HOW TO CREATE AN OUTLINE

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

Outlines are important in the process of writing because they help you organize your thoughts, they help you brainstorm, and they make starting the writing process easier.

An outline can provide the writer with a map of where to go with their paper. They also can show the thesis of the essay, the main idea of each body paragraph, and the evidence/support that will be offered in each paragraph to substantiate the main points. Outlines help writers write papers with concrete ideas and with clear and organized thoughts.

NOTE: This handout will help guide the reader by offering suggestions and different types of outlines; however, it is up to the writer to determine what type of outline works best for them.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF OUTLINES

There are different types of outlines that can assist the writer before they start their paper.

- The Alphanumeric outline uses a combination of letters and numbers to organize the writer’s thoughts. This includes Roman Numerals, Capitalized letters, Arabic Numerals, and lowercase letters.

  For example:

  I. Guide to writing a handout on outlines
     A) Find reasons that support the importance of writing an outline
        1) Research different types of outlines
           a) Learn about the different types of outlines
           b) Create an outline on the different types of outlines

- Full Sentence Outlines are similar to Alphanumeric outlines, but instead this outline consists of full sentences.
I) Outlines are the primary tools used to help writers organize their thoughts

A) These outlines simple help the writer make decisions with their writing in the writing process.

• Bubble maps, as the name implies, uses bubbles to help organize the writer’s thoughts and ideas. Bubble maps can be used to show similarities and differences within a topic. However, bubble maps do not necessarily have to be bubbles; they can be any shape the writer desires to help them organize their thoughts. They can be very simple or very complex depending on the effort the writer puts in to make them.

• Example of a simple bubble map
Example of a complex bubble map

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