

English 102

Formal Requirements for Essays

1. Papers must be typed, double spaced, with the usual margins (one inch on all sides). Be sure to indent paragraphs, but don't skip an extra space between paragraphs. Please keep the font and size sort of normal; in other words, not too big, not too small, not too fancy (this handout is printed in Times 12 point, which is about right). Don't forget to number the pages of your essay.
2. Put the final revision of your essay on top, with all other drafts underneath, in their proper order -- earliest on the bottom; latest on top. Be sure to turn in any peer response worksheets or tutor referral or response forms you have, and staple or clip everything together securely.
3. **Always turn in all drafts of all essays.** One copy of your draft is turned in the day of our peer-review workshop; turn the other copy in with the final draft, along with any other drafts you may have generated in the interim. Keep in mind that I WILL NOT EVALUATE OR ASSIGN A GRADE TO A FIRST DRAFT. If I receive only a single draft of an essay, I will assume it is a first draft, and it will not be graded. In addition, those essays you choose to include in your final portfolio MUST have all of their drafts with them.
4. You do not need to use a formal method of documentation of your sources, such as MLA or APA, though you may of course do so if you wish. When the quotes or citations you use are taken from our text, you need only identify the source (title and author) and put the page numbers in parentheses at the end of the sentence. However, if you do include sources from outside our text, you will need to provide complete documentation; be sure to include all the pertinent information (title, author, publisher, date of publication, etc.).
In general, if you are in doubt about documentation of any kind, keep in mind that it should be clear to your readers what your sources are and where they can be found.
5. Be sure to give your paper a title; since it is an essay, it needs a title for identification. In writing a title, try to come up with something descriptive and interesting, but not too long. Don't use the title of an essay or other work you may be writing about ("I Just Wanna Be Average," for instance, has already been used); don't use the number of the assignment ("Essay #1" lacks a certain descriptive quality); and don't use the topic itself (the topic should be evident after reading the essay). Having a descriptive title not only tells the reader what the essay is about, but it can also help you maintain a stronger focus as you write.
If you wish, you may use a separate title page; if not, put your name and the date in the upper right-hand corner of the first page, with the title centered on the page. Capitalize all of the important words in the title, but do not underline it or put it in quotation marks.
6. You don't need to use a plastic cover on your essays; though they look nice, they actually make the papers harder to handle and read.