Writing & Publishing Skills Bootcamp  
Dana Library and The Writing Program

1- Critical Reading Strategies and the Research Notebook  
January 9, 2016  
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Research: Related Topics  
• Critical Reading  
• The Literature Review

The Research Process Simplified  
1. Ask: What is the assignment? What is your question? Provide a preliminary answer.

   The question will drive and shape your research and writing, and will like change as you go through the process. It could also affect your methodology.

2. Review the literature

   Must be relevant summary
   Summarizes and organizes each work’s ideas around a specific topic or argument  
   a. Organizes and synthesizes  
   b. Includes a critical analysis of the relationship among different texts with an eye to your project’s argument or purpose (the question it is answering)

3. Conduct research  

   • The methodology depends on your field  
   • Research may reveal issues and questions that will affect your original question. How do you deal with that?

4. Refine the research

   Look for patterns. A research notebook is essential here.

What is critical reading?

Critical reading is a process of evaluating the context and purpose of written material. 
More than just what we typically consider “reading,” critical reading requires the reader to process information while simultaneously asking questions and evaluating the text. In doing so, the reader gains insight that can then be applied to later stages of the writing process.
Tips for Reading

- Devote a sufficient segment of time each day
- Look for key words, terms, patterns, overall organization
- Skim
- Understand you won’t and don’t have to understand every single thing
- Practice seeing words in blocks rather than individual items
- Read summaries, beginnings and ends
- Take notes
- Consult advisors, professors, interpretations
- Rest your eyes periodically

Resources:
Critical Reading for Grad Students

Study Guides and Strategies
http://www.studygs.net/texred1.htm

Scrivner for Academic Papers
https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl&q=scrivner+for+academic+papers
SEVEN CRITICAL READING STRATEGIES

1. **Contextualizing:** Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts (especially in relation to your discipline).

2. **Previewing:** Learning about a text before really reading it.

3. **Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values:** Examining your personal responses (identifying your beliefs, biases, what resonates to identify patterns).

4. **Outlining and summarizing:** Identifying the main ideas and restating them in your own words.

5. **Questioning to understand and remember:** Asking questions about the content.

6. **Evaluating:** Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact.

7. **Comparing and contrasting related readings:** Exploring likenesses and differences between texts to understand them better.
The Seven Strategies Explained:

1. **Contextualizing:** *Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts.*

   When you read a text, you read it through the lens of your own experience. Your understanding of the words on the page and their significance is informed by what you have come to know and value from living in a particular time and place. But the texts you read were all written in the past, sometimes in a radically different time and place. To read critically, you need to contextualize, to recognize the differences between your values and attitudes and those represented in the text, as well as the differences between your knowledge of the subject and the knowledge represented in the text.

2. **Previewing:** *Learning about a text before really reading it.*

   Previewing enables readers to get a sense of what the text is about and how it is organized before reading it closely. This simple strategy includes seeing what you can learn from the head notes or other introductory material, skimming to get an overview of the content and organization, and identifying the rhetorical situation.

3. **Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values:** *Examining your personal responses.*

   The reading that you do for class or for research might challenge your attitudes, your unconsciously held beliefs, or your positions on current issues. As you read a text for the first time, mark an X in the margin at each point where you feel a personal challenge to your attitudes, beliefs, or status. Make a brief note in the margin about what you feel or about what in the text created the challenge. Now look again at the places you marked in the text where you felt personally challenged. What patterns do you see?

4. **Questioning to understand and remember:** *Asking questions about the content.*

   As students, you are accustomed to teachers asking you questions about your reading. These questions are designed to help you understand a reading and respond to it more fully, and often this technique works. When you need to understand and use new information, though, it is most beneficial if you write the questions, as you read the text for the first time. With this strategy, you can write questions any time, but in difficult academic readings, you will understand the material better and remember it longer if you write a question for every paragraph or brief section. Each question should focus on a main idea, not on illustrations or details, and each should be expressed in your own words, not just copied from parts of the paragraph.
5. **Evaluating**: Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact.

All writers make assertions they want you to accept as true. *As a critical reader, you should not accept anything on face value but rather you should recognize every assertion as an argument that must be carefully evaluated.* An argument has two essential parts: a claim and support. The claim asserts a conclusion -- an idea, an opinion, a judgment, or a point of view -- that the writer wants you to accept. The support includes reasons (shared beliefs, assumptions, and values) and evidence (facts, examples, statistics, and authorities) that give readers the basis for accepting the conclusion. When you assess an argument, you are concerned with the process of reasoning as well as its truthfulness (these are not the same thing). At the most basic level, in order for an argument to be acceptable, the support must be appropriate to the claim and the statements must be consistent with one another.

Credibility questions to ask when evaluating a text:
1) Is the writer an authority on the subject?
2) Is the work a thorough study of the subject?
3) Does the author draw on primary sources?
4) Is the author biased?
5) Is the work up-to-date?

6. **Comparing and contrasting related readings**: Exploring likenesses and differences between texts to understand them better.

**COMPARING AND CONTRASTING RELATED READINGS**  
**KEEPING A RESEARCH NOTEBOOK**

**Lexicon**
- Discipline-specific definition of term (discipline’s jargon, terminology)
- Definition of term(ology) written in your own words

**Author information**
- Pertinent biographical information for each author
- List of each author’s important works
- Brief description of each author’s contributions to the field

**Trends/historical events list**
- Important dates
- Trends
- Current problems
- Proposed solutions

**Works list** – (may want to keep a separate loose-leaf binder with copies of articles)
- Bibliographic information
- Purpose of each piece
- Salient points (use notes or create a reverse outline)
- Critical comments and questions
- Important quotes
- Summary of each work’s purpose and argument

Ideas list
- Provocative questions that arise in class lecture or discussion
- Topics in your textbook that appear ripe for further explanation
- Issues that come up in your conversations with classmates
- Outlines of papers to write
- A sheaf of small project sketches – one or two pages of formally presented ideas on a single subject
- Skeletal papers – title, abstract, section headings, fragments of text.
May be found useful in documenting what you are up to

**Experiment.** A research “notebook” can take many forms. Different systems work for different people. Experiment: online (e.g. spreadsheet or Scrivner), offline, spiral notebook, legal pads, bound book, one copy at home and another at work, etc. Read back through your notebook periodically. Some people find it useful to write a monthly summary for easy reference (reserve a section of your notebook for summary, and expand it to include new ideas, rethought ideas, etc.)

7. **Reverse outlining and summarizing:** *Identifying the main ideas and restating them in your own words.*

Reverse outlining and summarizing are especially helpful strategies for understanding the content and structure of a reading selection. Whereas reverse outlining reveals the basic structure of the text, summarizing synthesizes a selection’s main argument in brief. Reverse outlining may be part of the annotating process, or it may be done separately. The key to both reverse outlining and summarizing is being able to distinguish between main ideas and supporting ideas and examples. The main ideas form the backbone, the strand that holds the various parts and pieces of the text together. Reverse outlining the main ideas helps you to discover this structure.

Reverse outlines and summaries come in various forms. When deciding how extensively you’d like to examine a text, think about how integral you expect the text to be within your current project. If, for instance, you’re considering using it as a central part of your argument, then a very thorough breakdown would probably be quite helpful. On the other hand, if you plan to use only one small part of the text or you’re not really sure that you’ll use it all, then a limited assessment is more appropriate. The reverse outline guide that follows works best for close textual examination. However, it can be adjusted to fit most of your critical reading needs.
The Bridge from Critical Reading to Writing: REVERSE OUTLINE

A traditional outline is the basic frame that we use to organize an essay (or other piece of writing). It has a relatively fixed structure, containing the thesis and breakdown of the main points that are going to be used to support the thesis. These points are usually accompanied by quotes, statistics, and other supporting evidence. This outline is then used to create the essay.

A reverse outline works in the other direction. It is an outline which is created from the text. It is a way to strategically break down a piece of writing and discover an author’s central argument and the ways that he or she supports that argument. It is helpful when analyzing another author’s work and also when revising your own! Creating a reverse outline of your own work is a great way to evaluate its effectiveness.

Steps to Writing a Reverse Outline

1. **What is the Reading About and How Do I Understand It?** Try to read (or at least skim) the essay in its entirety before you begin. Get an idea of what the essay is about and reflect on your initial understanding of the piece.

2. **What is the Purpose, Thesis or Main Argument?** Identify the author’s *purpose* for writing the essay. On a separate sheet of paper, write out the purpose. Then, identify and write out the writer’s *thesis or main argument*. Remember, the thesis statement isn’t necessarily at the beginning and it’s not always just one sentence.

3. **The Role of Each Paragraph.** On the same sheet, identify each paragraph/section by number, beginning with the first paragraph/section, and provide a brief analysis of each. Consider the following questions as you analyze:
   - What is the main purpose of the paragraph/section? In other words, what is the writer hoping to accomplish?
   - What does the writer do to try to get his or her point across in the paragraph/section? For example, does he or she include facts or expert opinions, try to manipulate your emotions, make comparisons, use similes or metaphors, etc.?
   - Does the author achieve his or her intended purpose in the paragraph/section?
   - How does the paragraph/section function in the argument the author is making?

4. **Patterns in the Text.** After analyzing each paragraph/section, look at what the reverse outline reveals about the organization of the text. What patterns do you see? Write them in your notes.

5. **Post-Outline Changes.** Return to the purpose and thesis which you wrote down earlier. After constructing your paragraph/section analyses, are there any changes that you feel need to be made? If so, write your new purpose and/or thesis at the end of your outline. Leave the originals as a basis for comparison.
TheBridge from Critical Reading to Writing:

SAMPLE CRITICAL READING WORKSHEET

(a) Discipline-specific lexicon
   1.
   2.
   3.

(b) References to key trends or historical events
   1.
   2.
   3.

(c) Author information
   1. list of important works
   2. main contributions to the field

(d) Outline/Summary of work
   1. Purpose of piece

   2. Main points
      a.
      b.
      c.
      d.
3. comments and questions
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 

(e) links to past readings (briefly explain)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

(f) quotation/s of note
   1. 
   2. 
   3.
SOFTWARE RESOURCES

RefWorks — Rutgers, Newark - from http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/refworks/

RefWorks is a Web-based bibliography and database manager that enables you to:

- Organize your research
- Import references from many electronic databases
- Include citations while you write your paper
- Build a bibliography according to different stylesheets (APA, MLA, etc.) Create a bibliography in different document formats (Word, RTF, HTML, etc.)

How do I get, an account on RefWorks?

If you are currently affiliated with Rutgers University as student, faculty, or staff, you are eligible to use RefWorks. Start at the Rutgers Refworks Account Creation page and enter your NetID and password. If you do not have a NetID, you can get one at https://netid.rutgers.edu/index.htm

If you don't remember your NetID, you may look it up using NetID Query https://identityservices.rutgers.edu/netidquery/query.html

Other resources - Cornell University Library - from http://guides.library.cornell.edu/c.php?g=31450&p=199968

Learn how to use Zotero

- Free
- Web-based add on for Firefox
- Citations with notes
- Notes as "index cards" linked to citations
- Excellent at capturing publicly available web pages
- Beware: doesn't interface well with all databases

EndNote

- Has to be purchased (updating requires re-purchase)
- Desktop based (with web-based companion)
- Interfaces seamlessly and powerfully with most databases
- Notes as "documents" linked to citations

Scrivener (also see page 2)
https://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener.php
GAUGING YOUR FIELD FLUENCY

Please spend a few minutes answering the following questions, so that you will be able to use your answers as a guide for your success.

1. *What does it mean to be fluent in your field of study?* (The dictionary tells us that fluent means: 1) able to express oneself readily and effortlessly; 2) flowing or moving smoothly; graceful.)

2. Do you feel comfortable with your reading and writing fluency in your field? If no, why not? If yes, then why?:

If not, write what you need to do to become more fluent:

1. More vocabulary?
2. More background knowledge?
3. More immersion in your field?
4. A colleague or two or three for peer reviews?
5. More confidence?

3. What will you be looking for as a fluent reader of research? Note:

- References to theorists
- Terminology explicit to your field
- Historical references
- Social references
- Graphs
- Data Analysis
- Other: ________________________________
2- Critical Reading, the Research Process and Evaluating Sources
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Evaluating Research Topic Proposals and Annotated Bibliographies/Abstracts

Proposals: Evaluate these

Effects of Depression

The topic I chose to write about is how Yunior feel lonely and depressed. This topic interests me because Yunior feels that he is alone and no one cares about him. I could argue that certain events in Yunior’s life causes him to be unsure of himself as a person. My paper will be persuasive because I will prove how events in Yunior’s life cause him to feel lonely and depressed. What events happened in Yunior’s life that lead to his depression/ loneliness? Why does he let these events take over his life?

Immigrant Unemployment and Frustration: The Toll on a Family’s American Dream in Drown

The topic for my research paper will be how unemployment among Latino immigrants and no hope for a better life are important factors to why Ramon, the father character in the short story collection Drown, participates in questionable work and personal activities that have a negative effect on his wife and children. This is an interesting topic because there is often more unemployment among immigrants, especially illegal immigrants, and I would like to prove how that plays a role in Drown. The working thesis will be: in the short story collection Drown by Junot Diaz, unemployment and the poor outlook for quality, well-paying jobs play a huge role in why Ramon involves himself in questionable business activities and personal relationships outside his marriage. These activities then have a detrimental effect on his family, greatly reducing their chances of attaining the American Dream. For my research, I would like to look at unemployment rates among Latino immigrants in the NY area and their effects on immigrant families. I will also research how unemployment affects an individual and families psychologically, relate that to Ramon and his family’s situation, and show how this points to one of Diaz’s main themes: how easy or hard is the American Dream to reach without a good job.

What drugs symbolize for Immigrants: How it changes and impacts the family dynamic

My research topic is how drugs change the family dynamic of Latino immigrants as it serves as a coping mechanism for acculturation. This is critical to understanding why Yunior who is the main character feels the need to become a drug dealer and forms a relationship with a young teen who is hooked on drugs (as displayed in Junot Diaz’s “Drown” and “Aurora.” I found interest in this topic because the family dynamic in urban
Communities are shattered by drugs because they serve as a contradicting platform for young men who believe that their background or culture does not allow them to work in a legal field. This would also show why in the short story “Drown” Yunion is so reluctant to join the Army and earn a living legally. The accessibility America has to drugs plays a huge role in the influence Drugs have on the lives of Immigrants as well. Due to the easy access to illegal substances Immigrants find selling drugs as a way to escape. The definition for escaping varies for immigrants who move to America. Some choose to reach superficial success through selling drugs in order to escape poverty, and others become addicted to drugs as a way to escape. These similar but different instances of how drugs change family dynamics between immigrants are personified in Junot Díaz’s “Aurora” as Yunion finds selling drugs as a way to live well, and his girlfriend Aurora finds drugs as a way to escape reality. The thesis I am proposing is: In Junot Díaz’s novel entitled “Drown” the use and distribution of drugs serves a constant reminder of the psychological toll acculturation takes on immigrant families, thus leading to using drugs as a coping method. Due to this fact drugs symbolize survival and a way to gain power for immigrants while causing a shift in the power dynamic between families. For my research I would like to examine the rates of Latino immigrants who are incarcerated for drugs and compare it to Latino immigrants who are incarcerated for drug abuse. In addition, I would like to explore some stories of teens who have resulted in either the process of the distribution of drugs or have been addicted to drugs to further determine what drugs symbolize to the average Latino immigrant family in America.

Three questions I would like to answer through research:
* How do drugs and acculturation coincide psychologically for Latino immigrants?
* Why do drugs change the family dynamic of Latino immigrant families?
* In what ways does drugs emulate a false sense of success or a way to escape?

**Key Terms:**
* Drugs
* Family Dynamic
* Acculturation
* Liberation

**Annotated Bibliography:** Evaluate these:


This text basically discusses the specific trials and tribulations of Latin American feminism. Specifically how Latin American feminists have tried to open discussion about gender roles, how they have been overlooked and the solidarity between specific regions. The *Encuentros*, in particular, are noted for their accomplishment of engaging a widespread number of Latina feminists to unite for common causes. I find this information useful because feminism in Latino cultures is not widely discussed. The significant history and the silent accomplishments are important in the discussion of the
Latina experience. For my research, this holds significance in that I can utilize this information to discuss the activism of Latina’s and how the history of how they have tried to break gender norms.


This piece breaks down what machismo means and its significance in Latino cultures. It states that machismo is about all things powerful, dominant, filled with action, independence, control and sexual freedom. It also mentions how women are denied sexuality and a voice and how the dominance of religion in Latino cultures influences that. The breaking down of what machismo is and how it relates to Latino cultures is significant for my research. And the religious perspective says a lot about how religion can affect not only one’s belief, but how tradition can affect a culture’s norms and perspective and divide the experiences of men and women.


This text is especially of importance because it details very specific Latina’s and the overall scope of how Latina feminism has been perceived. It also discusses a usually forgotten, marginalized group, Latina lesbians. It discusses the subcategories of Latina feminism depending upon sexuality, region, education and more. This is useful because it provides a look into the working of Latina feminism and how it is perceived by insiders and outsiders. It also discusses the successes and failures of specific Latina feminists.


This article discusses the numerical data of domestic violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. It states that home life is especially difficult for Latina’s and that law enforcement doesn’t take the necessary action to protect women. This is especially important for my research because I need factual data to support the severity of how women are sometimes treated in Latino cultures. This data highlights how common domestic violence is in these communities and how just being a women puts them at risk.


This article documents the violence against women in Latino cultures. It mentions how femicide has become common and how though certain regions have tried to pass laws to prevent this it hasn't benefited the victims. I find this useful because it details very specific data about the justice systems of certain Latin cultures and the severity of the treatment of women. I will use this data to show why Latin American feminism is direly needed.
3- Citation, Attribution and Formatting
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What is Citation and Attribution?
- Supporting ideas and arguments in your own work through the incorporation of other professionals', researchers', or experts' ideas, theories, studies, etc. (i.e. using evidence).
- Giving credit to others' ideas either through direct quotes or paraphrasing.
- Including the names of articles, books, studies, (i.e. sources), and the page numbers from which ideas or quotes are taken.
- Related to a works cited list.

Evidence should be used and cited to serve/support your paper's purpose or thesis, otherwise it will become a listing or summary of information and expertise.

Why is Proper Citation and Attribution Necessary: Avoiding Plagiarism
The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit.”

The most common academic integrity violations by writing students are:

- “Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.”

- “Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.”

- “Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.”


Challenges in Academic Writing: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/
Citation and Attribution Format Varies by Style:
MLA (literature, humanities) (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/):
Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).

APA (social sciences) (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/):
According to Jones (1998), "Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).

Jones (1998) found "students often had difficulty using APA style" (p. 199); what implications does this have for teachers?

She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APA style" (Jones, 1998, p. 199), but she did not offer an explanation as to why.

PURDUE APA SLIDE PRESENTATION: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/17/

Chicago (various disciplines, including sciences):
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/
(Contributors’ Surnames year of publication, page or section number when available).

(Clements et al. 2011).

PURDUE CHICAGO MANUAL SLIDE PRESENTATION:
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/13/

Additional Resources on Citation and Attribution:
Citation manager and formatters:
http://www.citationmachine.net/mla/cite-a-journal

Formatting Guidelines:
Purdue Online Writing Lab: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/
Montclair State University:
http://montclair.libguides.com/content.php?pid=335074&sid=2741169

Other Citation Issues:
Finding the source of a quote whose source you’ve forgotten:
• Input the quote in Google, Google Scholar or other search engine and search
• Upload the section where the quote appears through Turn It In, Safe Assign or other plagiarism checker
• Run it by your advisor, professor or a librarian
4- Revision and Editing
January 9, 2017
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The following information, where indicated by page number, is taken from this source:


What is revision?
**It is important to remember that revision is a very different process than editing or proofreading. Revision incorporates changes to an essay that "reflect new thinking or conceptualizing" (227). Therefore, during the stages of revision, you want to focus on the strength of your ideas, the organization of the content, and the appropriateness of the evidence incorporated.

Editing and proofreading are the final steps after revision, and you can think of them as "polishing"—or focusing exclusively on style and presentation.

When you sit down to revise a paper, another person can be extremely beneficial in helping you realize where the paper is strong and where it needs work.

The following steps break down the stages of revision into two stages prior to the final stage of editing.

1. Revising Early Drafts
   In this stage it is important to realize that you must focus on the content of your essay and the evidence you use to support your ideas. As you are beginning to revise you should consider the following: (1) has the assignment been met, (2) is the argument/issue clearly presented and has a "working" thesis been established, and (3) who is the audience.

   As a reader helping another revise (or in attempting to revise your own work) you should address each of the following issues (235):

   ✓ Are the questions and issues that motivate the writer clear?
   ✓ Has the writer effectively related the conversation that published writers are engaged in?
   ✓ What is at issue?
   ✓ What is the writer's thesis?
   ✓ Is the writer addressing the audience's concerns effectively?
   ✓ What passages of the draft are most effective?
   ✓ What passages of the draft are least effective?
2. Later Drafts
Revising later drafts will almost certainly come after you have done additional reading or research. Oftentimes new ideas are presented to you, the writer, through revising with a partner that need to be addressed in the essay. This is good—after you have collected evidence to substantiate those ideas, you must return to the essay and incorporate them. This stage of revision deals with organization and an examination of the evidence. You must make decisions on information to add, information to remove, information that must be replaced, and specific paragraphs/sections that need to be rearranged.

As a reader helping another revise (or in attempting to revise your own work) you should address each of the following issues (237):

✓ How effectively does the writer establish a conversation—identify a gap in people's knowledge, attempt to modify an existing argument, or try to connect some misunderstanding?
✓ How effectively does the writer distinguish between his or her ideas and the ideas he or she summarizes, paraphrases, or quotes?
✓ How well does the writer help you follow the logic or his/her argument?
✓ To what extent are you persuaded by the writer's argument?
✓ To what extent does the writer anticipate possible counterarguments?
✓ To what extent does the writer make clear how he or she wants readers to respond?
✓ What do you think is working best? Explain by pointing to specific passages in the writer's draft.
✓ What specific draft is least effective? Explain by pointing to specific passages in the writer's draft.

3. Final Draft
The final draft should require editing and proofreading, not revising. You should to work on sentence structure, grammar, and word choices—but you should not be adjusting the substance of the work. A final attempt at proofreading, or polishing the piece to improve its style and to ensure that you have not made any simple mistakes in spelling is also necessary. Again, even at this stage, it is best to have another pair of eyes examine your work, and usually they will be able to uncover mistakes that you overlooked.

Grammar and Citations
The best way is still immersion in the language and practice.

2. Find citation check software and recommendations: Check with your academic library, e.g. https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/tutorials
Graduate Research and Writing Workshop Series

"Writing an Abstract or Book Review"
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Generally, a good abstract should:

- Be short and substantive
- Be academic “click bait”
- Provide either information or a “thumbnail” of the overall work (thesis, methodology, findings overview)
- Adhere to the publisher’s or submission entity’s requirements: format, word length (which can vary from 100 to 500), etc.
- Use proper citation format (Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.)
- Avoid first person
- Be written in active voice (The researchers tested vs. The subject were tested by researchers...)
- Include keywords
- Use the same language as the larger work

Types of abstracts:

Critical: describes main findings and evaluates them in relation to other works on the same or related topic. Is usually closer to 500 words because of added evaluation

Descriptive: briefly summarizes or describes what the work is about without results or evaluation. Includes purpose, methods and scope. Normally short in length (100-150).

Informative: Most common abstract. Snapshot of work, includes main arguments, results, conclusions and possibly recommendations. Mid-length, @300 words.

Highlight: acts like an ad, designed to capture attention not necessarily present the work. Rarely used.

Sample abstracts from various disciplines (source, unless noted otherwise: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/presentations_abstracts_examples.html)

Humanities Abstracts
"The Commemoration and Memorialization of the American Revolution"
Benjamin Herman and Jean Lee (Mentor), History

This project involves discovering how the American Revolution was remembered during the nineteenth century. The goal is to show that the American Revolution was memorialized by the actions of the United States government during the 1800s. This has been done by examining events such as the Supreme Court cases of John Marshall and the Nullification Crisis. Upon examination of these events, it becomes clear that John Marshall and John Calhoun (creator of the Doctrine of Nullification) attempted to use the American Revolution to bolster their claims
by citing speeches from Founding Fathers. Through showing that the American Revolution lives on in memory, this research highlights the importance of the revolution in shaping the actions of the United States government.

Rich Johnson


This essay is the fourth chapter of Bahrani’s book on the representations of women in the material and figurative record of ancient Mesopotamia. The essay opens with an overview of the traditional art historical treatment of the human nude figure in antiquity, with its binary opposition of Near Eastern and Greek attitudes toward the human body, particularly that of the female. According to this interpretive paradigm, ancient Greek representations of the nude female body came to be considered the aesthetic ideal for all western art while ancient Near Eastern examples fell far short of this ideal. Following earlier critics, Bahrani traces this opposition to ancient Greek texts that use the nude human figure as a mode of differentiation between the noble Greek and the uncivilized barbarian (72). Bahrani pits her thesis against this traditional bipolarity of art historical discourse, arguing that a responsible consideration of the Near Eastern evidence has been sorely lacking in modern scholarship. She argues that the extensive interactions between Greece and the ancient Near East through trade and conquest, particularly in the fourth and third centuries BCE, brought about radical changes in representations of the nude female form in both cultures. Bahrani suggests that while many of the superficial aspects of style and iconography were readily adapted by the ancient Greeks, more visceral attitudes toward the female body, notions of femininity and female sexuality embodied in the artistic exchange were never fully accepted.

The bulk of the essay is divided into three major sections, each treating an aspect of Bahrani’s argument. In the first section of her essay, The Orientalisation of Aphrodite, Bahrani unpacks the origins and development of ancient Greek representations of the female nude form, particularly in comparison to similar Near Eastern examples. Bahrani argues that Greek nude female forms of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, with their discrete placement of hands to conceal nudity and lack of female genitalia, constitute the first instance in the history of art where a moral statement appears to be made in association with the undressed female body (79).

Bahrani’s second section, The Near Eastern Record, considers evidence from the textual and material artifacts of the ancient Mesopotamia. Bahrani analyzes the textual record in order to determine prevailing attitudes toward the female nudity and sexuality in advance of the incursion of the Greeks in the Near East. Although Bahrani focuses only on two of the four principal iconographic categories of female nudes, The Mother and The Seductress, she argues that each of the four types represented ideals of feminine beauty and sexuality. In contrast to earlier nude figures from prehistory, whose oversized hips and breasts emphasized the reproductive function of women, the images of the nursing Mother are generally depicted in more naturalistic terms. The figures are slim and youthful, with small rounded breasts. Bahrani argues that these images eschew the earlier representations of the female as an instrument of reproduction and instead promote an ideal of female beauty and overt sexuality. By the term Seductress, Bahrani refers to
figures whose full frontal nudity and suggestive gestures are clearly meant to express an erotic sexuality and elicit an equally erotic response from the viewer. Using evidence from erotic poems and other textual sources, Bahrani supports her assertion that ancient Mesopotamian culture viewed erotic allure rather than reproduction as the most valued aspect of femininity (89). (Source: http://www.harpercollege.edu/~rjohnson/zainabcritabs.htm)

Social Science Abstracts
"Subtype of Autism: Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia"
Amanda Babin and Morton Gernbascher (Mentor), Psychology

The purpose of this research is to identify a subtype of autism called Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia (DVD). DVD is a motor-speech problem, disabling oral-motor movements needed for speaking. The first phase of the project involves a screening interview where we identify DVD and Non-DVD kids. We also use home videos to validate answers on the screening interview. The final phase involves home visits where we use several assessments to confirm the child’s diagnosis and examine the connection between manual and oral motor challenges. By identifying DVD as a subtype of Autism, we will eliminate the assumption that all Autistics have the same characteristics. This will allow for more individual consideration of Autistic people and may direct future research on the genetic factors in autism.

Hard Science Abstracts
"Understanding Cell-Mediated Immune Responses Against Simian Immunodeficiency Virus (SIV)"
Sean Spenser and John Loffredo, David Watkins (Mentors), Primate Research Center

Each day 14,000 people become infected with HIV/AIDS, making the development of an effective vaccine one of the world’s top public health priorities. David Watkins’ laboratory is attempting to develop HIV vaccines that elicit cellular immune responses utilizing the simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV) – infected rhesus macaque animal model. A major component of the cell-mediated immune response are cytotoxic T-lymphocytes (CTL). It is thought that CTL play an important role in controlling HIV and SIV. Most standard immunological assays do not measure antiviral activity directly, limiting our understanding of CTL effectiveness. To address this, the Watkins laboratory developed a novel neutralization assay that quantifies the ability of virus-specific CTL populations to control viral growth. Evaluating the antiviral activity of CTL of different specificities will identify those CTL most effective against SIV. This information will likely impact the design of future HIV vaccines.

Some Online Abstract Writing Resources:
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/752/04/
https://www.american.edu/cas/src/pdf/upload/abstracts-guide.pdf
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3136027/

Workshop Assignment: Write an abstract of a current project or problem.
Book Reviews

A good book review should consider:

- **Author:** Who is the author? What else has s/he written? Has this author won any awards? What is the author’s typical style?
- **Genre:** What type of book is this: fiction, nonfiction, romance, poetry, youth fiction, etc.? Who is the intended audience for this work? What is the purpose of the work?
- **Title:** Where does the title fit in? How is it applied in the work? Does it adequately encapsulate the message of the text? Is it interesting? Uninteresting?
- **Preface/Introduction/Table of Contents:** Does the author provide any revealing information about the text in the preface/introduction? Does a “guest author” provide the introduction? What judgments or preconceptions do the author and/or “guest author” provide? How is the book arranged: sections, chapters?
- **Book Jacket/Cover/Printing:** Book jackets are like mini-reviews. Does the book jacket provide any interesting details or spark your interest in some way? Are there pictures, maps, or graphs? Do the binding, page cut, or typescript contribute or take away from the work?
- **Characters [or principals]:** Are there characters in the work? Who are the principal characters? How do they affect the story? Do you empathize with them?
- **Themes/Motifs/Style:** What themes or motifs stand out? How do they contribute to the work? Are they effective or not? How would you describe this author’s particular style? Is it accessible to all readers or just some?
- **Argument:** How is the work’s argument set up? What support does the author give for her/findings? Does the work fulfill its purpose/support its argument?
- **Key Ideas:** What is the main idea of the work? What makes it good, different, or groundbreaking?
- **Quotes:** What quotes stand out? How can you demonstrate the author’s talent or the feel of the book through a quote?

In writing a book review:

- **Establish a Background, Remember your Audience:** Remember that your audience has not read the work; with this in mind, be sure to introduce characters and principals carefully and deliberately. What kind of summary can you provide of the main points or main characters that will help your readers gauge their interest? Does the author’s text adequately reach the intended audience? Will some readers be lost or find the text too easy?
- **Minor principals/characters:** Deal only with the most pressing issues in the book. You will not be able to cover every character or idea. What principals/characters did you agree or disagree with? What other things might the author have researched or considered?
- **Organize:** The purpose of the review is to critically evaluate the text, not just inform the readers about it. Leave plenty room for your evaluation by ensuring that your summary is brief. Determine what kind of balance to strike between your summary information and your evaluation. If you are writing your review for a class, ask your instructor. Often the ratio is half and half.
• **Your Evaluation:** Choose one or a few points to discuss about the book. What worked well for you? How does this work compare with others by the same author or other books in the same genre? What major themes, motifs, or terms does the book introduce, and how effective are they? Did the book appeal to you on an emotional or logical way?

• **Publisher/Price:** Most book reviews include the publisher and price of the book at the end of the article. Some reviews also include the year published and ISBN.

Source: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/704/01/

**Samples for evaluation:**

Nick Flynn  
*The Captain Asks for a Show of Hands*  
Graywolf Press  
*Ree* by Paula Neves

Venturing from the personal to the political, these heartbreaking poems chronicle everything from absent fathers, to an indifferent God, to the brutality at Abu Ghraib. Their lyrical integument both covers and cracks to reveal personal fragmentation and general inhumanity, and one’s inextricable relation to the other. Flynn’s vision is, thankfully not entirely bleak. After the cruelty, “First thing we should do / if we see each other again is to make / a cage of our bodies—inside we can place / whatever still shines.” Long after reading, these poems still shine.

Source: http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2011/04/whatchu-reading/
NY Times Book Review
Science
Review: A Spirit of Charity’ Probes Struggle of Public Hospitals
Reviewed by Abigail Zuger, M.D. Aug. 8, 2016

All hospitals deliver an endless loop of drama. In America’s great public hospitals, the show is nothing short of operatic.

There have been gruesome abuses: Staff members at New Orleans’s old Charity Hospital were indicted in the 1970s for running prostitution rings on the wards. There have also been stunning triumphs: The nation’s first blood bank was established at Chicago’s Cook County Hospital in 1937. There has always been a background chorus of surprised patients lauding the care received in these infamous places.

Most chroniclers confine themselves to the human interest stories, reasoning that the funding of these hospitals is unlikely to be as gripping. It turns out that’s not necessarily the case, certainly not in this first strange decade of reformed health care, as the federal government drapes the nation in a health safety net full of holes.

Where does that leave the venerable hospitals of last resort, the nets beneath the net?

Mike King probes this question in A Spirit of Charity: Restoring the Bond Between America and Its Public Hospitals. His decades of experience as an Atlanta-based journalist covering health care in the South have versed him well in the doublespeak of health care financing for America’s poor. The fact that even such an experienced observer has some difficulty describing the terrain speaks for itself: His is a moving, ridiculously complicated target. (Read an excerpt here.)

Still, his outrage on behalf of our continuously threatened public hospitals should be immensely gratifying to all of their fans.

Mr. King’s story concentrates on Atlanta’s Grady Hospital, which opened its doors in 1892 with a combination of municipal and private funding. Over the decades, Grady has never stopped scrambling for dollars, its mandate complicated by strictly segregated wards that were not dismantled until 1964.

Back then, Grady was a bizarre amalgam of charity and racial hatred. Now the hospital is different in all respects, bolstered by its world-class academic programs and its ongoing social mission.

But its financing still relies on a hodgepodge of funds grudgingly contributed and newly withheld by every echelon of government, as the states and the feds continue to toss the big burdens of health care back and forth like sputtering firecrackers.

The Affordable Care Act specifically excludes noncitizens from its benefits, leaving public hospitals like Grady as the sole care providers for both foreign transients and illegal residents. At the same time, new increases in reimbursements for some services and in the number of insured
people under the health care law have made the private sector take intense interest in caring for previously unattractive customers.

In Mr. King’s eyes, though, the biggest problem is that many states in the South, including Georgia, have chosen to forgo the expansion of Medicaid, the largely state-run health insurance for the poor, under the Affordable Care Act. Thus, working Atlanta residents who make too little for private insurance and too much for Medicaid under the old guidelines tumble right through the health care act’s safety net and land at Grady, a hospital of last resort.

But Grady now has big holes in its own safety net. For instance, Mr. King details how it stopped providing outpatient kidney dialysis in 2009, outsourcing this potentially profitable, Medicare-reimbursed procedure to private companies. But those companies do not serve uninsured patients, and throw them directly back to Grady’s emergency room, where costly emergency dialysis must be provided.

Grady handles about 3,500 trauma cases a year in a hugely expensive Level 1 center equipped to handle all injuries. But for-profit health care is now getting into the trauma business, specifically seeking victims of so-called blunt trauma, often caused by falls or car accidents, as opposed to victims of penetrating trauma caused by knives and guns. Blunt trauma victims are often insured, penetrating trauma victims often not.

About half the estimated 5,000 homeless people in Atlanta are thought to be mentally ill or addicted, Mr. King writes. Had Georgia agreed to Medicaid expansion, many would now be insured. Instead they receive outpatient care at charity clinics, and when they are admitted, Grady pays the bill.

Similarly, about 60 percent of patients in Grady’s AIDS clinic live below the poverty level; had the state expanded Medicaid, an estimated half of them would be insured. Instead, they and the hospital must rely on increasingly thin federal AIDS dollars.

Mr. King tells a slightly garbled, herky jerky story with intermittent excursions to events at other large public hospitals in the South and Midwest, including Cook County, Miami’s Jackson Memorial and Charity, now closed. These digressions just muddy the narrative waters with more anecdotes leading to a common conclusion: It seems nobody wants to pay for health care in this country — not even those specifically charged to do so — unless they can make a buck.

Well, it’s just one more verse in our sad, old health care song. I had hoped Mr. King might step back a little and try to pinpoint exactly why it is that so many Americans (rich, poor, doctor, patient) are such fierce partisans of our public hospitals, given that other hospitals must struggle hard to inspire the same degree of brand loyalty.

Mr. King does not venture a guess, so I will do it for him. All the addictive drama aside, I bet it’s because within public hospital walls lie the few square miles in this country where health care is an unquestioned right, not a grudgingly granted privilege. It’s a good feeling, to be in those spaces. We should create more of them.

Graduate Research and Writing Workshop Series

“Applying for Conferences and Publishing Your Work”

April 17, 2017
Paula Neves
pneves@rutgers.edu

Finding the Conferences: Common Sense

Network:

- Join your discipline’s professional organization or organizations. For example: AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs), MLA (Modern Language Association) etc. and register online.

- Ask for conference recommendations from your advisor, mentor or professor, particularly in regards to a strong paper.

- Attend grad school association meetings, gatherings and network with other attendees.

- Attend professional development events/meetings.

- Submit work to student symposia to “practice”

- Attend conferences and panels, especially those where professionals in your field, that you’ve written about (lit reviews, bibliographies, etc.) are presenting.

- Attend small conferences, not just large ones.

- Check with your program, department or institution for funding to defray costs of attending conferences. Graduate student associations or student/TA unions are good places to start.

Applying to the Conference

- Follow the conference’s submission guidelines.

- Submit a panel idea or for a spot on an existing panel.

- Revise/adapt an existing paper to fit in with the panel topic. Ask for guidance from an advisor.

- Write an abstract for a presentation and submit it. If the idea is accepted, then write the paper (not uncommon but not advisable).

- Meet or beat deadlines (for conference spots, often earlier is better).
• Follow through: if the conference requires you to submit the paper for the proceedings, do it. Even if the conference does not require this, determine whether there is a publication or journal associated with the conference and investigate its submission guidelines.

• Check with your program, department or institution for funding to defray costs of attending conferences. Graduate student associations or student/TA unions are good places to start.

Publishing Your Work

• Choose the right publication.

• Acquaint yourself with journals in your field. Are they publishing work that fits with your interests and expertise? (Networking is helpful here as well).

• Review target journals’ or presses missions, themes and guidelines carefully.

• Choose the right readers to review your work before submitting

• Correspond with potential editors in a clear, concise and professional manner.

• Respect advisory readers’ comments as well as those from editors

• Revise your work (even if it was “perfect” for its original purpose or assignment)

• Don’t be discouraged by rejection, but do not pester editors by submitting again immediately (unless they ask for an immediate revision).

From Course Assignment Paper to Publishable Manuscript

These resources address specific fields but their guidelines are adaptable to other disciplines:

• Nursing - http://jhn.sagepub.com/content/30/4/270.abstract
• Science - http://www.sciencemag.org/site/feature/contribinfo/prep/prep_init.xhtml
• Law - https://lib.law.washington.edu/content/guides/lawrevs-sub
• Composition/Writing - http://www.ncte.org/ccce/ccce/write

Journal Examples

• Renewable Energy - Journal of Renewable Energy
  https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jre/contents/
• Global Affairs - Journal of Public and International Affairs (student run)
  http://jpia.princeton.edu/
Again, it is also helpful to check your graduate-professional organization for resources and guidelines.

**Resources**

Rutgers Graduate Student Association  
[http://gsa.rutgers.edu/](http://gsa.rutgers.edu/)

National Association of Graduate Professional Students (NAGPS)  

Vitae  