# ESSAY GUIDELINES
Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Different types of research projects:
Expository Analytical Argumentative
Good essays generally combine the above elements and are not merely descriptive.

What research writing is not:
- A string of quotations.
- A personal essay with no research basis.
- Entirely theoretical with no research basis.
- A collection of plagiarized information.

Choosing your topic:
Thesis vs. topic
Topic and Thesis:
All good research writing has a clearly identifiable thesis.
A topic provides you with something to talk about, a thesis makes a significant and specific statement about a subject.
A topic therefore is general, whereas a thesis is specific.

Thesis statement
This is the backbone of your essay. You should be able to state your thesis precisely in 1 or 2 sentences for any shorter essay. The thesis should be clear from your introduction, and it should express an opinion or attitude toward the topic chosen. The thesis should be evident throughout the body of the essay and should be revisited in the conclusion.

Organization
Introduction:
- Should include your thesis statement and briefly mention the points you intend to cover.
- Should catch the reader’s attention.
- Should preview the main ideas and structure of the essay.
Body:
- Each of the body paragraphs help you prove your thesis by developing arguments and providing evidence and sources.
- The majority of your secondary sources will appear in the body of the essay.
Topic sentences:
- The first sentence of each body paragraph should clearly enunciate the topic of that paragraph.
Transition sentences:
- The last sentence of each paragraph should preview what is to come in the next paragraph and give some sense of why that information is coming next.
Conclusion:
- Should briefly restate your argument or main points.
- Do not introduce new issues in the final paragraph.
• Do not make apologies for what you haven’t done or simply state what you have achieved.

Formatting:
• Title page—including your name, the title of your paper, the course name, the lecturer’s name, date of submission and word count
• Page numbers—pages should always be numbered
• Line spacing—double spacing should be followed throughout, except in footnotes and bibliographies, which should be single spaced
• Margins—Use reasonable margins, headers and footers, your work will be judged on the basis of what you have written not the number of pages you have filled.
• Paragraphs—Clearly mark paragraph breaks by indenting the first sentence. Every paragraph should be appropriately developed. Like the overall essay, paragraphs should consist of a beginning, some development and a conclusion or link to the next point you intend to make. Paragraphs consist of a minimum of five sentences.

Formatting titles:
• All titles should be properly capitalized
• Titles are either in quotation marks: “Title” or they are in italics: Title
• Titles in quotation marks include: Individual stories, poems, essays, articles
• Titles in italics include: Books, journals, websites, newspapers, magazines
• When using in the text of your essay the title of a book or the title of a text, a chapter or an article from a book, the same rules regarding the use of italics or quotation marks apply.

Proofreading
Always proofread your work. Do not trust computer spelling and grammar checks absolutely.

Plagiarism
If you use material from another source you must cite it correctly, if you do not you will be guilty of plagiarism. Use of source material may involve direct quotation, paraphrasing or summary. Do not read about your topic, use other’s ideas and then claim you were “inspired.” Keep account of the material you have used to learn about your chosen topic, take accurate notes or make photocopies so that you will be able to cite correctly. You will always need the following information about a source – a) author’s name b) full title of text c) publisher, place of publication and year of publication d) whether you have taken the author’s exact words or have paraphrased.

Citations
• Paraphrase, Summary, Direct Quotations, References—all must be referenced.
• Use double quotation marks for direct quotations. Do not use italics.
• Context—avoid dropping in cited material without giving a context. Usually an introductory tag i.e. Shakespeare states that “…” or “According to…” is stylistically preferable to an abandoned quote or paraphrase.
• Short quotations of poetry—when quoting a brief extract from a poem in the text of a paragraph, indicate the line breaks by using a slash (/).
• **Block quotations**—if you quote more than three lines of a text it is customary to format as follows (In this case quotation marks are not used):

According to Frank Budgeon,

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xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.
```


Citing sources
Our department uses the “Notes and Bibliography” type of Chicago Style. All of your sources should be cited using footnotes and a bibliography.

Footnotes Format
Microsoft Word and Apple Pages both allow you to insert footnotes automatically. The first footnote is assigned the number 1, and the others follow. **Place the number of the footnote after all punctuation at the end of the sentence or passage that contains the reference.**

Footnote format (the use of punctuation and the order of information included is of essence):
Author, *Title* (City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication), Pages.

Bibliography Format
The bibliography appears at the end of your essay and is ordered alphabetically according to the last name of the author. If no author is listed, begin each bibliographic reference with the title of the article and list these alphabetically after the list of author’s last names. If you have more than one source from the same author, include the author’s full name in the first reference, then use an indented em dash followed by a period in place of the author’s name.

Bibliography format (the use of punctuation and the order of information included is of essence):
Author. *Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.
Note: Bibliographies don’t use page numbers, unless the source is a journal, a magazine, or the chapter of a book where the page range for the cited essay/article/chapter is given.

Shortened Notes
When you cite one source more than once you will use a shortened form of the footnote. See the examples below.

**PRINT BOOKS**

*Footnotes*


*Shortened footnotes*


Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

CHAPTERS OR PARTS OF AN EDITED BOOK
In a note, cite specific pages. In the bibliography, include the page range for the chapter or part.

Footnotes

Shortened footnotes

Bibliography

TRANSLATED BOOKS

Footnotes

Shortened footnotes
2. Lahiri, In Other Words, 184.

Bibliography

E-BOOKS
For books consulted online, include a URL or the name of the database. For other types of e-books, name the format. If no fixed page numbers are available, cite a section title or a chapter or other number in the notes, if any (or simply omit).

Footnotes
Shortened footnotes

Bibliography
Kurland, Philip and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders’ Constitution*. Chicago: University of
2016. ProQuest Ebrary.

WEBSITES
If the source you are citing has a clear publication date, use that as the source’s date. Otherwise,
look for a revision date; many websites will make note of when they were last modified, edited,
or revised. If you are using a date of revision rather than a date of publication, make that clear:
“Last modified May 17, 2019.” You may use both at your discretion, in which case you should
distinguish between the two: “Published April 26, 2019; last modified May 17, 2019.” If no date
at all is available, use the date when you accessed the source to get the data: “Accessed August 7,
2019.”

Footnotes
www.poetrytoday.com/terrill.

Shortened footnotes
Terrill, “Business.”

Bibliography
www.poetrytoday.com/terrill.

JOURNAL ARTICLES, PRINT OR FROM DATABASES
In the footnote, cite specific page numbers. In the bibliography, include the page range for the
whole article. For articles consulted online, include a URL or the name of the database. Many
journal articles list a DOI (Digital Object Identifier). A DOI forms a permanent URL that begins
https://doi.org/. This URL is preferable to the URL that appears in your browser’s address bar.

Footnotes


**Shortened footnotes**


**Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)**


**Multiple authors:** Journal articles often list many authors. If there are four or more authors, list up to ten in the bibliography; in a footnote note, list only the first, followed by *et al.* (“and others”). For more than ten authors, list the first seven in the bibliography, followed by *et al.*

**Footnotes**


**Shortened footnotes**

8. Bay et al., “Predicting Responses,” 466.

**Bibliography**


**NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE ARTICLES**

Articles from newspapers or news sites, magazines, blogs, and the like are cited similarly. Page numbers, if any, can be cited in a note but are omitted from a bibliography entry. If you consulted the article online, include a URL or the name of the database.

**Footnotes**


**Shortened footnotes**


7. Pegoraro, “Apple’s iPhone.”


**Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)**


**BOOK REVIEWS**

*Footnotes*


*Shortened footnotes*

2. Kakutani, “Friendship.”

**Bibliography**


**INTERVIEWS**

*Footnotes*


*Shortened footnotes*

2. Stamper, interview.
Bibliography

THESES OR DISSERTATIONS
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Shortened footnotes
2. Rutz, “King Lear,” 158.

Bibliography

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS
Personal communications, including email and text messages and direct messages sent through social media, are usually cited in the text or in a note only; they are rarely included in a bibliography.

Footnotes
1. Sam Gomez, Facebook message to author, August 1, 2017.

Shortened footnotes
Gomez, Facebook message.

PLAYS, INCLUDING SHAKESPEARE
According to Chicago Style, when you’re citing a play, including Shakespeare, the first footnote should include act, scene, and line number, e.g. 1.1.15-20 and the first time you provide these details add the phrase, “References are to act, scene, and line.” Subsequent, short form footnotes can omit the author's name if it’s clear from the text.

Other important details to include are the editor and publication details. If you are using a play from an online source, such as Drama Online, you will also need to include a DOI or URL.

First Footnote
https://doi.org/10.5040/9781408160183.00000045.

Later Footnotes
The Tempest, 1.1.28-32.
Bibliography