

Fundamentals of Graduate-Level Writing

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All Good Writing (of any level)...

Demonstrates good mechanical skills, including grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Is well organized, with main ideas introduced early on and defended, complicated, and refined through the paper.

Is coherent and unified.

Explores and explains worthwhile content.

Is free from filler phrases, verbal tics, and space-wasters.

Is aware of its audience.

Situates itself within a discipline, discourse community, or scholarly field.

Undergraduate v. Graduate Writing

- Is mechanically correct
- Is concise
- Is clear though not necessarily interesting
- May or may not demonstrate new ideas
- Contains citations when required
- Uses transition words
- Exactly conforms to outside models of argumentation, such as the Toulmin method of legal argument or classical rhetorical theory.
- Is written for a general audience or for the teacher
- Will, with revision, be presentable at an undergraduate conference or in a general-interest publication.

- Is mechanically skillful
- Is concise though also nuanced
- Is engaging, stylish, and interesting, and speaks with your own voice
- Explores a topic or research question in an original way
- Demonstrates extensive research
- Has a strong organizational frame
- The paper moves from point to point in the way you want your audience's thoughts to move; structure grows out of content
- Is written for a professional audience
- Will, with revision, be publishable in a professional journal or presentable at a good conference

An Undergraduate Thesis (Intro)

Adolescent Depression and Attachment

Depression affects over 20% of adolescents. It is a disorder that disturbs their mood, causes a loss of interest or pleasure in activities they should enjoy, and makes them irritable. It has been concluded that several things are thought to be correlated with depression in adolescents. Some examples include, a failure to individuate, insecure attachments, negative parental representations, etc (Milne & Lancaster, 2001; Olsson, Nordstrom, Arinell, & Knorrning, 1999). In the present paper, the role attachment plays in adolescent depression is investigated. It is hypothesized that insecurely attached adolescents, (ambivalent or avoidant), will display higher levels of depression related symptoms than securely attached adolescents. The following five literature reviews attempt to demonstrate and support the hypothesis.

A Graduate-Level Paper (Intro)

The impact of parental attachment and supervision on fear of crime among adolescent males

Despite recent reports that the crime rate has decreased, even among juveniles (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2000), the general public has the impression that violence is rampant. Until very recently, the study of fear of criminal victimization, and the subsequent discussion of causes of this fear, had been limited to adults (see Hale, 1996). However, there has been an effort to expand fear of crime research to adolescent populations (May, 2001; May & Dunaway, 2000a, 2000b). This initial work suggests that though adolescent and adult fear of crime share many of the same predictors, there are still some significant differences as to which factors contribute to fear of crime. This is particularly true in the areas of race and class, which appear to predict fear of criminal victimization in a much more consistent way among adults than among adolescents (May, 2001).

Using a sample of 318 adolescent males incarcerated by the Department of Corrections from a Midwestern state, the present study borrows further from the fields of delinquency theory and developmental psychology to assess the relationship between adolescent fear of crime and two known insulators from delinquency: parental attachment and parental supervision.

Summary...

- DO make sure your mechanics are correct.
- DO make sure you haven't committed any undergrad errors (inconsistent paragraphing, weak transitions, lazy research, etc.).
- DO make sure you understand APA formatting (see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu> for help).
- DO be willing to revise through many drafts.
- DO get to the point (but don't oversimplify!).
- DO learn from and refer to enough authorities to demonstrate that you have done extensive research and know your subject matter.
- DO work on your writerly voice, eliminating verbal tics and other distracters and making your prose as clear, concise, and engaging as possible.
- DO remember that you are a professional writing for other professionals.
- DO talk to your profs, read work you admire, and come visit the Graduate Writing Center!