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Musicology Area

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Tips and Guidelines for Writing a Research Paper

I. Writing and Presenting your Report or Essay

1. Some Elements of a Research Paper

Title Page: Include your name, course number, date, and the title of your paper. The title should be as specific as possible to your paper, and should reflect its central thesis if your project is an essay.

Introduction: Your introductory paragraph is perhaps the most important part of the paper. It must specify the topic and goals of the paper. It should be clear and engaging; remember that the reader usually judges whether to keep reading on the basis of the opening paragraph! Your title is not sufficient to define your topic; you must also do so in your introduction. Note that I will be on the lookout for a clear statement of your paper’s thesis within the first page-and-a-half of your paper. If you wrote the introduction at the beginning of the writing process, be sure to return to it afterwards and adjust it to the rest of the paper if necessary (it is common for the focus to change somewhat as the writing process unfolds).

Biographical details can be included here, but make sure that they are relevant to your specific topic. Be very selective in this regard. A paper on Brahms’s symphonies cannot begin with the sentence “Johannes Brahms was born in 1833.” Do not use biographical background in place of an introduction!

The Body of the Paper
Make sure that this section is a coherent treatment of the subject set forth in the introduction. Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence, and make sure that each paragraph is sufficiently developed (at least three or four sentences). Avoid strings of short sentences or paragraphs, which create a choppy effect.

Musical Examples
Use these where appropriate. If you include them, you can add them at the end of the paper as an appendix. Make sure to number them clearly, and make sure that the measures are also numbered so that you can refer directly to the example(s) in
your text. Each example must have a clef and key signature. Remember that you must USE the example to make a precise point with reference to specific issues in the example; otherwise do not include it.

**Conclusion**
Close your paper or report with a conclusion; it need not be long, but should either draw a conclusion, summarize your main points, or suggest areas for further work. The paper should not simply stop; it must have a closure. It is often a good idea to set aside an interesting piece of information or a special insight into your topic for presentation in the conclusion; this gives a closing ‘gift’ to the reader.

**Bibliography**
End your paper with a bibliography or list of works cited. Enter the sources alphabetically by author’s last name, using a consistent bibliographical format (cf. section II below). We suggest that you use the following manual as a reference:


**NEW!** You can now access an electronic version of the *Chicago Manual of Style* online. All you need is your netlink idea and password. Go to the list of databases: [http://metalib.uvic.ca:80/V/4IDOPJ5JKHKBBOTJ4KF6UDVY819DLNMDML3H6QGR8EE7UCI5-71922?func=find-db-1](http://metalib.uvic.ca:80/V/4IDOPJ5JKHKBBOTJ4KF6UDVY819DLNMDML3H6QGR8EE7UCI5-71922?func=find-db-1)

Then type “Chicago Manual of Style” in the search window to find it.

Another very useful reference work is the following slim volume: James R. Cowdery (ed.), *How to Write about Music: The RILM Manual of Style*. 2nd ed. (add bibliographical information) It can be purchased inexpensively here: [http://www.rilm.org/manual.html](http://www.rilm.org/manual.html)

**2. Revision**
Make sure that you leave enough time to revise your paper at the end, reviewing spelling, grammar, coherence, consistency, and clarity. Be on the lookout for weak passive voice verbs, sentence fragments, run-on sentences (two independent sentences stuck together with a comma or “however”), or winding sentences that lose themselves in a tortuous tangle of circumlocutions. Check the accuracy of direct quotations and foreign-language terms or names. Do not use long direct quotations to speak for you; if you use one, you must comment on it yourself. Remember that writing style is an essential component of your grade. Read your paper out loud slowly to yourself, and listen to your voice as if you were hearing the paper for the first time; ask yourself if everything you hear would be clear to a listener unfamiliar with the subject.

**3. Citation of sources**
All direct quotations from sources, *as well as* all paraphrases of material outside the realm of common knowledge* must be cited by using a consistent form of citation: footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references are all possible. See the guidelines for reference formats below.
A handy definition for material outside the realm of common knowledge: ask yourself if the author had to do hard, original work in order to be able to make that statement. If you refer to that piece of knowledge without citing it, even if you have put it in your own words, this is a violation of academic honesty. It implies that you did that work yourself. For example:

“The use of cyclic form in Brahms’s Third Symphony reflects its debt to Schumann’s Symphonies, especially his Fourth.” If you say this without citation, it means that you know all this music well enough to be able to form this judgment yourself. If not, CITE! It is usually not necessary to document factual information in a note. Try also to group multiple sources in a single note where possible.

Please note: in accordance with the rules laid out in the UVic Calendar, http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2007/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAeI.html, a clear case of blatant plagiarism results in an automatic failure for the paper. Please refer to the University guidelines regarding academic honesty before submitting your paper.

II. Reference Formats

1. References to Books and Articles

Here are some suggested formats which you can use to refer to reference materials which you use in your paper, including books, articles, CDs, DVDs, scores, databases, websites, etc. You may choose a reference style with which you are comfortable, but always remember to be consistent, and not to mix two different reference styles in a single paper.

Format for Bibliography

Book:

Essay in a Book:

Article in a Scholarly Journal:

Citation of Quoted Material in Footnotes

(1) Citation of Direct Quote

The underlying problem of the genre is stated succinctly by Joseph Kerman: “Drama entails the revelation of the quality of human response to actions and events. Opera is drama when it furthers such revelations. How does opera do this? How does it happen?
How does one tell?"¹

(2) Original transmitted by second party:

The fable of Orpheus which was once musically staged in the Academy of the Invaghiti under the auspices of your highness on a narrow stage, and now being about to appear in the great Theatre of the universe ...²

Note: indent direct quotations of more than two full lines of text

(3) Original transmitted by third party

Antwerp in our Netherlands often seems like a mother of artists, as Florence used to be in Italy ...the renowned and glorious city of Antwerp, prosperous through trade, has beckoned the most excellent of our artists and many of them have taken themselves there, for art likes to be where riches are.³

2. Citation of Material from the Internet

When citing a single web page:


When citing a database or online encyclopedia:


3. Citation of Sound Recordings

sound recordings (records, tapes, CDs, audio computer files) are generally listed under the name of the composer, writer, or creator responsible for its content collections or anonymous works are listed by title
the title of a record or album is italicized

¹ Joseph Kerman, Opera as Drama (Berkeley: University of California, 1988), 214.
names of performer(s), if included, usually follow the title
the recording company and the number of the recorder should be included to identify the recording
the date of copyright, kind of recording (cassette or CD etc.), the number of records in the album, may be added
you may add the designation “sound recording” or “sound compact disk” if it is not obvious from the other information

When Cited as a Footnote


2. Leonard Bernstein, dir., *Symphony no. 5* by Dmitri Shostakovich, New York Philharmonic, CBS IM 35384.


When Cited in Bibliography


Supply the date of the recording if available.

4. Videocassettes and DVD

When Cited as a Footnote


When Cited in Bibliography


5. Citation of Music Scores

Scores are cited in both bibliographies and footnotes in much the same way as books
In both, the composer’s name is first, followed by the title of the work
If the work cited is part of a larger work, that title comes next, followed by the name of the editor (if there is one listed) and the usual publication format
In bibliographies, they are alphabetized by the composer’s last name

**When Cited in Footnotes**


**When Cited in Bibliography**


**III. Note on Research**

The quality of the research often plays a major role in the success of a paper. Please be careful in evaluating internet sources, and cite them appropriately. Popular sites such as Wikipedia may be helpful first steps to information, but are not appropriate for use as a cited source in your paper. Avoid unauthored material and personal blogspots, and evaluate any internet sources with care. Of course it is inappropriate to copy and insert internet materials into your paper without quotation marks and proper citation.

Here are some good online tools which will help you get started on your research project:

*Oxford Music Online* (always a good place to start; now includes *Grove Music*; requires your UVic Netlink ID and password)  
[https://triton.library.uvic.ca/cgi-bin/ezauth.cgi?url=http://www.grovemusic.com](https://triton.library.uvic.ca/cgi-bin/ezauth.cgi?url=http://www.grovemusic.com)


You can find a list of all the music databases (including the RILM and The Music Index), which can help you find articles in journals located in the library, as well as databases containing full-text versions of articles (such as JSTOR) on the UVic Library database search page  
[http://metalib.uvic.ca:80/V/TNLCTJMI2VMI7VUUSBKJQ8GXD516EYT9UMHHNV5BCEC2KQX73-59073?func=find-db-1-category&mode=category&sequence=000000388&restricted=all](http://metalib.uvic.ca:80/V/TNLCTJMI2VMI7VUUSBKJQ8GXD516EYT9UMHHNV5BCEC2KQX73-59073?func=find-db-1-category&mode=category&sequence=000000388&restricted=all)
IV. Getting Help With Writing:

The University of Victoria’s Writing Centre (TWC) is located in the Learning Commons, situated in the McPherson Library’s central hallway. TWC tutors are experienced writers who can help you write better papers, integrate smoothly your research and ideas, and can unlock the mysteries of citation styles. The Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC), http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/ located in the Harry Hickman Building, offers other resources. You are encouraged to consult with them when you are in the planning stage of your paper. Here are some more useful internet links from UVic and other universities:

Internet Guides to Writing: Advice on Academic Writing
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advise.html

Planning & Organizing

- Some General Advice on Academic Essay Writing
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/essay.html
- Understanding Essay Topics: A Checklist
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/topics.html
- Making Sense of Essay Topics
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/topics2.html
- Using Thesis Statements
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/thesis.html
- Preparing an Outline
  http://web.uvic.ca/wguide/Pages/EssayOrgOutStruct.html
- Developing Coherent Paragraphs
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/parag.html
- Using Topic Sentences
  http://www.utoronto.ca/ucwriting/topic.html

Reading and Researching

- Critical Reading Toward Critical Writing
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/critrdg.html
- How to Get the Most out of Reading
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/reading.html
- Taking Notes from Research Reading
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/notes.html

- Content Analysis as a Research Method (Colorado State University)
  http://writing.colostate.edu/references/research/content/index.htm
- Research using the Internet
  http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/library/utml/common/services/researchinternet.html
- A System for Dealing with New Words while Reading
  http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/vocab.html

Using Sources
How Not to Plagiarize
Standard Documentation Formats
Documenting Electronic Sources
Using Quotations
How to Paraphrase and Summarize
http://www.utoronto.ca/ucwriting/paraphrase.html

Specific Types of Writing

The Exam Essay
Writing about History

Style and Editing

Revising the Essay http://web. uvic. ca/wguide/Pages/ExamEssays. html
Using the Computer to Improve your Writing
http://www. utoronto. ca/writing/computer. html
Wordiness: Danger Signals and Ways to React
http://www. utoronto. ca/writing/wordines. html
Unbiased Language http://www. utoronto. ca/writing/unbias. html
Spelling Correctly
http://www. uottawa. ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/spelling. html

Grammar and Punctuation

Hit Parade of Errors in Style, Grammar, and Punctuation
From Dena Taylor of the Health Sciences Writing Centre, a quick overview of the thirteen most common and bothersome errors. Using student examples, she defines the problems and shows revisions.
http://www. hswriting. ca/handouts/hitparade. asp
Grammar and Style Notes (Jack Lynch, University of Pennsylvania)
This set of comments on various problems of usage and grammar is witty as well as sensible. Worth browsing.
http://andromeda. rutgers. edu/~jlynch/Writing/

Purdue University Online Writing Lab handouts
This is the best and most inclusive set of online handouts on writing. Start with the indexes and browse through the sections that are most useful to you. http://owl. english. purdue. edu/handouts/index2. html
HyperGrammar at the University of Ottawa
This impressive set of files helps you build an understanding of grammatical terms and standard usage. Start by reviewing terminology, then go on to look at specific items and try out online quizzes.
http://www. uottawa. ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/grammar. html
The UVic Writer's Guide
This attractively-designed and well-written set of advisory files is especially useful for literary essays.
http://web.uvic.ca/wguide/Pages/MasterToc.html

NASA on Grammar, Punctuation, and Capitalization
You might not think that astronauts care about details of language use, but apparently scientists on the ground do.
http://stipo.larc.nasa.gov/sp7084/sp7084cont.html This online handbook gives careful explanations and well-chosen examples for stylistic questions faced by science writers. The chapters on punctuation (http://stipo.larc.nasa.gov/sp7084/sp7084ch3.html) and capitalization (http://stipo.larc.nasa.gov/sp7084/sp7084ch4.html) are especially helpful.

Some Answers for Writers of English as a Second Language

Subject-Verb Agreement: Expressions of Quantity
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/l2agr.html

Rules for Using the Word ‘The’ http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/l2the.html

When to Use Gerunds http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/l2ger.html

Verbs for Referring to Sources
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/reporting.html

Self-Help Books for Learning English as a Second Language
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/l2bks.html

How to Use Prepositions: Tips and Exercises (Helsinki University)
http://www.ruthvilmi.net/hut/LangHelp/Grammar/prepositions.html

Everything You Need to Know about Verb Forms (Helsinki University)
http://www.ruthvilmi.net/hut/LangHelp/Grammar/verbs.html

Further Online Resources http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/other4.html

Further Writing Resources

Courses in Writing http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/courses.html

Writing Centres in the Colleges and the Professional Faculties
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/centres.html

Books on Writing http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/bookind.html