
CourseBook Series

College Level Writing CourseBook

Mark H. Kavanaugh, Ph.D.

CourseBooks

The CourseBook series is a creation of Dr. Mark Kavanaugh.

This eBook series has been developed to enhance the delivery of course content across the entire program and take advantage of the tools within Apple's ecosystem in order to deliver more engaging course materials with embedded interactions, video, and links to apps and web content that support teaching and learning.

The content of these CourseBooks have been developed by the authors and represents independent scholarly activity on the part of each author who has contributed to the development of each CourseBook.

How to use this CourseBook

This CourseBook is designed as a reference to be used in conjunction with other CourseBooks in this series. This book will consist of Chapters dedicated to topics, concepts, practices, theories, and principles that are applicable across all the different CourseBooks in regard to Mental Health.

References to content in THIS CourseBook will be found in each of the other CourseBooks

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Mark Kavanaugh has been writing, teaching, and integrating technology into instruction for decades. He holds a Masters in Counseling, Masters in Instructional and Performance Technology, and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology.

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[Visit Mark's Website](#)

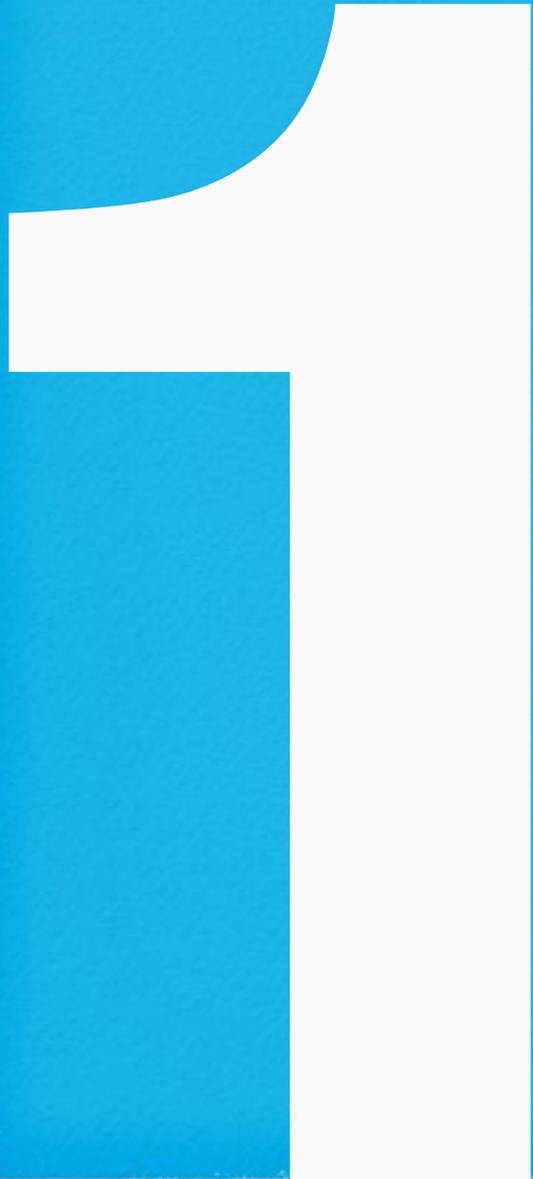


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Literature Reviews



Literature Review

Literature

We hear the term “literature” more often applied to fine art writing like poems and novels. But, in the scientific world, the term is also used to describe the published body of knowledge in a field. So, a field like Physics as a Body of Physics Literature (and I bet it is a LOT!)

This literature, literally embodies all we know about something. Or at least it is a good estimate of what we know. This body of knowledge is what drives the curriculum in your courses and shapes what we teach in classes. Through the curriculum of a course or program, teachers introduce you to a body of knowledge that is supported by the literature of that field.

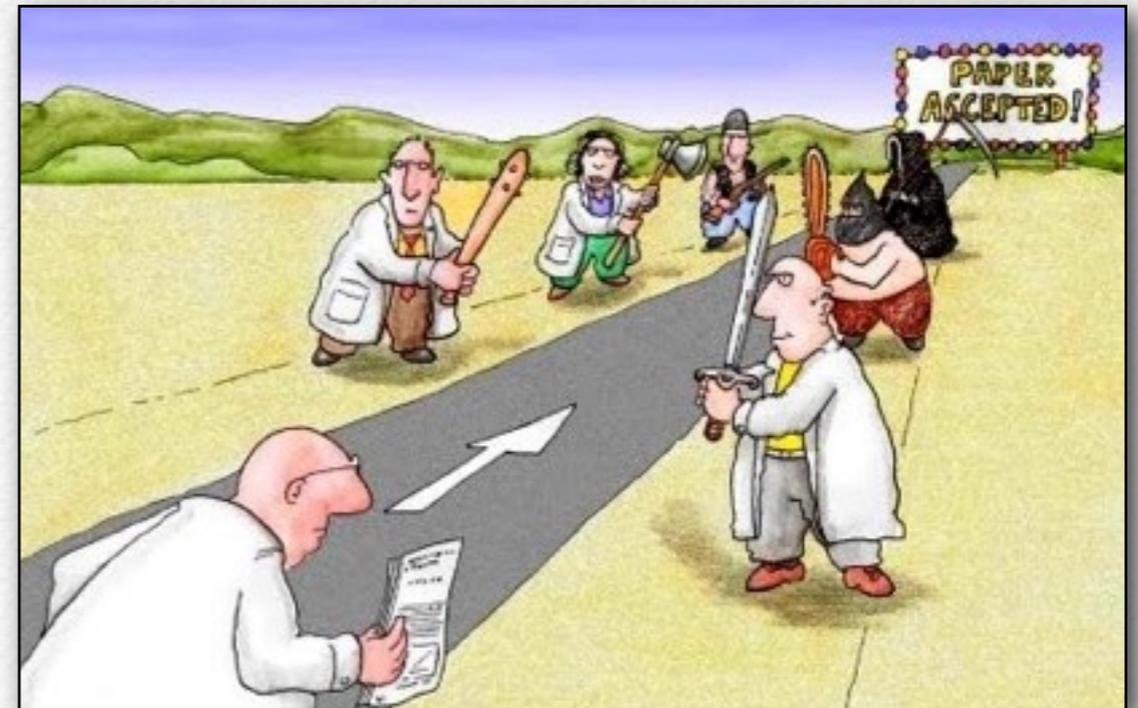
Sources of Information

If we were going to look at a particular subject we would be able to find all kinds of information about that topic. We would

find newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites, books, and all kinds of other sources of information. Many of these sources, however, are considered somewhat unreliable.

They are unreliable not because they are lying or poorly written. They are unreliable because the content is rarely put through a process that we refer to as **Peer Review**. The source of Peer Reviewed information is in Professional Literature.

Although the process is not always painful, the peer review process can sometimes feel like this!



Peer Reviewed Literature

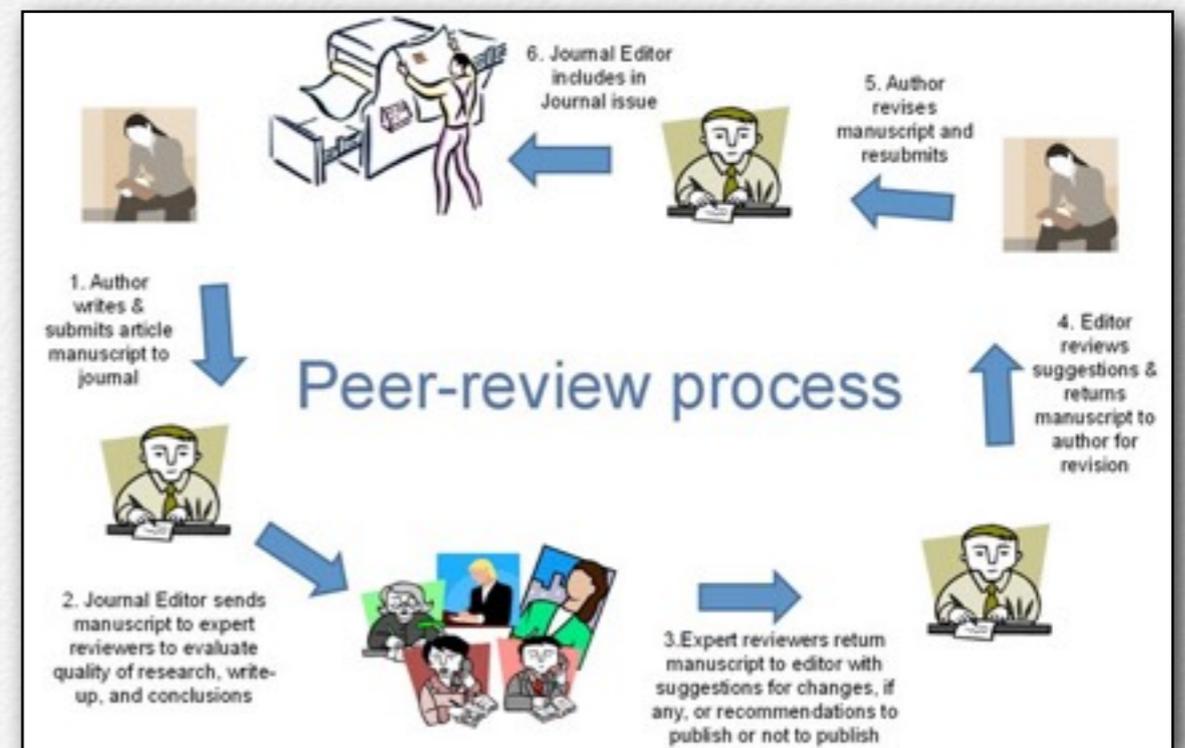
The difference between all those other sources and Professional Literature is that the work has been subject to the peer review process. This is how it works.

1. A researcher conducts an experiment about their topic and writes it up in accordance with the publication standards in their field (See the Chapter on APA Format!)
2. The researcher would like to share their discoveries with other researchers who are interested in the same topic. They search and find different Professional Journals that may be willing to publish the work.
3. The work is submitted to the Editorial Board of the Journal for review. The Editorial Board is made up of other experts in the field that was studied. These are individuals who have published a lot of their own work. The Editorial Board also consists of writing experts and style experts to ensure that the writing is consistent with expectations. Finally, the Editorial Board has members who are experts in the methods that the researcher used to gather and analyze their data.
4. The work is reviewed for quality, expert presentation, style, and valuable contribution to the field. If the paper is found “worthy” they will offer to publish the work.

When the paper is published, it is said to be “peer reviewed” because it has gone through this process.

If we, the reader of this article, are going to depend on that article’s content to make a decision, we can at least be assured that a group of experts did take a look at it and found it to be worthy of some level of trust. This does not guarantee that the work is valid or true, but at least it has gone through some level of review.

Here is a nice graphic representation of the process.



Writing a Literature Review



Writing a Literature Review

This video goes into details about the development of and writing of a Literature Review paper. This is an excellent introduction to what is normally viewed as a “Research Paper” in many courses.

Essentially, a Literature Review paper summarizes and synthesizes the theories and thoughts on a particular topic or research question. You are, in essence, a reporter...reporting to your reader the state of knowledge on a particular topic.

The point of this type of exercise is to find out what is already understood about a topic. It may seem, at times, that no one has studies or thought about something, but you will find out that there is a LOT of research out there on just about any topic or problem you can think about.

In fact, there are often contradictory ideas about the same topic, particular in social sciences like Psychology.

Learning what we already know about a subject places you in an ideal position to make an informed choice about a problem you are facing...or it simply allows you to write your paper for class!

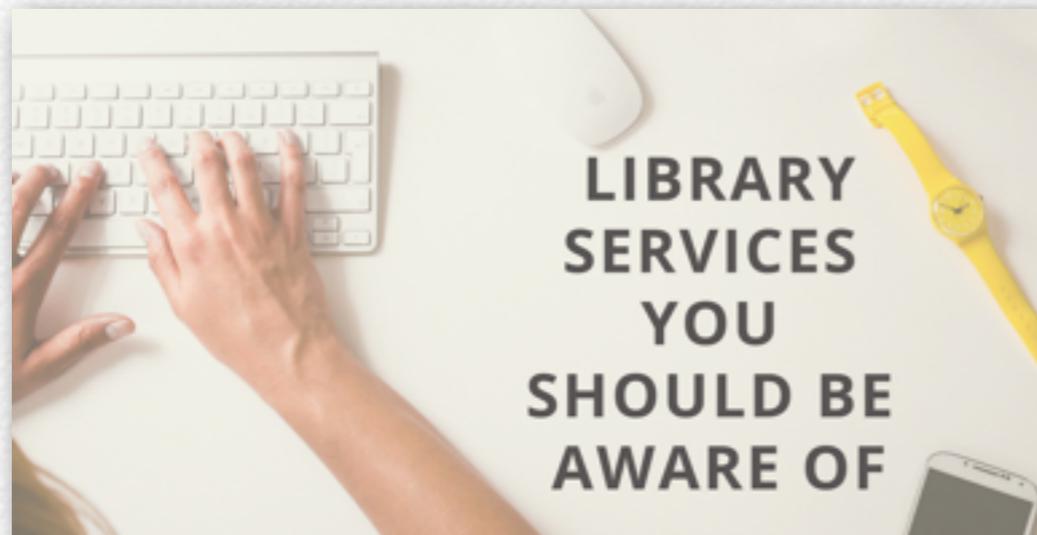


Library Services



Library Services

So much information!



Library Services and the Learning Commons

Library services at KVCC have transformed. Academic Library Services are provided as a part of a constellation of services grouped together and known as the “Learning Commons”. This model attempts to place all student academic services together both philosophically and, in many cases, physically (occupying the same space.)

There are two “Learning Commons” spaces at KVCC. One is located at the Lunder Library building on the Fairfield Campus, the other is located on the 2nd floor of the Averill Building on the Alford Campus. Both locations provide equitable services related to academic libraries, tutoring, teaching and learning spaces, technology, etc.

Academic Library Services

Your education at KVCC is only partially met by the instruction and materials that you get in the classroom. There is a world of information that is available to your instructors and to students that enhance and expand the knowledge that you are presented in class. In fact, a methodical exploration of this information is a part of many classes at KVCC.

This information, of course, is referred to as Academic or Professional Literature. This is the collected fund of knowledge distilled through scientific inquiry and reflection and published for other professionals to use.

It is no mistake in my wording that much of this material is specifically written for the professional audience...as in the instance of articles written in the Journal of Personality are written for other psychologists who are interested in personality! The fact is, the format, language, context, and subject matter are NOT presented for STUDENT audiences!

Every field has, over time and through the application of scientific inquiry, developed its own language. Language is very important in all fields of science, because in order to collaborate on any body of work, those involved need to have a shared vocabulary to ensure that everyone is on the “same page”.

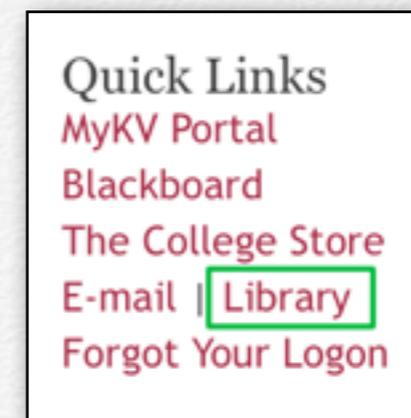
The barriers created by this language can make the professional literature a bit challenging. Our Academic Library Services have a core mission to assist you in navigating this body of information. They have a keen understanding of not only the varied languages of different fields, but of the underlying logic of organizing and interconnecting information across different fields. Our Academic Librarians are invaluable in the process of any sort of exploration or research into this world.

Accessing Library Services

The modern library is much different. The endless shelves of dusty books (as cool as those are!) are giving way to electronic databases and digital content. While the digital resources lack the romance of a leather bound volume, they are certainly easier to find (search terms), easier to store (computer databases) and much easier to carry around (stored on your device)!

Accessing Academic Library Services at KVCC is easy. We have two locations, and, at most times, there are staff there to assist you. However, we also provide access to these services through the web.

Those interested in accessing these services on their browser can go to www.kvcc.me.edu (the main home page of Kennebec Valley Community College) and click on the right-side menu item titled “Library”. This will bring you to the Library homepage.



Explore the Library Homepage with this Interactive Image

The image shows a screenshot of the KVCC Library homepage with three interactive callout boxes. The 'Online Databases' callout points to the 'Databases' section. The 'Librarians' callout points to the 'Librarian Schedules' section. The 'Password' callout points to the 'PASSWORDS' link.

Lunder Library
Home
Find
Help ▶
About ▶
New

Contact Us
Your Email Address
[Input Field]
How May We Help You?
[Input Field]
Submit

KVCC Library
Search KVCC Library Collections:
[Input Field] Search

Online Databases

Databases
EBSCO Journals Databases
EBSCO Nursing Reference Center
EBSCO Rehabilitation Reference Center
EBSCO Points of View
Films On Demand

Library Catalogs
KVCC Library
Colby Library
Waterville Public Library
Minerva
MaineCat
WorldCat

Librarian Schedules
Barbara:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday @ Fairfield Campus
Wednesday, Friday @ Alford Campus
bbartley@kvcc.me.edu
453-5195
Stephen:
Monday, Wednesday @ Fairfield Campus
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday @ Alford Campus

Quick Links
MyKV Portal
Blackboard
The College Store
E-mail | Library
Forgot Logon
Cancellations

Course Offerings:
Current Course Schedule
Course Search
Professional Development

External Links
College.Gov
FAFSA™
Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Librarians

Password

Accessing Online Databases

Through out Online Databases you have access to millions of published, professional articles, films, newspapers, etc. This is an amazing resource supported by KVCC.

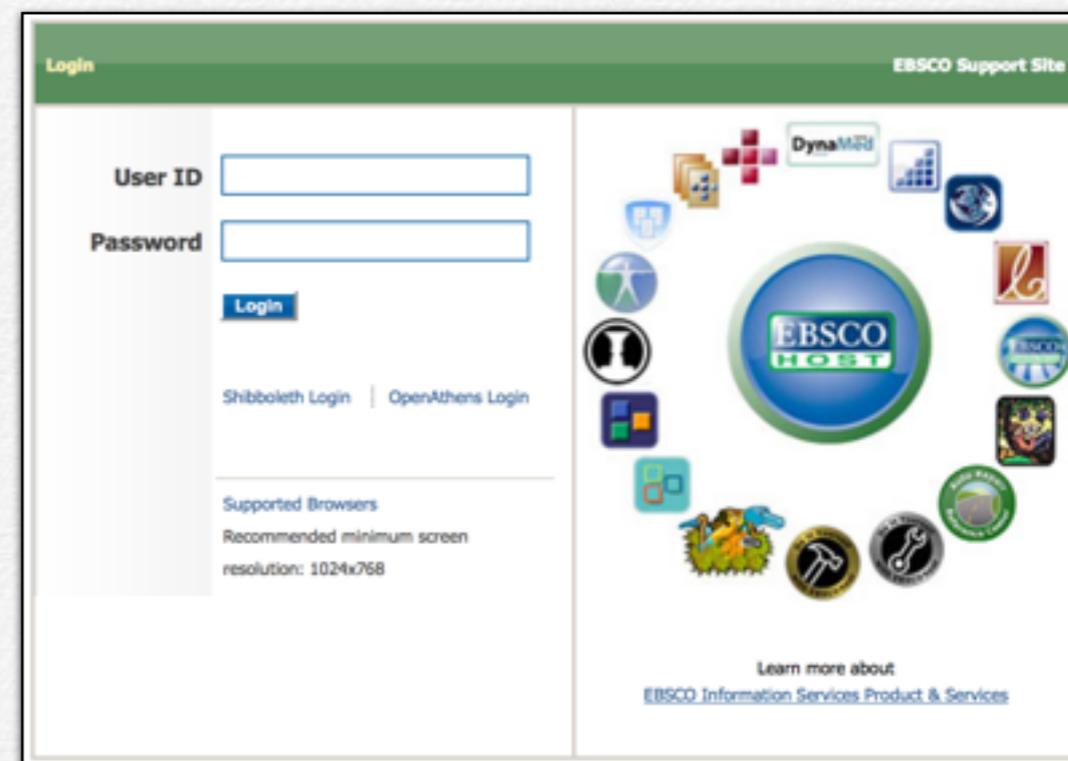
Let's take a look at accessing the EBSCO Databases to see how this works.

Step 1 - Passwords

Because these databases are purchased, they are only available to patrons of the KVCC library. (Keep in mind that the KVCC Library is considered a "Public Library" so members of the community who are not students, staff, or Faculty at KVCC, can still access our services for no charge!) To access these databases you need to select the **PASSWORDS** link on the Library page and log in to our services. Your log in will be the same as your regular KVCC log in.

Step 2 - Opening up EBSCO

Next you want to open up the link for EBSCO databases...we will select the EBSCO Journal Databases option. Selecting this link on the webpage will bring you to a log in window for EBSCO. Use the passwords you got from the **PASSWORDS** page to access the database (this is NOT the same as your regular KVCC login.)

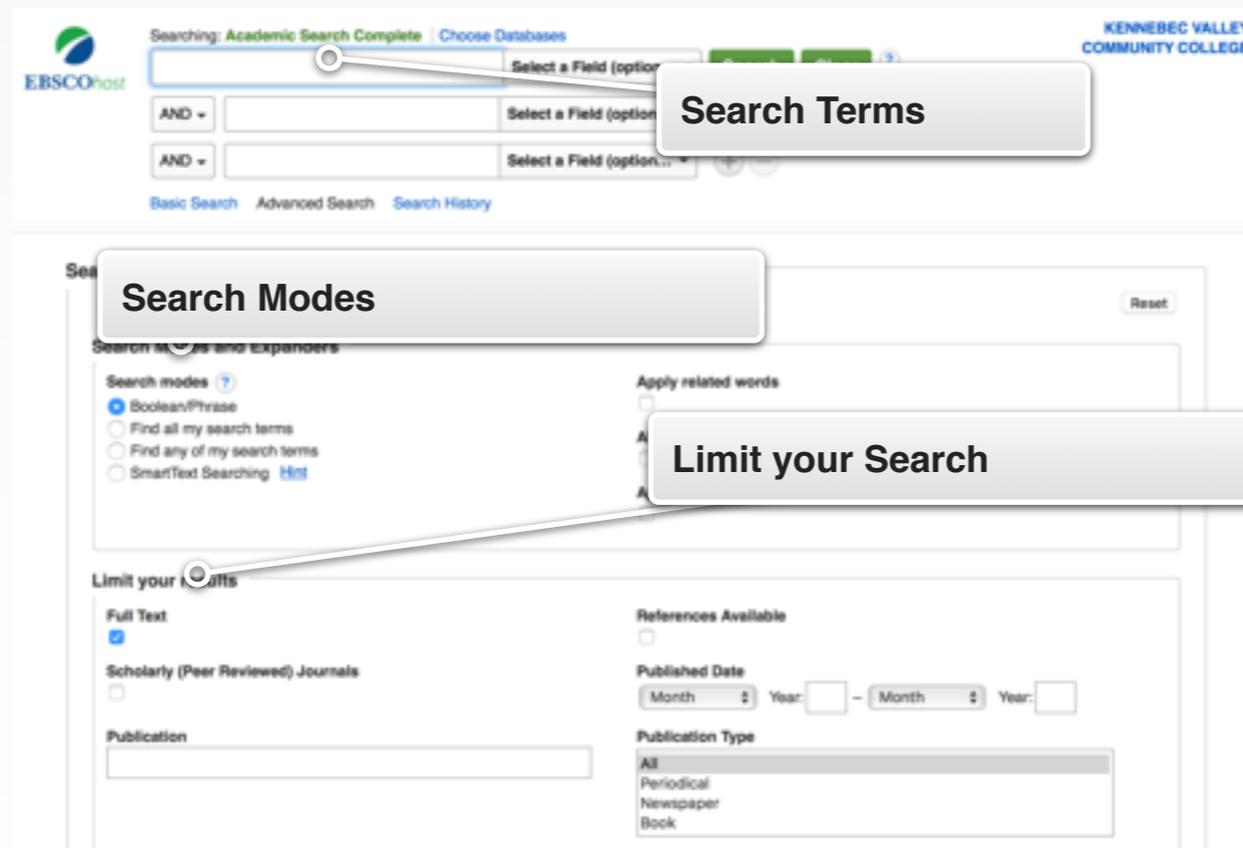


Once you log in you will have the opportunity to select which of the many EBSCO supported databases you want to search.

You can go through and select the ones you want to utilize. For general research, the Academic Search Complete is usually good enough. Specialized topics, such as health care, have many separate databases that you can explore.

Select your database by checking the box next to the title and then select the Continue button (located at both the top and bottom of the page.)

Explore the EBSCO interface with this interactive image.



Check out this graphic on search strategies that you can use!



There is So Much More!

This is really the limit of what we can cover in a short tutorial on accessing Academic Library Services. We have explored ONE database, and we have a lot more!

Feel free to access our Academic Librarians for ANY question related to these resources. They would be very pleased to help you in any way.

The Library, and the Academic Librarians, are actually really into technology. They are both fluent with working on iOS and other devices. They are a great resource to inquire about instructional technology, iPads and other Apple devices, 3D printing, and movie making!

They are also cool people!



APA Format

3

What is APA Format?

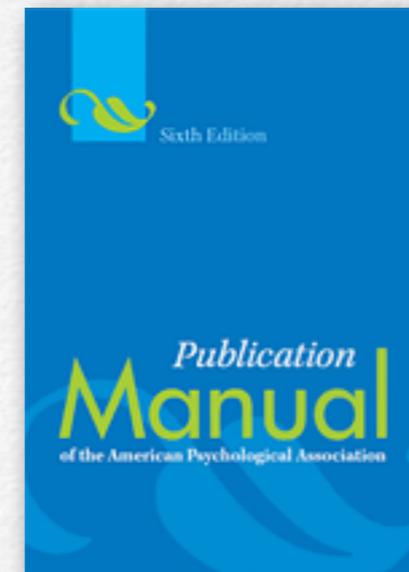
APA

APA stands for the **American Psychological Association**. In order to standardize the format of submissions for professional articles from psychologists, the APA developed a set of standards for writing. This set of standards has become one of the most widely used set of “rules” for writing professional publications in the world.

Keep in mind that the entire publication standard is geared toward professionals who want to publish their research in academic journals, so the standards are very exacting, and at times, may seem excessive. The point of the standard is to level the competitive playing ground for publication and standardize the expectations for communicating certain kinds of information.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.)

The absolute best reference for these standards is the official 6th edition of the Publication Manual of the APA.



This manual may be purchased directly from the American Psychological Association by clicking [HERE](#). You can also find some other supplemental materials on this same page.

Use Google to look up the titles of other books related to the Publication Manual that you may find useful include:

- Concise Rules of APA Style**
- APA: The Easy Way**
- APA Made Easy**

Purdue University Online Writing Lab

Another very popular resource for information on APA style is the OWL website supported by Purdue University. Click [HERE](#) to visit the site.

What is APA Format?

I guess I have still not answered this particular question! APA formatting rules and standards describe how to format your document for publication. These standards include standards related to structure and content, writing clearly and concisely, how to format title pages/statistics/graphs, etc., crediting sources (in-text citations and references), and information about the publishing process.

You may encounter many of your instructors insisting that your work be in APA format, but they might not always be very clear about what that means.

Unless you are trying to get your paper published, you probably only have to pay attention to a few of the standards. Preparing documents for advanced Psychology classes, presentations, or for publication necessitate that you actually purchase the manual and learn all the details.

For the purpose of this tutorial, we will focus on five distinct areas that are often the focus of your teacher's demand that you write in APA style.

- Doing Research
- Title Pages and Formatting
- In-Text Citations
- References
- General Writing Style and Clarity

The rest of the content of this chapter will focus on these areas.

Doing Research

Academic Research

Research, of any kind, is all about answering questions. How we ask these questions can lead us to different kinds of answers.

[The content of this Chapter aligns well with the content in Chapter 8 on Literature Reviews](#)

Developing Good Research Questions

The difference between a research paper and other forms of writing apparent within the definition of a Research Paper.

A research paper is a document that explores the knowledge that is available within a particular field of study and presents that knowledge in the effort to answer a particular research question.

The point is that you are looking at a body of knowledge in a field, such as psychology, sociology, or communication, and

you are trying to find out what we already know about the question you have.

How you phrase that question is key to getting at the right information!

Coming up with questions...



There are all sorts of interesting things to think about in the Social Sciences...really, we deal with everyday life and the extremes of human behavior.

However, we have been at this for quite some time so some of the basic questions such as "What is abnormal?", or "How do people communicate?", or even, "What is Schizophrenia?" have been written about enough and the answers to these questions

are either easy to find with simple searchers or they are very complex and beyond the scope of a research paper.

You want to focus your paper on a very specific question that is important to you...that will not only narrow down your search for answers, but it will also motivate you to do the paper.

Focus, Focus, Focus

Good research try to answer "real" questions...not just definitions like you might do in an expository paper. Since so much research has already been done you have to narrow your topic and focus your research.

Examples:

Here are some examples of how you transform an interesting TOPIC into a researchable QUESTION

TOPIC: Differences between the genders in communication

- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: What strategies can couples use to mitigate the different styles of communication between men and women?
- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: How do men and women's communication styles differ in the context of a Muslim community?

- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: How do men and women interpret "assertiveness" and "aggressiveness" in interpersonal communication?

TOPIC: Autism

- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: Which behavior modification techniques are best for use with a child with moderate Autism in the home?
- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: What is the impact of having a sibling with Autism on perceived sense of responsibility in the home?

TOPIC: Religion or prayer or meditation

- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: What are the potential physiological benefits of deep prayer and/or meditation?
- RESEARCHABLE QUESTION: What is the relationship between religious belief and happiness in marriage?

As you can see...these questions are MUCH more precise and they answer REAL WORLD questions!

Your task is to move from TOPIC to RESEARCHABLE QUESTION

Sometimes you need to go ahead and begin searching on Google or within the Online Databases to find out what may be interesting to study!

What we already know...the Literature Review

To this end, academic research has a lot to do with discovering what we already know. Each academic paper that we write is attempting to answer a question. Maybe we are wondering what Schizophrenia is, maybe we want to describe what happened during the last year of the American Revolution. No matter what, our work will focus on finding out what we already know.

There are many sources of information in our world. Sadly, many of them are not really reliable. For this kind of work we want to focus our energies on the most reliable information we can find. We want to focus on what is known as Peer Reviewed Literature.

What is a Peer Reviewed Article?

Peer Reviewed Article is an article that has been reviewed by others in the field for accuracy and good methodology

These articles tend to appear in special publications called "Journals"

Nearly every field has a Journal of some kind where the latest research in the field is reported to others who are professionals and also interested in the field

Here is a VERY small list of some of the journals from the field of Psychology (You won't find these at Barnes and Noble):

- Asian American Journal of Psychology
- Consulting Psychology Journal
- Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology
- Health Psychology
- Journal of Comparative Psychology
- Neuropsychology

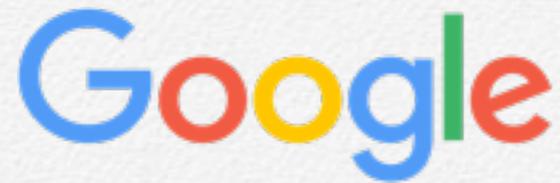
If we were to look up information on "communication between men and women", here is an example of a typical peer reviewed article:

Junco, R., Merson, D., & Salter, D. W. (2010). The effect of gender, ethnicity, and income on college students' use of communication technologies. *CyberPsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, 13(6), 619-627.

Evaluating Your Sources

Use this checklist to be sure that your sources are reliable and academic.

Using Google for Academic Research



In this section I'm going to provide a method for finding interesting topics to write about that has been effective for me for several years of college...using Google (or any other search engines)!

Let's say you want to do some research on communication between men and women. You are in trouble:

- There are whole books written on this topic, let alone a paper!
- You don't have a question yet so how are you going to find information to answer it?

Here are the steps that I take:

Step 1 - Check out related research that is listed in your book. This puts you in touch with some research that has been done

and also introduces you to specific terms that might be used by those who study this topic

- Terms that are going to be important for your "communication between men and women" topic include:
 - gender
 - communication
 - gender differences
 - interpersonal
 - communication styles
 - interpersonal relationships

Step 2 - Now that you have some of the terms that you need to use to get to this topic, you can use Google!

Google is a great search engine and it is a great place to START your search but it is only a start...ultimately you have to get to the real "Peer Reviewed Research" (as described prior to this section.

Place your search terms into Google in quotes so that you get hits that include the entire phrase.

I tried this one: "communication styles between the genders"

-
- I got over 5 million hits, but I don't need all of them!
 - Once you have a list of hits, start going through them and see if you can locate the NAMES of the researchers who are doing this kind of work
 - My search revealed, on just the first page, the following researchers:
 - Deborah Tannen
 - John Gray
 - Beverly Langford
 - Debra Warner
 - Rhonda Kelley
 - I also got some interesting ideas for where I might want to go with this
 - Communication between men and women in the context of a Christian community
 - Gender communication and emotional discomfort
 - Gender styles and trust

Step 3 - Now that you have some names and some potential topics...you need to go find out what these leading researchers

are doing NOW...you can also look up some of the specific topics and ideas you got...so where do you go to find out what these folks are doing NOW?

- You need to explore the actual articles listed in the back of your textbook
- You need to familiarize yourself with the online databases at KVCC

Using your Textbook and Online Databases for Research

One good source for interesting topics is likely your textbook. Not only does it provide for a huge collection of topics, but it also provides you with some references to some of the best research being done on that topic.

Let's say you want to do some research on communication between men and women. You are in trouble:

There are whole books written on this topic, let alone a paper!

You don't have a question yet so how are you going to find information to answer it?

Here are the steps that I take:

Step 1 - Check out related research that is listed in your book. This puts you in touch with some research that has been done and also introduces you to specific terms that might be used by those who study this topic

- Terms that are going to be important for your "communication between men and women" topic include:
 - gender
 - communication
 - gender differences
 - interpersonal
 - communication styles
 - interpersonal relationships
- In addition, in the back of your book you will find references to Peer Reviewed Articles that have been published on your topics
- You find the section in your book that has to do with your topic
- In that section you will find references to real research being done...the authors and the date of the publication are listed in the textbook like this: (Kavanaugh, 2005)

- Look up the name and year in the back of the book in the References section and you can see all the information you need to find the original article in the Online Databases

Step 2 - If you need to, reference the section on using Google and get names and topics from there

Step 3 - Now that you have some names and some potential topics...you need to go find out what these leading researchers are doing NOW...you can also look up some of the specific topics and ideas you got...so where do you go to find out what these folks are doing NOW? To the library online databases

Step 4 - The KVCC library maintains an extensive collection of online, searchable, databases that contain Peer Reviewed Articles (see the tutorial section on Peer Reviewed Articles) from authors such as the ones listed above

Step 5 - It will be important to learn how to use search strings, quotes, and then limiting your results to "peer reviewed" and "full text" are skills you can acquire best when you are actually in the Library databases.

Step 6 - Read the Abstracts of the articles to see which ones catch your eye

- Abstracts are the short summaries of the articles you find that go over the basic premiss and findings in the article

-
- This should help you identify some interesting questions that can then be formulated into your Research Questions!

Step 7 - When you find a good article that seems to be about what you want to study...take a look at the last pages of the article. The author has listed all the PAST research that has contributed to their thinking when they wrote the article you are reading. This provides you with a great list of articles to look up!

Avoiding Plagiarism

Knowing that you have reliable, peer reviewed, information to support your paper, you need to tell your reader where you got the information when you write about it. If you don't do this, you are guilty of what is called Plagiarism.

The resources below should help you in avoiding plagiarism in your paper.

[Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing](#)

[Using Quotations](#)

Used effectively, quotations can provide important pieces of evidence and lend fresh voices and perspectives to your narrative. Used ineffectively, however, quotations clutter your text and interrupt the flow of your argument. This handout will help you decide when and how to quote like a pro.

[Effective Quote Integration](#)

[What is Plagiarism?](#)

This is a very entertaining and informative video produced by Rutgers University

Along with these other sources, you can also access a website service that will check your paper for any instances of Plagiarism. Click on the link below and select Premium. Follow the instructions from there.



Title Pages and Formatting

What's the big deal?

This is probably the most common complaint I hear from students! “Why does the formatting need to be so exact?” Well, in a way, your instructors are a lot more interested in what you have to say in your paper and how you say it (some of which is covered by APA style)...than the exact format of your title page. But, education does not only teach about the world of ideas. We also teach how to perform to specific standards, and in some cases, how to exceed these standards.

One of the basic lessons from this sort of demanding exercise is: “Can you persist in learning how to do this and follow instructions to the smallest detail?” Trust me when I say that many employers want to know that you can “persist in learning” and “follow instructions”, and if you are destined to be a supervisor, you will appreciate these characteristics (and others) in your employees!

The Title Page

The Title Page is the first page in your document. Even though we are submitting documents electronically, your Title Page needs to be the first page in your entire document.

Title Pages inform your reader (instructor) as to who you are, which class you are submitting this for, and the name of the assignment. It also conforms to some specific standards related to APA, such as centering, no fancy typesets, and running headers.

I've found a video that you can visit using the links below that will be helpful in each aspect of creating an acceptable APA formatted Title Page.



For all of your papers, your title page should include the following:

- Running head (at the top of the page...formatted as in the video)

-
- Your name
 - Title of your paper
 - The title of the assignment
 - The name of the college (Kennebec Valley Community College)
 - The course number and name name of the class (PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology)
 - Your professor's name

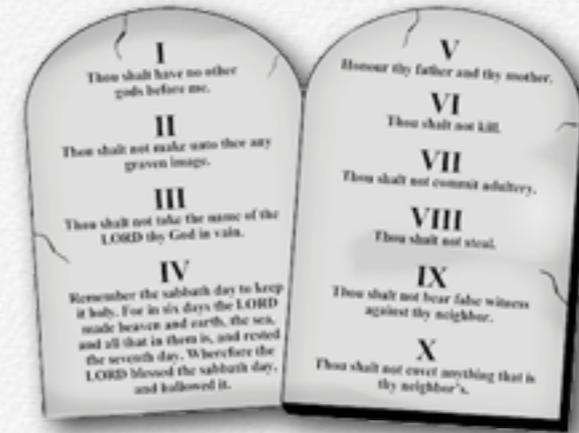
To complete some of the instructions on the video you are going to have to get to know your word processing application. However, nearly all applications (including MS Word, Pages, Word Perfect, etc.) have the capacity to do this formatting.

Resist the temptation to use templates that come with your word processor to create APA formatted documents. It is much better that you exercise writing with this style so you can understand when something does not look right!

Formatting

In addition to the Title Page, there are some document formatting points you need to pay attention to. This list reads more

like the 10 Commandments by focusing what NOT to do, but it is useful none-the-less.



DO NOT use fancy font types or text styles anywhere.

DO NOT submit your title page as a separate document.

DO NOT put extra spaces between paragraphs. Your entire document should be double spaced with the first line of every paragraph indented 5 spaces.

DO NOT use a fancy format title page with graphics in it. Make it boring, focus on making your WRITING captivating rather than your Title Page.

DO NOT insert graphics, links, pictures, or any other elements that is not directly part of your paper.

DO NOT write in first person. This means you don't use the word "I", as in, "I think that these conclusions are misguided."

DO NOT copy sections of text from your resources (to be discussed later)...even if you cite the source. The VAST MAJORITY of the paper should be in your own words.

DO NOT use shortened versions of words, slang, curse words, emoticons, or other symbolic language.

How about some more POSITIVE RULES?

YOU SHOULD write clearly and concisely. Make sure you follow a good paragraph style...see below...that allows you to clearly explain what you are saying.

YOU SHOULD only use language that you can use comfortably. While it is necessary to use specific terminology at times, do not try to “write smart” or impress your instructor by writing using words and concepts that you have not mastered.

In-Text Citations

Giving Credit

When you are writing a paper it is very important that you give credit to the sources of the knowledge you are using. This goes beyond using quotes....you must give credit to the ideas you use as well.

There are two ways you do this when writing papers...In-Text Citations and References.

In-Text Citations

As you are writing and decide to use a piece of information from your research, you make reference to it in the actual context of your writing. When you make reference to a source, you include some basic information about the source that allows the reader to look up your source in your References (see the next section.)

For a typical article, you might include the last name of the author and the year of the publication. This is enough for the reader to find it in the list of sources you have in your References.

Let's imagine that you are going to use the following article:

Junco, R., Merson, D., & Salter, D. W. (2010). The effect of gender, ethnicity, and income on college students' use of communication technologies. *CyberPsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, 13(6), 619-627.

Now pay attention to this part...

The **FIRST** time I mention information from this article in my writing I will do it this way:

“According to Junco, Merson, and Salter (2010), income was found to be not related to students’ use of communication technologies.”

In this sentence I’m stating to my reader that I got this information from the article.

The **SECOND** (and from this point on) time I refer to this article, I can shorten it to:

“According to Junco, et. al. (2010), most students felt that communication technologies were an important part of learning.”

Another way that I could have written these is in this way:

“Income was found to be not related to students’ use of communication technologies (Junco, Merson, and Salter, 2010).”

and...

“Most students (Junco, et. al., 2010) felt that communication technologies were an important part of learning.”

Here is a video showing you details about how to do APA In-Text Citations.



In-Text Citations

References

Listing Your Sources

If you have done any papers prior to this time, you are probably familiar with the need to list all your sources on the last page or pages of your document. Different styles and standards call these pages by different names.

You may have used the term “Bibliography” or “Works Cited”...these are fine, but they are NOT APA standard. APA’s version of this part of your paper is simply called “References” and that word is centered right at the top of that first page!

Formatting References

With all the different kinds of sources that are out there, it is beyond the scope of this section to cover all of the different ways to cite references. So here are some tips and resources:

- Make sure that for every source you have cited in the in-text citations, you have a matching source in your references.
- Websites are cited in-text only, and you include the complete URL or you can simply put the main website address (www.apple.com).
- Keep in mind that citing books, journal articles, newspapers, TV shows, the Bible, a lecture, a blog, or any other source...all have slightly different formats.
- The Purdue OWL website is invaluable in this regard. Click [HERE](#) to visit the OWL website on citing References in APA format. (Look at the left side menu and all the options for References List.)

Here is a video on APA References.



**APA
References**

General Writing Style and Clarity

Academic Voice

Over the time that you are in school you are going to be asked to write a number of different papers, essays, and answers to questions. One of the things that begin to appear over time is the development of your Academic Voice.

Your Academic Voice is the unique way in which YOU write and convey information. Your writing should not be an imitation of others' voices but be your own.

In the early development of Academic Voice a lot of students have a tendency to try and write "complicated" or to appear "smart" in their writing. But this language does not come naturally and it is apparent to the reader that you are not writing in your own academic voice. The purpose of writing is to convey what you know to your reader. Use language that is, for the most part, comfortable for you and seek assistance when you

need to learn how to write about more complex subjects and use more precise terms.

Keep in mind that Academic Voice develops over time. Over years of study and work in your field you will become more and more expert at how to write.

Basic Writing Skills

These resources are presented to you in order to assist you with some of the basic writing skills such as grammar, punctuation, word choice, etc.

If you have challenges in these areas, use the resources below, or better yet, get help from writing tutors available at the College.

[Attending to Grammar](#)

[Grammar on the Purdue OWL website](#)

[Grammar in College Writing](#)

[Fragments and Run Ons](#)

If instructors have ever returned your papers with "frag", "S.F.", "R.O.", or "run-on" written in the margin, you may find this hand-out useful. It will help you locate and correct sentence fragments and run-ons.

Word Choice

This handout can help you revise your papers for word-level clarity, eliminate wordiness and avoid clichés, find the words that best express your ideas, and choose words that suit an academic audience.

Conciseness

The goal of concise writing is to use the most effective words. Concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones. Writers often fill sentences with weak or unnecessary words that can be deleted or replaced. Words and phrases should be deliberately chosen for the work they are doing. Like bad employees, words that don't accomplish enough should be fired. When only the most effective words remain, writing will be far more concise and readable.

On Paragraphs

Introductions and Conclusions

Writing Clearly

One of the most frustrating situations I have encountered in student writing has been a lack of clarity. I can tell what you are trying to say, but you are just not coming across clearly. Here are some basic approaches and tips to writing clearly.

The Basic Format of an Essay

Writing clearly is a very important aspect of this process. Consider yourself as the guide to your reader's exploration of your ideas. You need to gently bring them into your cognitive space and slowly and intentionally support your ideas.

Writing Essays

Nearly everything you might write in a social science class is an essay of some type. Everything from a discussion post to an answer to a question, to a research paper.

When you read excellent writing you know it. It is clear, concise, and it leads you, the reader, through the thought process of the writer and when you are done...you understand what they are talking about.

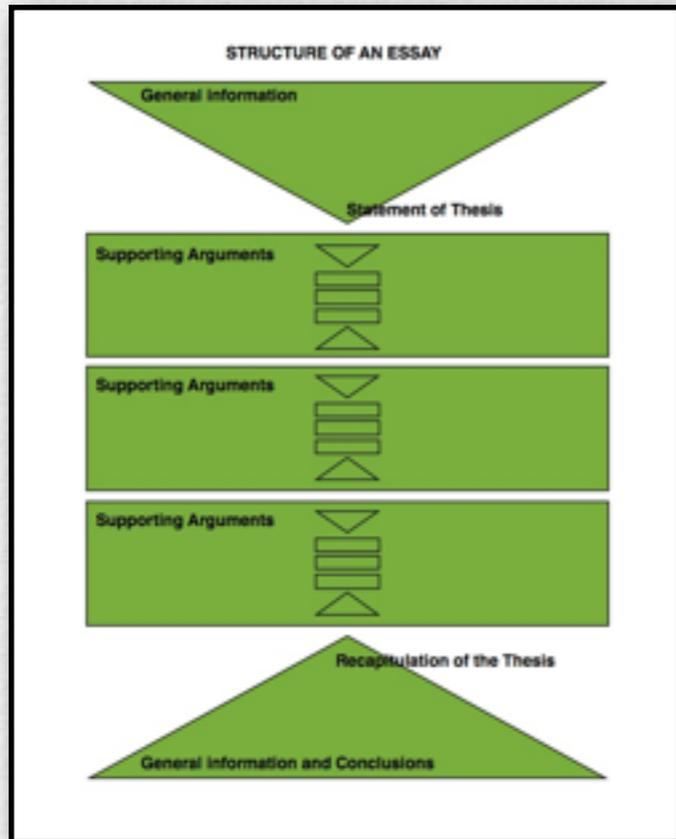
It is critical that you develop good essay writing skills in the Social Sciences.

My favorite model for essay/paper writing is as follows:

- You start out introducing the topic in general terms and then gradually work your way toward the thesis...this first part should show the reader why your question is important
- The "thesis" is your actual research question.

- You should then present your arguments/research/data that support/refute/answer your question
- You should then bring the reader back to the question (the recapitulation of the thesis)
- Then work your way out again towards general information and/or the practical application of your answers

Here is a graphic that represents the rhythm and structure of an essay or a paper. (There is a larger version of this same graphic at the end of this chapter.)



Here are some additional resources on writing clearly:

[Top 10 Rules of Writing](#)

[Understanding Assignments](#)

The first step in any successful college writing venture is reading the assignment. While this sounds like a simple task, it can be a tough one. This handout will help you unravel your assignment and begin to craft an effective response. Much of the following advice will involve translating typical assignment terms and practices into meaningful clues to the type of writing your instructor expects.

[Writing Essay Exams](#)

At some time in your undergraduate career, you're going to have to write an essay exam. This thought can inspire a fair amount of fear: we struggle enough with essays when they aren't timed events based on unknown questions. The goal of this link is to give you some easy and effective strategies that will help you take control of the situation and do your best.

[The 5-Paragraph Essay](#)

A classic format for compositions is the five-paragraph essay. It is not the only format for writing an essay, of course, but it is a useful model for you to keep in mind, especially as you begin to develop your composition skills. The following material is adapted from a handout prepared by Harry Livermore for his

high school English classes at Cook High School in Adel, Georgia. It is used here with his permission.

[How to Write a 5-Paragraph Essay that will Amaze Everyone-](#)

Did you know that you can effectively unleash your creative capacity and astonish everyone with your talent by creating just 5 paragraphs? Writing a 5-paragraph essay can be easier and faster than baking a 5-layer cake if you know the secret ingredient. Keep reading to get to the essence of 5-PE mastery.



Writing Research Papers

The first thing to understand is "What is a research paper?"

A research paper is a document that explores the knowledge that is available within a particular field of study and presents that knowledge in the effort to answer a particular research question.

So, let's take this apart a bit...a research paper is:

A document

- This means that it is written out as a single item. It might be printed or stored electronically.

Explores

- By exploring we mean that it documents and writes about something...it is somewhat "investigative".

Knowledge that is available within a particular field of study

- While some research questions might involve more than one specific field, the point is that the paper focuses on knowledge that is ALREADY present within a field. If that field was Psychology, you would explore the knowledge of what has been discovered about that topic already...we call this "a review of the literature". This provides you with the background knowledge that you need to write about our current understanding about something.
- This is different than conducting a study (experiment, survey, interviews) where you are actually gathering raw data on your topic. To conduct these sorts of studies you need to have specialized training in research methods and ethics

(not because you can't do it, but to ensure that you do it in such a way that it produces accurate knowledge).

Answer a particular research question

When you set out to write a research paper you need to first decide which question you want an answer. This is often the toughest part because you have to phrase the question in a way that will "justify" your work.

- You can't really ask "yes or no" type questions
- You have to ask questions using the terms that are common in the field you are studying (so often times you need to do some preliminary work to get to the question)
- The question has to be important...there are a lot of questions out there that are not important or "nobody cares". This is particularly true in this day and age when there is so much information already put together out there on the web. If I can answer your question with a simple Google search, it is not worth writing a paper about it.

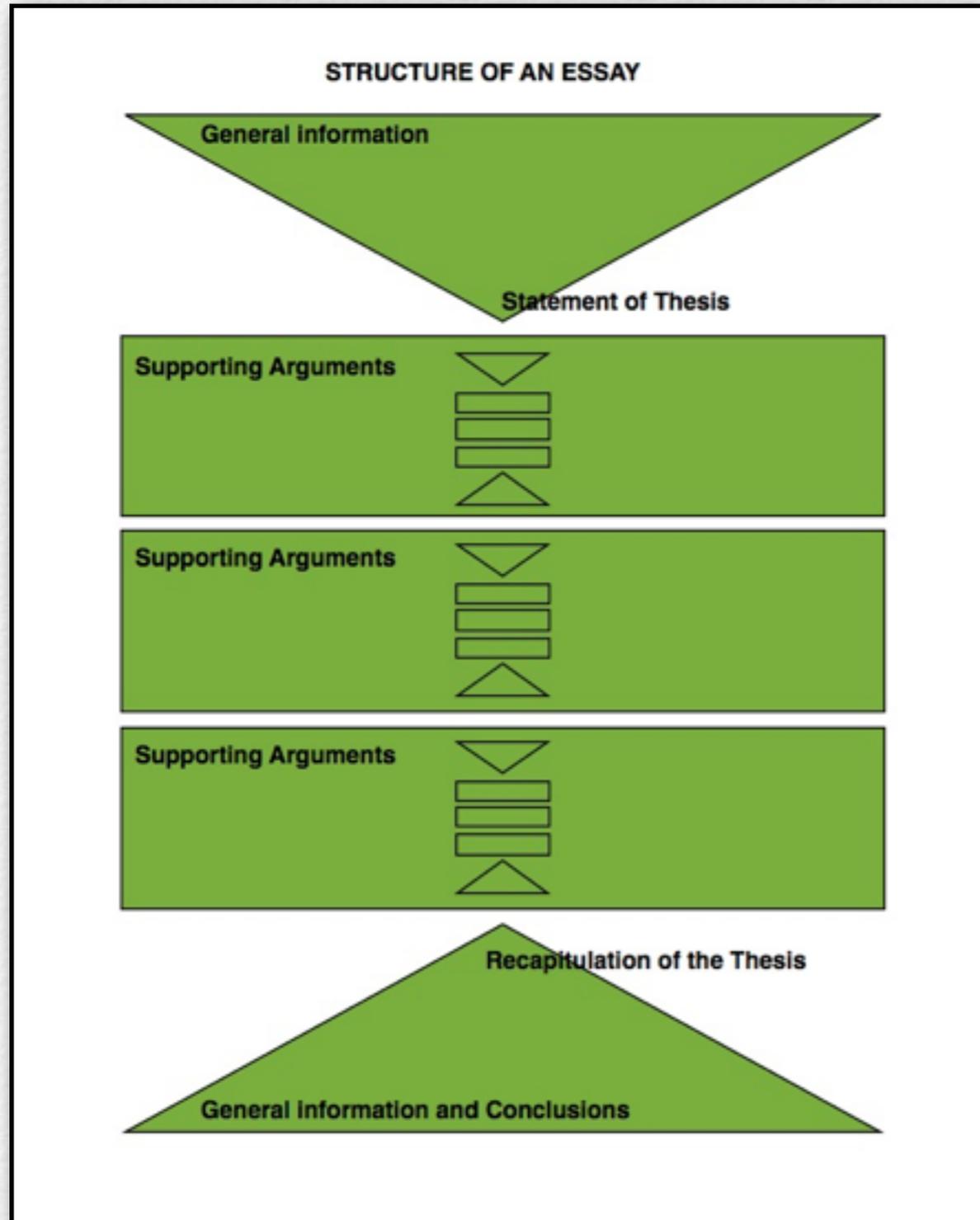
Formatting the Whole Paper

Similar to writing an essay, the format of a paper needs to lead the reader through your thinking process as you attempt to show what is known in a particular field in order to answer a particular question.

My favorite model for essay/paper writing is as follows:

- You start out introducing the topic in general terms and then gradually work your way toward the thesis...this first part should show the reader why your question is important
- The "thesis" is your actual research question.
- You should then present your arguments/research/data that support/refute/answer your question
- You should then bring the reader back to the question (the recapitulation of the thesis)
- Then work your way out again towards general information and/or the practical application of your answers

Here we can use that same graphic!



[Top 10 Rules of Writing](#)

[What is an Academic Paper](#)

[Starting the Writing Process](#)

This site from the Purdue Online Writing Lab will help you get started on your paper.

[How to Structure and Organize your Paper](#)

Making sense out of your observations about a text is a difficult task. Even once you've figured out what it is that you want to say, you are left with the problem of how to say it. With which idea should you begin? Should you address the opinions of other thinkers? As to that stubborn contradiction you've uncovered in your own thinking: what do you do with that?

Writing papers in college requires that you come up with sophisticated, complex, and even creative ways of structuring your ideas. Accordingly, there are no simple formulae that we can offer you that will work for every paper, every time. We can, however, give you some things to think about that will help you as you consider how to structure your paper.