

## Assignment: Using Classical Arrangement to Outline Your Research Essay

Rather than using classical arrangement as a tool for planning your argument from the beginning, you are going to use it as a tool for evaluating your essay, as it currently exists in draft form, and for filling in any areas that you may find missing, incomplete, or undeveloped. Use the instructions and the terms of classical arrangement below to evaluate the areas already present in your draft, to plan areas of your essay yet to be written, and to organize your essay as you begin to revise for your second draft. You will also use the class handout on paragraph development to help you consider the organization already present among your paragraphs or to revise the organization of individual paragraphs in your draft.

### Outlining Your Paper

- **Exordium (Attention Grabber):** How have you gotten, or how do you plan to get, the attention of your audience in your introduction? Use or summarize a brief passage from your paper to illustrate your attention grabber, or include a brief discussion of how you plan to do so. You may want to revisit your research journal entry on writing introductions—“Three Ways In.”
- **Narratio (Introduction):** How have you included, or how do you plan to include, any background information about your topic that your audience might need in order to understand what the issue is, why it’s an issue, and how it is important to them. Use or summarize a brief passage from your paper to illustrate how you provide background on your topic, or include a brief discussion of how you plan to do so.
- **Propositio (Claim):** State the main claim or thesis of your argument.
- **Partitio (Statement of Division - *Optional*):** How have you given, or how do you plan to give, your audience a sense of the way that you will support your argument? This may be achieved by summarizing the main points or sub-claims of your argument. Please note: it is best to do this without explicitly stating: “The main points that I plan to cover in this paper are . . .” I want to see very little, if any, use of the first person in your researched position paper. The only exception is wherever you might briefly use personal experience to support your argument.
- **Confutatio (Rebuttal - *Optional*):** How have you included, or how do you plan to include, a rebuttal of the opposing views of your argument? Alternatively, you might simply discuss alternative views or other approaches to your thesis if your essay is less argumentative. I recommend presenting them early on as a separate section of your argument, or you may present opposing viewpoints early in each section of the body of your argument. You will also want to consider whether you will completely disagree with these alternative views (or counterarguments) or whether or not you will partially agree with them.

There are two main reasons for addressing opposing viewpoints either early in your paper, or early within each section of your paper. First, you can do your best to dismiss any objections that some members of your audience may have about your position and therefore gain a greater share of their attention, leaving you a greater chance of persuading them to see things your way. Second, you leave your audience with a final impression of your argument, rather than an impression of the opposing views. What you say last often leaves the greatest impression—a reason that you might also want to consider making your best sub-claim as the final reason that you develop to support your claim.

- **Confirmatio (Support):** List the sub-claims or reasons that support your thesis (main claim/proposition). You should have a few.
  - **For each of your sub-claims (or reasons), you need to choose a pattern of organization from our class handout.** It is possible that this may just be a matter of recognizing a pattern of organization that already exists in your draft. If you have no discernable pattern of organization, however, I would like you to choose and develop one. We will discuss, in class, which patterns of organization are often suited to supporting particular types of claims.
  - **For each of your sub-claims, I would also like you describe the evidence that you plan to use to support it.** Again, this may simply be a matter of recognizing the types of support that are already present in your draft. If, however, you find that support is lacking, this is an opportunity to look over your sources, find support for your sub-claim, identify it, and include it both here your outline and also in your essay.
    - **Some possible methods of support are:** facts, statistics, quotes, examples, analogies, signs, cause and effect, definitions, appealing to authority, common values, or motivation.
- **Peroratorio (Conclusion):** How will you conclude your essay? Your conclusion should sum up your thesis and your best reasons that support it but should also be more than a mere summary of what you have already said. Your audience should have a sense of what they have learned and what they have gained by reading to your research essay. Offer any new perspectives that you may have formed in the process of writing the essay. Leave your audience with a sense of purpose in having taken the time to read your essay. Now that you have made your statement, what do you want your audience to do? You might want to motivate them to some sort of action, even if that action is simply to become more informed about the issue at hand. Many essays (especially the more argumentative sort), however, make stronger appeals to their audience to act by becoming some sort of force for change. For example, if you have made a policy argument, what part can the members of your audience play in assuring that your proposal becomes a reality?