Getting Started

Political Science papers are usually very easy to write. Most Political Science professors require the use of APA formatting. To further understand APA format you can go to http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/. The general format of political science papers is “telling them what you’re going to tell them; then tell them; then tell the what you told them” (Van Evera, 1999). In other words you repeat your point over and over, but changing the wording each time.

Introduction and Conclusion

It’s always best to begin your paper with a short summary of what you’re going to talk about. It should answer five questions (Who, What, When, Why, How). Starting with a summary helps the reader understand your argument better (Van Evera, 1999). If you use a summary introduction it’s best not to restate your these in the conclusion because then it becomes too repetitive. Instead, try to explore the “implications of your argument” (Van Evera, 1999).

TIPS FOR TUTORS

• Make sure to have the student read their paper for passive voice. Key words of passive voice can be “was” and “its.”
• Ask the reader student if they have mentioned and explained any rebuttals in their thesis.
• Make sure EVERYTHING is cited (that needs to be).
• There should be no clichés or slang used. For example, “He knocked it out of the ballpark.”
• Use college vocabulary! Refrain from using words like “good” and “bad.” Academic terminology is a must!
• Every professor has specific guidelines for what they want! Make sure the student is aware of this and has gone through their paper looking for them.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:
Avoid the use of Passive Voice
Use empirical evidence to support your argument
Argue against yourself (acknowledge objections and address them)
Break your paper into sections.
Use parenthetical documentation.
Argumentation and Writing

When you’re arguing your thesis, make sure that you are framing your general points clearly. Make sure to give substantial evidence to support your point (Van Evera, 1999). Use footnotes even if they’re not required to keep track of all sources and statements of facts. When giving evidence, make sure it is always empirical: facts, numbers, history (Van Evera, 1999).

Writing clearly is essential to communicate your argument to the reader. The paper should have a single point and a “handful or related points” (Van Evera, 1999). Break your paper into sections so it is easier to see the structure of your argument. Don’t forget the topic sentence! The reader should know your argument in the first sentence (Van Evera, 1999). Make sure to avoid the use of passive voice at all times.

References