



Essay Writing 101: How to Write an Essay

Congratulations on starting your application to Norwich University. To help you along the process, this document outlines how to write an essay. It may be some time since you have written a formal essay, and this serves to help you along the way. We offer some suggestions to get you started. Please refer to the recommendations below before you make your final submission.

A clear, concise, thesis statement that occurs in the first paragraph of the essay

It is essential that the thesis statement be specific to the guidelines detailed in the assignment. If it is not, it will be quite difficult to write an effective or persuasive essay.

✓ **Tips for Writing Your Thesis Statement**

- Your thesis statement should be precise. It should cover only what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported with specific evidence.
- The thesis statement usually appears close to the end of the first paragraph of a paper.
- Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you have discussed in the paper.

Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion

Transitions hold the foundation of the essay together. Without logical progression of thought, the reader is unable to follow the essay's argument, and the structure will collapse.

✓ **Tips on How to Use Transitions**

Good transitions are essential to keep writing unified. Paragraphs should draw on each other and connect to a greater idea.

- Highlight connections between paragraphs.
- Continue one paragraph where another leaves off.
- Pick up key phrases from previous paragraphs to create a clear progression.
- Use a few words to draw these connections such as in addition, although, after etc....

Body paragraphs that include evidential support

Each paragraph should be limited to the explanation of one general idea. It should begin with a sentence that outlines what the paragraph will discuss. This will allow for clarity and direction throughout the essay. In addition, this improves the flow and makes it easier to follow. Each paragraph in the body of the essay must have a clear and logical connection to the thesis statement of the opening paragraph.

✓ Tips on How to Write with Clarity - Use Active Voice

Sentences in active voice are easier to understand than those in passive voice because in active voice, the subject of the action is clear. Use active voice whenever you can. There are occasions to use the passive voice such as when you do not want to name the doer, or when the doer is obvious, unimportant, or unknown.

For example:

Passive: A decision was reached by the committee.

Active: The committee reached a decision.

A conclusion that does not simply restate the thesis, but readdresses it in light of the evidence provided

This part of the essay will leave a lasting impression on the reader. Therefore, it must be effective and logical. Do not introduce any new information into the conclusion. Instead connect and come to a conclusion concerning the information presented in the body of the essay.

✓ General Structure of the Conclusion:

- Restate your topic and why it is important.
- Restate your thesis/claim.
- Address opposing viewpoints and explain why readers should align with your position.
- Call for action or overview future research possibilities.

A candidate for acceptance in the Master of Arts in Diplomacy program must complete a 500 word (plus or minus 25 words and not including notes or bibliography) writing assignment as part of the application packet. The assignment must be completed in Modern Language Association (MLA) style and sources (with proper documentation) are encouraged. Quotations, however, are not allowed. The assignment must be in the candidate's own words. The candidate should ensure that his/her name is on every sheet of the assignment. The candidate must write approximately 250 words in support of and 250 words refuting the following statement:

"Democracy is the best form of government for all the world's inhabitants."

Properly referring citations

See www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html for more information.

Bibliography

General Writing Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved 06 21, 2012, from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/>