

## PolS 334: Seeking Truth Autumn 2019 Paper Writing Tips

\*Be sure to follow all the paper instructions on the prompt.

### General Writing Tips:

- Make sure you describe your key claims and defend them throughout your paper
- Use active voice instead of passive voice (ex: “I threw the ball” instead of “The ball was thrown to me.”)
- Do not use “I feel” unless you are talking about feelings. Instead, use “I think,” “I believe,” “the evidence indicates,” etc.
- Be mindful of spelling, grammar, and syntax, such as run on sentences, sentence fragments, etc.

### Paper Organization:

- Introduction: One paragraph. Begin with a “hook” to draw the reader in, preview your topic, define the issue your paper is about, include a roadmap.
- Body of paper: Use evidence to support your claims. Make sure to develop and explain your arguments.
- Conclusion: One paragraph. Could be used to review your major points, discuss ramifications beyond your paper, and/or discuss limitations of your paper.

### Elements of a Great Paper

- Makes claims that are focused, developed throughout the paper, and supported with evidence
- Explains the ways in which your ideas connect together. Flesh out your claims. Think of the reader asking, “OK, but why?”
- Organization that ties paragraphs together and helps advance the paper’s claims
- Incorporates concepts, theories, and observations from class that are analyzed (interpreted) and synthesized (combined and assessed).
- Goes beyond summarizing course material and includes your original perspective, analysis, and insights that can either agree with, disagree with, or extend course materials (be sure to explain!)
- Follow all the instructions to minimize point loss.

### Bibliography and In-text Citations:

- Bibliography (if you have one) needs to be on a separate page.
- Info from a source that is not a direct quote should have the author and page/year after it.
- Citing lectures: include the date of the lecture. You don’t need an entry in your bibliography for lectures.

### Plagiarism:

The basic rule is if something is not your original thought, cite it! Of course, COPYING someone else’s paper or parts of their paper is cheating, as well. This is an individual assignment.