

Process Approach to Composition -- 3 Stages UF Writing Studio

1. Pre-writing (brainstorming, clustering, outlining).

- Start with uncritical generation of ideas.
- When you've either exhausted your ideas -- or arrived at the point you need to do research – stop.
- Either do the research, or else group your brainstorming info into clusters From the clusters, create a rough outline

Your goal is to end with a rough, working thesis, which may change during writing.

2. Rough draft – Execute on your outline.

- The more well-thought-out your outline, the easier the rough draft is to write.
- To fight procrastination and writer's block, start writing on whatever section of the outline you feel most comfortable with.
- Consider writing the introduction LAST.

*It's much tougher to introduce what you don't completely understand yet, so start with a rough, working thesis and write the draft. THEN write the introduction – once you know exactly what you're introducing.

Don't be too critical: a rough draft should be “rough!” You're looking for a mostly complete document, NOT a polished one.

3. Re-vision. This is not just proofreading, but a chance to re-see your entire argument. You're not just looking to fix weak spots, but to strengthen everywhere, and maybe to generate new writing that you hadn't thought of during your first two stages.

- Revise from big to small – content/global first, and form/local last
- Content/global includes aspects such as clarity of thesis, structure, coherence and flow, sufficient evidence to back up interpretive claims, etc.
- Form/local involves grammar, syntax, word choice, style, sentence length variety, etc.
- Don't polish grammar or sentence-level issues first, because if you find out later that that section needs to be cut, you'll have wasted time on polishing something that you must get rid of.

Key points:

- There is no great writing, only great re-writing.
- Don't get too critical too soon.

Differences in Writing in Different Disciplines:

1. Template/structure: IRAC legal brief; hard science article (abstract, research problem, instrument, data, analysis, point to future research),
2. Style – first person allowed? Passive structures allowed? Formal/informal register? (Sometimes significant variations b/t journals in the same field.
3. Learn your audience! Find and study models/templates in your target journal

Tips for writing Theses and Dissertations

1. Divide and conquer – break every large task into smaller ones.
2. Schedule some downtime or brief breaks