Effective Writing: Useful Tools
2018 ASPA Student Summit

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Who is Pat Shields
Who is Pat Shields
Texas State Experience

Problem
✓ Poor Literature Review
✓ No Conceptual Framework

New System
✓ Awards
✓ Downloads (1.5 million)
  http://ecommons.txstate.edu/arp/
✓ Opportunities
## Texas State PA Applied Research Projects

Texas State University Master of Public Administration Program is known for the quality of its student research. Five student papers have won the prestigious national Phi Alpha Alpha (best master’s student paper in Public Affairs and Administration) award. These awards were more... 

| 5,748 Followers | 82 Following | 8 Co-authors | 297,848 Total Views | top 0.5% |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavia Freidenberg</th>
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<tr>
<td>Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Faculty Member</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allen J Scott</th>
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<td>University of California, Los Angeles, Faculty Member, (1)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Alessandro Camiz, Ph.D.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Girne Amerikan Universitesi, Faculty Member, Architecture</td>
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<th>Yurii Kudinov</th>
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<td>National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Post-Doc, Institute</td>
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<th>Prof. Sobhan Kr. Mukherjee</th>
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<th>Heather Wyatt-Nichol</th>
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<th>Jako Olivier</th>
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<th>Thomas Doyle, II</th>
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<td>Texas State University, Faculty Member, Political Science</td>
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<th>Vakur Sümer</th>
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<td>Selcuk University (Selçuk Üniversitesi), Faculty Member, Internat...</td>
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</table>
1. *Elements of Style*

2. *Step by Step* Notebook
   
   Project Management
   
   Time, Materials, Ideas
Use definite, specific and concrete language (compared to general and abstract)

A period of unfavorable weather set in.
*It rained everyday for a week.*

He showed satisfaction as he took possession of his reward.
*He grinned as he pocketed the coin.*

Community gardens
Individual -- *neighbor, gardener, resident, citizen*
Focus: 20+ page scholarly paper

- Literature Review
- Thesis
- Dissertation
- Capstone Project
- Grant Proposal

[Image of a book titled "STEP by STEP: Building a Research Paper"]
You will be judged by how well you write because nobody really knows how well you think  

(Gray, 1998, 140)

Critical Thinking

✔ Application
✔ Analysis
✔ Evaluation
✔ Creating
Connecting Writing a Paper
Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remembering</th>
<th>Collecting materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying</td>
<td>Topic/purpose</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Notes, Outlining</td>
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<td>Analyzing</td>
<td>Outlining</td>
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<td>Drafting</td>
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<td>Evaluating</td>
<td>Outlining</td>
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<td>Drafting</td>
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<td>Creating</td>
<td>Outlining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drafting, editing</td>
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Build a Research Paper : One Step at a Time

Notebook method for writing papers

Can Adapt the Process
Common Problems

• Can’t find time to work on it for more than an hour.

• After a while I lose my place and forget what I originally wanted to do.
The Step Process
Transforms Writing a Paper
Managing a Project

Organizing

• Materials
• Time
• Ideas
Organizes Materials

- Three-ring binder
- Tabs
Organizes Time

Planning

- Things-to-do list
- Calendar
Organizes Ideas - Innovation

Integrated Outline

- Before writing begins the outline incorporates the reading, notes, interviews
- Entire notebook builds to create the outline
- Conceptual Frameworks
Examines Key Issues around Efficacy of High Stakes Testing

Potential Integrated Outline for Term Paper or Literature Review Chapter
Purpose: Examine Major issues associated with high stakes testing

I. Introduction and Purpose

II. Student Learning
A. English Language Arts

B. Mathematics

C. Science
   Longo (2010), Marx and Harris (2006), Southerland et al. (2007), Taylor et al. (2008), Texas Education Agency (2010d), Tretor and Jones et al. (2003), Wideen et al. (1997)

D. Social Science

III. Student Motivation
A. Student Engagement
   Amrein and Berliner (2003), HSSSE (2005a), Jones et al. (2003), Kellaghan et al. (1982), Madaus et al. (2009), McNeil et al. (2008), Moon et al. (2003), Nichols and Berliner (2007), Roderick and Engel (2001), Scot et al. (2007), Yazzie-Mintz (2010)

B. Student Creativity

IV. Preparation for College
A. Academic Knowledge and Skills

B. Cognitive Abilities

C. Academic Abilities

V. Conclusion
Addresses Binge Writing

- Common Form of Writer’s Block
- Wait till the last minute to do the paper
- Stress, sleeplessness
- Poor quality work
# Binge Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Step Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Procrastination</em></td>
<td><em>Planning</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel overwhelmed</td>
<td>Separate small activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self doubt</td>
<td>Use time wisely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need big block time</td>
<td><em>Persistence</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Perfectionism</em></td>
<td>Use every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destructive self talk</td>
<td><em>Practice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect conditions</td>
<td>habit of writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organization
Step Notebook

- Things-To-Do List & Calendar
- To find & useful information
- Bibliography
- Notes
- Integrated Outline
- Drafts
- Sources
Things-To-Do List — Tab

- Project oriented - tasks for paper only
- Breaks the many tasks into small manageable pieces (15 minutes - hour)
- Keeps track of book chapter, articles etc.
- Links to notes
- **Emphasizes scholarly reading**
- Addresses procrastination - easy to return to work after a break
Calendar - Tab

- Takes into account paper deadlines
- Timetable for reading, notes, drafts etc. can be developed
- Connects to other events in scholar’s life
- Can be kept in personal Daytimer
Keep detailed notes in this section.
Organize alphabetically by last name of author.
Develops habit of writing.
Builds reading comprehension.
Ties directly to the integrated outline.
Essential part of process - this is where the student really learns the new material.
Outline - Tab

Integrated Outline

☑ Outline that incorporates all of the notes.

☑ Begin drafting paper after integrated outline is complete

☑ Fewer frantic searches.
Drafts - Tab

- Early drafts are kept here.
- Edit on hard copy and then make the corrections.
- Use different color paper for different drafts.
Sources - Tab

- Hard copies of journal articles, book chapters, monographs, government publications
- File alphabetically by last name of the author.
Review - Organizing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Things-to-do list  
• calendar    | All of the tabs in the notebook               | • Things-to-do list            |
|             |                                               | • Notes                        |
|             |                                               | • Integrated Outline          |
|             |                                               | Key tabs                      |
Concrete End-State of Paper

- Series of coherently organized paragraphs
- References imbedded in the paragraphs.

*Notebook reinforces the importance of*

- Author’s last name
- Year of publication
- Page of quote
Applying the Activities

Chapter - The Bureaucracy in Military Sociology (8 -10 pages)

Purpose: “This chapter examines the intersection of military sociology and bureaucracy.”
Example

*Paragraph with embedded references*

*Cottey et al.* (2002) examine civil-military relations in the emerging democracies of post-communist Eastern Europe. Like *Feaver* (1996) they believe there is too much concern in the literature over the “threat of praetorian military intervention in domestic policies” (*Cottey et al. 2002:31*). They call for a reconceptualization of civil-military relations “in terms of the governance of the defense and security sector” and the “wider problem of the democratic management and implementation of defense and security policy” (*Cottey et al. 2002:32*).
## Things-to-do list
reinforces author’s name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date completed</th>
<th>Task:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/3/04</td>
<td>6. Read Feaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10/04</td>
<td>7. Take notes Feaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4/04</td>
<td>8. Read Cottey et al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/04</td>
<td>9. Take notes Cottey et al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/6/04</td>
<td>10. Read ch.1 Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/18/04</td>
<td>11. Take notes Ch.1 Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/6/04</td>
<td>12. Skim Ch2. Wilson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Starting the **Things-To-Do List**

- Collect set of materials
- Review & decide read or skim
- Use post-it-notes to record read/skim
- Each book chapter gets a note
- Transfer post-it-note directives to Things-to-do list
- Include note taking on list
- Remember **15-60** minute tasks
Things-To-Do List Emphasizes Reading and Thinking

Important to read widely. Important to comprehend deeply.

Ideas for paper come from the literature and thoughts of scholar.

A person's writing ability is constrained by their reading comprehension.

It is impossible to write clearly about a subject you do not understand.
Tips on Note-taking

• Be self-reflective when taking notes.
  ✓ Do you really understand what the material?
  ✓ Less you understand the more detailed the notes should be.
  ✓ Notes can be take on computer or by hand.

• Be sure the author’s last name, year and page are on every page of the notes.
Cottey et al 2002

Say too concerned in lit about “threat of praetorian military intervention in domestic policies.”

Should “reconceptualize in terms of democratic governance of the defense & security sector.”

Shifts focus to “the wider problem of the democratic mgt and implementation of defense & security policy.”

PART OF BUREAUCRACY - job to implement policy
The Bureaucracy in Military Sociology

I. Intro
   A. Set the stage/Weber ideal
   B. Purpose statement: This chapter examines the intersection of military sociology and bureaucracy
      1. Define mil sociology
      2. Interdisciplinary study bureaucracy

II. Military Bureaucracy
   A. Unique Definition-War
   B. Authority
   C. Leadership decisions

III. Recent Trends
   A. Bureaucracy and civil-military relations
      1. Mature democracies
      2. Emerging democracies
   B. New Roles

IV. Conclusion
The Bureaucracy in Military Sociology

I. Intro
   A. Set the stage/Weber ideal (Weber, Merton)
   B. Purpose statement: This chapter examines the intersection of military sociology and bureaucracy
      1. Define mil sociology (Siebold, H-J & Moskos)
      2. Interdisciplinary study bureaucracy
   Socio-(Mills)
   Political Sci (Allison)
   Policy science (Wilson)

II. Military Bureaucracy
   A. Unique Definition - War (Janowitz & Little p.27-28)

B. Authority (J&L p.27-28)
C. Leadership decisions (Allison)

III. Recent Trends
   A. Bur & Civil-military relations
      1. mature democracies (Feaver)
      2. emerging democracies (Cottey et al pp31-32)*
   B. New Roles (Mora, Parchomenko)

IV. Conclusion

*Paragraph slide 28 “Example”
Where does the outline come from?

Analysis & Creativity

- Developing the outline can be the most difficult part of the process.
- Think about organization of paper as you go along. Keep ideas in “miscellaneous” tab.
- Sorting method
- Conceptual Framework
PURPOSE

“The purpose of this research is to describe the attitudes of young college graduates regarding the **efficacy** of high-stakes testing policy in Texas.”

**Dimensions (or categories) of Efficacy**

- Student Learning
- Student Motivation
- Student Preparation For College

Mark Featherston
Efficacy of high stakes testing (as it influences)

- **Student Learning**
  - English language arts
  - Math
  - Science
  - Social Science

- **Student Motivation**
  - engagement
  - creativity

- **College Preparation**
  - Academic Knowledge Skills
  - Cognitive ability
  - Academic behavior
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   B. Student Creativity

IV. Preparation for College
   A. Academic Knowledge and Skills

   B. Cognitive Abilities

   C. Academic Abilities

V. Conclusion
WORKFLOW

THINGS-TO-DO LIST ➔ READING & NOTES ➔ INTEGRATED OUTLINE ➔ DRAFT

Names & titles ➔ Ideas, Theories, Facts ➔ Analysis, Synthesis ➔ Clarifying, crafting, creating
Path of learning or understanding while doing a paper
As scholar confronts the unexpected while doing the reading—confusion-doubt
Notebook is a tool to manage the ‘doubt and confusion’ stage

Step notebook is a tool that brings order to the outer world while the inner world changes

Transformations of Inquiry
Lightbulb Moments