

## **Outline (word counts to be adjusted/swapped/reorganised as needed)**

### **Introduction (c. 2000 words)**

- Introductory paragraph with a mission statement (e.g. “In this project, I will...”)
  - Identify a ‘gap’ – an omission, a flaw, a question that needs answering – and say how you’re going to fill it.
- Thesis statement: the overarching argument that you intend to prove
  - Explain your argument in straightforward terms, without any heavy-duty theory (that will come later)
- Description of the works under consideration
- Rationale (why you chose these authors/works in particular)
- Lit review (a brief overview of the critical texts you’ll be using to back up your points)
  - Show that you’ve done your due diligence regarding the research that has already been done on your topic
  - Make a case for what your work will add to that research
- Lead-in to the first chapter

### **Chapter 1 (c. 2000 words)**

- Slightly more detailed overview of the main author/work you want to consider in this chapter
- Analysis
  - Find a theory or two to apply
    - The more specific your topic is, the easier it will be to find sources about it: do a JStor search
    - Think about how you would describe your project to someone who has no knowledge of the subject area; this will often suggest theoretical avenues to pursue.
    - Once you figure out what you want to say, include the stuff that supports your argument; acknowledge the stuff that contradicts you, but then say why you think it doesn’t apply (this can be done in a footnote/endnote)
      - Remember that you’re not going to settle every argument forever, and you don’t have the space to address every contradictory point. As long as you acknowledge that counter-arguments exist, it’s okay to leave them out and say “that issue is beyond the scope of the present project.”
  - If the text annoys you, bores you or leaves you nonplussed, write out a list of reasons why you don’t like it, and re-structure those as arguments
- Conclusion
  - Summarise the points you made over the course of this chapter.
  - At each point, ask ‘so what?’ and then justify each one: “This point matters because...” Re-write the list into a paragraph.

### **Chapter 2 (c. 2000 words)**

- Introduce the main author/work for this chapter: as above
- Analysis: as above
- Conclusion: as above

### **Chapter 3 (c. 2000 words)**

- Introduce the main author/work for this chapter: as above
- Analysis: as above
- Conclusion: as above

### **Conclusion (c. 2000 words)**

- Summation of the main points of the preceding chapters: what you feel you've shown, and how they're linked together
- Why this matters:
  - Which critics got it right? Which ones got it wrong?
  - What are the implications of your argument?
- Concluding thoughts