

Paper Format Expectations: Argument and Structure

This chart is a list of what college papers in the U.S. usually include. The “Paper Components” are the parts of a paper you need. The “FIYS Rubric Criterion” is an example of what professors look for when grading. In “How does it capture argument,” the function of each part of the paper is described. Finally, “WC resources” lists handouts you can find on the Writing Center Student Resources webpage to learn more.

Paper Component	FIYS Rubric Criterion	How does it capture argument?	WC resources to help explain component to client
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structure ✓ Depth ✓ Use of sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives background information about a problem or question central to your argument • Defines terms important to your argument • Briefly summarizes relevant arguments by other scholars, writers, or critics (in order to frame your different argument) • Presents your thesis statement – a focused, argumentative claim that governs the entire paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structuring Introductions ✓ Using <i>They Say, I Say</i> to Draft Introductions
Thesis statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structure ✓ Depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses a unique and debatable claim (Ask yourself: Could someone argue against my thesis statement?) • Supportable by evidence from outside (academic or reputable) sources • Forecasts the argument for the entire paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developing the Thesis Statement ✓ 10 "Moves" Scholars Make to Find Meaningful Tension ✓ Revising and Fixing Weak Thesis Statements

Paper Format Expectations: Argument and Structure

Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structure ✓ Flow ✓ Depth ✓ Use of Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic sentence: previews the argument that the paragraph is making—not a fact or a quotation • Evidence: provides support for your argument from outside resources • Analysis sentence(s): explains the evidence within the context of your topic sentence; makes the connection between your evidence and argument clear • Transition: explains relationship between the argument point in this paragraph and the next paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structuring Body Paragraphs ✓ Outlining Body Paragraphs ✓ A Writer's Word Bank ✓ Analysis ✓ Constructing the Counterargument
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Structure ✓ Flow ✓ Depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restates your argument and explains why it is important • Addresses opposing viewpoints (the counterargument) and explains why readers should agree with your position • States a call for action or implications about your argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conclusion Template ✓ The Thesis and Conclusion Connection: How to End Your Paper