

Quality Standards



Quality standards for research papers vary from discipline to discipline and from class to class. For example, some disciplines require that your paper use the format developed by the Modern Language Association. Others require the American Psychological Association format. In some classes you may only be required to write a brief three to five page paper. In others, the requirement could be up to 20 pages or more.

Although quality standards vary, there are some basic requirements for a research paper that are common to most disciplines. These standards are reflected in the Core Skills Writing Rubric developed by the faculty at Schoolcraft College.

To understand the quality standards expected in a course, be sure to review your syllabus. However, you need to remember that the syllabus is only a starting point. Your professor will likely supplement material from the syllabus with handouts, class lectures, and e-mail.

Suggestion for Success

This workbook was set up to be placed in a three ring binder. When you get a handout or e-mail from your professor concerning your research paper, you can insert it into your binder. You can also put your class notes in the Quality Standards section of your binder.

On-Line Resources

Basic MLA Format

<http://writing.stevenlberg.info/tutorials/mla>

Core Skills Writing Rubric

<http://writing.stevenlberg.info/tutorials/core/index.html>



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Student Name: _____

Syllabus Review Worksheet



As a student in one of Dr. R. Glenn Wright's classes at Justin Morrill College,² I wrote a brilliant paper. I am not being an egomaniac in saying this. Dr. Wright agreed.

In addition to agreeing that I had done an excellent piece of research, Dr. Wright also rejected the paper and made me re-do it. The problem is that my paper did not demonstrate that I understood the course objectives.

I then wrote an appropriate paper and submitted it to Dr. Wright. After demonstrating that I could write a paper that fulfilled the requirements of the class, I received a passing grade. I would continue to work with Dr. Wright as a graduate student at Michigan State University and owe much to his valuable guidance.

The course syllabus includes important information about the expectations for your research paper. Some instructors spell out their requirements in explicit detail. Others provide only general information which they supplement with class instruction.

In reviewing your syllabus, you should consult not only the assignments and grading section of the syllabus, but also the sections that apply to faculty/student responsibilities and deadlines.

Assignment

In your own words, briefly summarize the research expectations and quality standards spelled out in your syllabus.

² Justin Morrill College was a liberal arts residence college at Michigan State University. Attending JMC was like attending a community college housed in the center of a major research university.

