

## PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR PAPER

### INTRODUCTION (1-1.5 PAGES)

In a 10-page paper, the **first page and a half** should be your introduction. In a 5-page paper, three-quarters of your first page should be your introduction. In it, you argue:

- 1) what the paper will be about, (thesis) and
- 2) if possible, and if you know it, what methodological procedure you will follow to prove your particular point.

EXAMPLE: Normally you say: "In this paper I will intend to prove that..." (EXAMPLE: The murals in the East Los Angeles, though lacking artistic rigor, are valid expressions of how a community imagines itself and how it tries to reaffirm this identity through some form of artistic expression).

Finally, you make a claim that this particular analysis that you are making, will either shed further light on our interpretation of the text, or of the cultural object that you are analyzing. You may also claim that you will make us change our traditional assumptions of how we understand that text or cultural object in particular; or, some justification of some kind as to why you chose this line of research.

### BODY OF THE PAPER (7 PAGES)

Then, and only then, you move to the body of the paper, where you are very careful that every section you include is a response to the issues you raised in your introduction, in a very direct cause-and-effect relationship. Everything in the body of the paper should be devoted to supporting the main thesis. Every claim you make in this section of the paper should be supported, either by a citation or a reason. Citations should be no longer than a third of a page.

### CONCLUSIONS (2 PAGES)

At the end, do not forget conclusions, like most people. The conclusions are a **separate section** from the body of the paper. Usually they start by the phrase "In this paper, I intended to prove... " then you do:

- 1) a brief summary of your thesis plus your main arguments without repeating yourself too much. Then you tell us
- 2) how you succeeded in proving your thesis, and proceed to explain to us

3) **why this matters.** What's so important about it, what insight it adds to our knowledge of the text. In short, sum up how the body of the paper supports your thesis.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

For a 10-page paper there should be at least 3-5 sources.

Think of an academic paper as a TV courtroom drama. You are the D.A. I am the jury. You have to convince me of your case. Therefore, you do your opening presentation when arguing your case (introduction), followed by a list of witnesses and exhibits to prove your case (body of the paper), and a closing argument in which you remind the jury of the merits of your case, and of the substance of your evidence (conclusion). If you are a good enough lawyer, you move the jury into awarding a verdict in your favor (an A).

## **SUBMITTING YOUR PAPER**

The paper should be double spaced with one-inch margins and presented in a legible font.

Give the paper a title and place that title in the center of the first page.

The subtitles should be labeled, INTRODUCTION, CONCLUSION, and BIBLIOGRAPHY (the body paragraph is optional).

The body of the paper should begin on a new page.

Number the pages.

On the upper right of the first page, above the title, supply this information:

- } Your Full Name and Your UT EID
  - } Today's date
  - } Word Count