

Organizing an Academic Paper

Note: There are many methods for organizing academic papers, and it is always best to investigate specific methods our professor or discipline prefers.

Introduction:

- Introduce your topic
- Focus your topic respective to your audience
- Introduce the problem as it pertains to the purpose
- Introduce the cost/benefits of addressing the problem
- State your thesis
- Preview the points you will make in your paper

Body (multiple paragraphs that repeat this format)

- **State your point in one sentence**
- **Provide information/evidence from relevant, reliable sources regarding your point.**
Student writers should provide sufficient evidence including scholarly and substantial written sources (secondary research) plus the student's own interviews and field observations (primary research). Evidence should be accurate, and brief quotations, summaries, and paraphrases of sources should be cited accurately. (Sources should be used both to ask questions and to provide answers.)
- **Provide explanation/exploration/examination and analysis of the information/evidence**
The student writer makes meaning by exploring the information/ evidence he/she has just cited. The student writer repeatedly asks, "So what?" and then responds to this question to explain to the reader why the evidence is important. Experienced writers do not assume that the meaning of their source material or their reason for including it is self-evident. Instead, experienced writers explain to their readers what the quotation, paraphrase, or summary of the source means.

Conclusion

- What should the audience do/think/believe after reading the paper?
- Why does it matter?
- State further questions or unresolved issues
- Mention further research