



NUS
National University
of Singapore

NUS
Libraries

WRITERS' CENTRE

Introduction to College Writing

Professor Ila Tyagi

Workshop Agenda

- Slides on academic writing ($\approx 4:00 - 4:20$)
- Sample college essay analysis in breakout rooms ($\approx 4:20 - 4:40$)
- Post-breakout room debrief ($\approx 4:40 - 5:00$)

Workshop Agenda

- Slides on academic writing ($\approx 4:00 - 4:20$)

What is Academic Writing?

What is Academic Writing? *

* Disclaimer:

The writing you do at NUS will vary widely depending on assignment, course, and major.

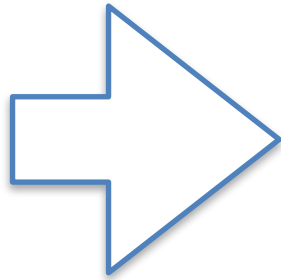
This workshop is simply a general introduction to broad commonalities.

For every assignment, read the prompt carefully, and check in with your professor, to make sure you understand its writing expectations.

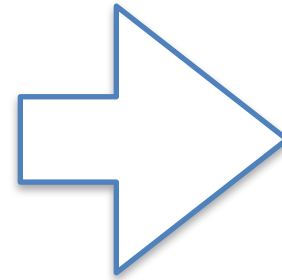
Broad Commonalities

Most college students go through the following chronological process for each assignment:

**Brain
storming**



Drafting



**Proof
reading**

Broad Commonalities

A typical
written
assignment
is structured
like this:

Introduction

Body Paragraph 1

Body Paragraph 2

Body Paragraph 3, etc.

Conclusion

Introduction



Often starts with a HOOK:
something to grab the reader's
attention and make them
want to keep reading . . .

. . . goes on to make an
ARGUMENT, or thesis,
expressed in a sentence
called the thesis statement,
which might go, "In this
essay, I argue that . . ."

. . . depending on
assignment requirements, can
end with a brief ROAD MAP
outlining the main points the
essay body will cover.



Body Paragraph

Begins with a **TOPIC SENTENCE**: captures the paragraph's one main point, and advances the argument articulated in the introduction by one step.

A professor should be able to get a snapshot of your paper just from reading its thesis statement and topic sentences.

. . . rest of paragraph goes on to develop the topic sentence's one main point, usually by incorporating **EVIDENCE** from external sources, such as course readings.

Conclusion

Provides a **SUMMARY** of the main points the essay has covered . . .

. . . and might briefly explore the **WIDER IMPLICATIONS** of the essay topic, such as by connecting it to a related topic, or by pointing to directions for further research.

Two common concerns about academic writing involve plagiarism + citation.

How do I avoid accidentally plagiarizing in my essay?

An assignment might ask you to incorporate outside sources, like published articles, into your own writing.

One strategy to avoid accidental plagiarism is diligent record-keeping.

As you are gathering sources that will help you write your essay, keep a running list of the author's name for each source, its title, and exact quotes relevant to your essay topic along with their page numbers.

Notes:

J. B. Harley, “Maps, Knowledge, and Power”

- Pg. 277 *Maps* “are seldom read as ‘thick’ texts or as a socially constructed form of knowledge.”
- Pg. 278 “Maps will be regarded as part of the broader family of value-laden images. Maps cease to be understood primarily as inert records of morphological landscapes or passive reflections of the world of objects, but are regarded as refracted images contributing to dialogue in a socially constructed world.”
- “Maps are never value-free images.”
- Pg. 281 “The specific functions of maps in the exercise of power.” *Global empire building, preservation of the nation state, local assertion of individual property rights.*
- Pg. 285 “Supplementing older, written surveys, the map served as a graphic inventory, a codification of the information about ownership, tenancy, rentable values, cropping practice, and agricultural potential, enabling capitalist landowners to see their estates as a whole and better to control them.” *Relationship between surveillance and control.*

Denis Wood, *Rethinking the Power of Maps*

- Pg. 8 “Chapter 2 contends that far from being pictures of the world maps are instruments for its creation; that is, they are not representations but systems of propositions, arguments about what the world might be.”
- Pg. 39 *Maps are propositions rather than representations.*
- Pg. 52 “maps happen to be unrivaled as vehicles for the creation and conveyance of authority about and over territory.”

How do I avoid accidentally plagiarizing in my essay?

Even if you are paraphrasing or summarizing an author's ideas—that is, not copy-pasting an exact quote from a source directly into your essay, but re-expressing what an author says in your own words—you should still cite the page numbers where the ideas you are paraphrasing or summarizing appear.

It is better to err on the side of caution by over-citing your sources rather than under-citing them.

How do I cite sources properly in my essay?

The purpose of a citation is make it easier for your reader to go back to an external source you have quoted or paraphrased and find the original idea themselves.

At its most basic, a citation therefore includes the last name of a source's author, and a page number, in brackets at the end of your sentence.

If an author's last name already appears somewhere in your sentence, just the page number is enough.

character, to move through cinematic space with that character. This difference sets a spectacular science fiction film like *Gojira* apart from a classical narrative film. Mulvey argues that there are “three different looks associated with cinema: that of the camera as it records the profilmic event, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion” (208). She argues that the conventions of narrative film subordinate the first two looks under the third, in order to “eliminate intrusive camera presence and prevent a distancing awareness in the audience” (Mulvey 208). Since her argument is based on a discussion of narrative films, the argument can apply only partially to a documentary-style film

How do I cite sources properly in my essay?

At the end of your essay, include a “Works Cited” page in which you list all the sources you used in your essay.

Again, provide all information necessary for your reader to easily find the source themselves, such as author name, source title, and publication year.

Works Cited

Debord, Guy. *The Society of Spectacle*. Detroit: Black + Red, 1983.

Gojira. Dir. Ishirô Honda. 1954. DVD. Classic Media, 2006.

Goodwin, James. "Akira Kurosawa and the Atomic Age." *Hibakusha Cinema*. Ed. Mick Broderick. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996.

Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator, and the Avant-Garde." *Theater and Film: A Comparative Anthology*. Ed. Robert Knopf. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

Ikimono no kiroku. Dir. Akira Kurosawa. 1955. DVD. Criterion Collection, 2008.

Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgement*. Trans. James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.

Man with a Movie Camera. Dir. Dziga Vertov. 1929. DVD. Image Entertainment, 2002.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*. Ed. Philip Rosen. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

How do I cite sources properly in my essay?

The citation style with an author's last name and a page number in brackets at the end of a sentence is known as **MLA (Modern Language Association)**.

You can find a detailed guide on how to cite in **MLA format** on the **Purdue Online Writing Lab website**.

Purdue OWL

- General Writing >
- Research and Citation >
 - Research and Citation Resources
 - Conducting Research >
 - Using Research >
 - APA Style (7th Edition) >
 - MLA Style >
 - MLA Style Introduction
 - MLA Overview and Workshop
 - MLA Formatting and Style Guide >
 - General Format
 - MLA Formatting and Style Guide
 - MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics
 - MLA Formatting Lists

MLA Formatting and Style Guide

The following overview should help you better understand how to cite sources using MLA 9th edition, including how to format the Works Cited page and in-text citations.

Please use the example at the bottom of this page to cite the Purdue OWL in MLA. See also our [MLA vidcast series](#) on the [Purdue OWL YouTube Channel](#).

Cite your source automatically in MLA

Website

Using citation machines responsibly

Powered by  Citation Machine PLUS
a Chegg service

Note: For more information about services for the Purdue University community, including one-to-one consultations, ESL conversation groups and workshops, please visit the [Writing Lab site](#).



Creating a Works Cited list using the ninth edition

How do I cite sources properly in my essay?

An alternative citation style using footnotes is known as Chicago.

A detailed guide on how to cite in Chicago format is available at chicagomanualofstyle.org

Suspicious of words and impatient at their limitations, the Western hero prefers to let his actions speak for themselves. He is a loner — the word “lonesome” is indeed “almost a Western patent” — whose keeping to himself hints at a melancholy past.¹

While *Hellfighters* was produced by Universal Pictures rather than *Batjac*, Wayne was still closely involved in its development, specifically requesting that certain episodes from Adair’s life be written into the script.² For example, he was intrigued when Adair told him that

¹ Roger Horrocks, *Male Myths and Icons: Masculinity in Popular Culture* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 67.

² James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, *John Wayne: American* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 552.

Notes and Bibliography: Sample Citations

[Go to Author-Date: Sample Citations](#)

The following examples illustrate the notes and bibliography system. Sample notes show full citations followed by shortened citations for the same sources. Sample bibliography entries follow the notes. For more details and many more examples, see [chapter 14](#) of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. For examples of the same citations using the author-date system, follow the Author-Date link above.

Book

Notes

1. Zadie Smith, *Swing Time* (New York: Penguin Press, 2016), 315–16.
2. Brian Grazer and Charles Fishman, *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 12.

Shortened notes

3. Smith, *Swing Time*, 320.
4. Grazer and Fishman, *Curious Mind*, 37.

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

Grazer, Brian, and Charles Fishman. *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

Smith, Zadie. *Swing Time*. New York: Penguin Press, 2016.

For many more examples, covering virtually every type of book, see [14.100-163](#) in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Chapter or other part of an edited book

In a note, cite specific pages. In the bibliography, include the page range for

Book

Chapter or other part of an edited book

Translated book

E-book

Journal article

News or magazine article

Book review

Interview

Thesis or dissertation

Website content

Social media content

Personal communication

How do I cite sources properly in my essay?

If an assignment prompt does not specify what citation style you should use, and if your professor expresses no preference, how you format citations is up to you.

Any major citation style—such as APA, Chicago, MLA, or others—is acceptable, so long as you use only one citation style consistently throughout your essay.

Workshop Agenda

- **Sample college essay analysis in breakout rooms (\approx 4:20 – 4:40)**

You will be put into a Zoom breakout room containing ≈ 4 people for ≈ 20 minutes.

First, read the sample college essay emailed to you, on the topic of veganism.

You do not have to read it extremely carefully.

Simply skimming to get a general sense is sufficient.

Then, with the other people in your breakout room, discuss the following:

- What kind of writing did you do before NUS?**
- How is the sample essay similar to, or different from, the writing you did before NUS?**
- What is 1 question you have about academic writing that the workshop has not answered yet?**

Nominate an ambassador from your breakout room to share an overview of your discussion, and your 1 question, in the post-breakout room debrief.

Workshop Agenda

- **Post-breakout room debrief (\approx 4:40 – 5:00)**

I will now ask each breakout room's ambassador to provide a quick recap of what their group discussed, and share their 1 question.

Additional Writers' Centre Workshops

- “Critical Reading and Annotating” (Week 4)
- “Generating the Essay” (Week 5)
- “Reviewing and Rewriting” (Week 6)

Signup
QR
code:



Workshop Feedback

**Weeks
4 / 5 / 6
workshop
signup:**



**Introduction to
College Writing
workshop
feedback:**

