



## Essays: General Structure

- ▶ Introduction: this should be 5-20% of the essay length, and should:
  - Capture the reader's interest
  - Clarify ambiguities, give background information, establish context and significance
  - Analyse the topic by identifying its parts and scope, and give the reader some understanding of the order in which the ideas in the essay will be developed.
  - Focus the reader's attention on the central issue of the essay and identify the author's point of view in a thesis statement. The thesis statement is usually expressed in the last sentence of the introduction.
  
- ▶ Body: the body of an essay varies in length based on the complexity of the topic and the requirements of the assignment.
  - The body is made up of paragraphs that develop the argument presented in the thesis statement.
  - Each paragraph must contain a topic sentence that presents one specific issue or argument related to the thesis.
  - Paragraphs may be developed through: explanation of the issue; expansion of the implications raised by the issue; providing evidence for the argument, such as quotes, paraphrases, statistics, facts, examples, illustrations or tables.
  - Paragraphs should be presented in a logical order, and the first sentence of each paragraph should link it with the previous paragraph.
  
- ▶ Conclusion: this should be 5-20% of the essay, and should:
  - Remind the reader of the key arguments or issues that the essay raises.

- Present details of the essay in a general statement that sums up the argument; often, a conclusion restates the topic or thesis statement of the paper.
- Leave the reader with a sense of satisfaction that questions have been answered, or loose ends have been tied up.
- Provide evaluative comment, and make predictions or recommendations if appropriate.