

Research Essay Template

Prerequisites

- Advanced skills within a specific discipline and familiarity with major issues and methods of that discipline
- A particular theme, issue or question that *gnaws within*
- A passion for research and an ability to write concisely
- Self discipline exhibited in extensive reading, research and concise expression in writing
- A concise 250 word initial research proposal (for a potential supervisor's consideration)

Commencing the written project

Introduction components

Title: The title is not the thesis

Thesis: A brief one sentence statement (a question and a briefly proposed response)

Thesis proposal: Expansion of the thesis, articulating the proposed research project

Relevant literature: Citation of significant contributors to the proposed issue of research

Method: determined by the discipline, major interlocutors and skill development

Working presuppositions and limits: articulation of scope and anticipated outcomes

Developing an introductory narrative (initially, 400 words)

My thesis is ...

Within this thesis I propose to engage the following issue ...

The focus of my research has been canvassed by scholars who have argued that ... (pro), while equally significant contributions have been proposed against ... (footnote significant works; no quotations; cite the field or continuum of engagement only)

Within this field of engagement, I intend to give particular focus to ... (isolate central scholars for research focus; this should not be more than three scholars at the most). In particular, I will explore the following aspects of ... from A by contrast to B (or A complemented by B but contested by C). By this engagement, I intend to demonstrate the following aspects of my thesis:

In this research, I will be highlighting the particular issue of ... which introduces the following questions to be explored ... Some of the challenges inherent within these questions include ... It will be necessary to demonstrate that ... (the relationship between ...; or the feasibility of ...) in order to establish my thesis.

In terms of method, my approach in responding to the central question of my thesis will be ... (historical, philosophical, literary, theological; a combination of two or three of these; this will be determined to some degree by the texture of work in the primary scholars engaged).

In my thesis, I anticipate ... (suggest proposed outcomes); this will also necessitate working within the following limits (statement of related areas that will not be canvassed)

Thesis development

A research informed and concise incremental expansion to full length from an initial 10 percentile narrative summation of the entire project.