

Activity: Workshop final paper outline

Goal: workshop 3 different possible outlines for your paper and assess which will most effectively convince an intelligent but skeptical reader of your claims.

Questions to consider:

- Can you break up your overall thesis into smaller, incremental claims?

- Do any of these smaller claims depend on each other? If so, in what order will you need to present them?

- Will you present your evidence in chronological/geographical/some other order? If you do not present your evidence in this way, will it confuse the reader?

- What information does your reader need up front (theoretical framework, historical context, description of key evidence)?

- Will you present background information, such as historical context, up front or introduce it as needed in different sections of your paper?

- Will you have a consolidated literature review, or will you address the arguments of other scholars as they come up during your paper?

Step 1 (15 minutes): Use sticky notes, notecards, or giant paper to map out the major sections of your paper, primary evidence, and secondary sources. Arrange these in an order that you think will make for a logical and persuasive argument. This will be Outline 1.

Step 2 (10 minutes): Challenge yourself to come up with as radically different an outline as possible. Reorder the sections of your paper, present background information in a different place, or group primary evidence and secondary sources differently. This will be Outline 2

Step 3 (10 minutes): Use Outlines 1 and 2 to help you answer the “Questions to consider” above. Do either of the outlines address certain issues more effectively?

Step 4 (10 minutes): Use elements from Outlines 1 and 2 to design Outline 3.