

Assignment 2b: Essay Outline Assignment

This assignment builds on the research from Assignment 2a. The goal of the outline assignment is to help you create a working structure for your research essay (Assignment 2c). Like a road-map or the blueprint for a house, the outline needs to include as much practical detail as possible (thesis, topic sentences for each paragraph, specific evidence to support your claims, etc.) in order to clearly lay out the argument you will make in your essay.

- 1) Look at the sample outline assignment on the library's APA Assignments and Examples page. Note that it offers a clear thesis statement, each main idea has its own argument to support that thesis, the evidence for each section clearly supports the claim being made, and that all supporting evidence is short, specific and appropriately cited (including page numbers for direct quotations). Use this example as a template for your own assignment.
- 2) Consider your own research question (from Assignment 2a), and draft a thesis statement that will address the topic of your research. Your thesis statement will attempt to answer your research question critically, clearly, and succinctly. It must make a scholarly argument that both identifies a specific issue and proposes a critical intervention to address or resolve the concern(s) you identify.
- 3) Consider the logical steps you will need to take in order to support your argument successfully. Where do you think you should start, and where do you think you need to end up? Once you have a general idea of the shape your essay should take, start organizing and arranging your evidence into logical groups/claims.
- 4) Identify the main idea for each section, and draft a topic sentence for each one. Think of a paragraph's topic sentence as a mini-thesis statement: it must be a complete sentence, make a clear argument or claim, and require evidence from your research to support it—the topic is just smaller in scope, and serves as a supporting argument for your thesis.
- 5) Reorganize your evidence and revise your claims until you are satisfied that you have a good plan for making a successful critical argument.

Notes:

The benefit of doing an outline is that you do all the hard work of figuring out what you want to say *before* you start writing the essay itself. The more time you spend refining your argument and organizing your evidence now, the easier it will be to write Assignment 2c.

Even though the supporting evidence for this assignment can be listed in point form, **you are still required to write in complete sentences.**

You **must** use quotation marks for direct quotations and provide appropriate in-text citations using APA formatting for *all* words/ideas that are not your own.

Avoid organizing your essay around your sources; instead, organize your essay around the main ideas you want to communicate, and bring in your supporting evidence as necessary.

This outline should be three to five pages (not including title and references pages).

Use the sample assignment on the NorQuest library website as a template for your own outline.

Marking Rubric: Assignment 2b

Outline	
Thesis statement is argumentative and specific	/5
Claims/topic sentences are argumentative	/5
Evidence is valid, persuasive, and relevant to the topic	/5
Significance/discussion of evidence is thorough and insightful	/5
Organization • Main points appear in a logical order • Evidence within each section is cohesive • Argument flows smoothly from one idea to the next	/5
Language, Style, Mechanics	
Grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, style/tone, proof-reading	/5
APA formatting in paper (including citations, integration of sources, page formatting, etc.)	/5
APA formatting in References page	/5
Total	/40

Rubric notes (double the numerical values for categories marked out of 10)

0 = does not meet expectations/missing

1 = meets minimum expectations

2 = needs improvement

3 = satisfactory

4 = good

5 = excellent