S. program. Be careful to avoid improper “borrowing” of the ideas, and especially the words, of those sources you read for general background to help you complete your assignments.

I hope this message has been of help. If you want more information on the nature of plagiarism, just “Google” that word and see how many “hits” you receive. Best wishes and God’s blessings to you all as you continue toward the completion of your program.

Sincerely,

Prof. Fred Jewell
Director of the M.R.S. Program

X. Improving Style

A. Choppy Sentences

1. Combine sentences that add only one detail. Look at this example.

The National Weather Service issued a warning. The warning was about a storm. Now the storm was turning. Its turn was sudden.

It could be easily revised into the following:

The National Weather Service issued a storm warning. Suddenly the storm turned inland.

2. Use conjunctions.
3. Use opener words, such as “while” or “although.”

B. Sentences That Begin the Same Way

If sentences begin same way:

1. Rearrange words or phrases.

2. Rewrite a sentence as a question or exclamation.

C. Sentence Openers

1. Addition signals

In fact, most 8th graders want to pass.

Use a comma with short openers as needed to create a pause or for clarification. A long opener should always be followed by a comma.

2. Time Transitions

Next, we expected everyone to be there.

Meanwhile, we should be ready if no one comes.

Afterward, you can decide what to do.

3. Contrasting Connectors

I like science, however; I do not want to be a scientist.

On the other hand, I enjoy history.

Yet, I will never be a math teacher.

4. Adverbs or Adverbial Phrases

Basically, adverbs end in -ly.

Actually, you should use more adverbs.

Eventually, you will be ready.

Of course, you do not want to hurry.

5. Mild-mannered Exclamations

Yes, it is a mile exclamation.

No, we still are not ready.

Well, you should not begin a sentence with well.

6. AAWWUBBIS

After, although, as

After working, Winn-Dixie

When, while, until

When I pop in a CD, it's like

Before, because, if, since

Before the plate hit the table,



LEO: Literacy Education Online

The Write Place Catalogue

To find a handout on a particular subject area, browse through the alphabetical list below. Clicking this link [LEO](#) you will find the many topics listed below.

- Business Writing
- Citing Sources In Research Papers
- Development
- Grammar
- Jargon and Symbols Some Teachers Use When They Comment on Student Papers
- Logical Fallacies
- Online Sources
- Organization and Cohesion
- The Process of Writing
- Punctuation
- Research Papers
- Resumes and Cover Letters
- Sentence Structure
- Style