**I. Structure of a Typical Paper**

1. Introduction: Welcome the Reader and Orient Them

You are writing about a theme: a theme is a BIG IDEA.

Explain what you are writing about.

Explain why it is important. For example:

“This topic is important because …”

What are some reasons why a topic could be important? List those reasons.

Define your terms. For example: “For purposes of this paper, *Class* will mean ‘... ’ .”

Acknowledge any areas that are important but outside the paper's scope: For example, “While X is important, it is beyond the scope of this paper.”

End this part by outlining the remaining structure of your paper. For example:

“Preliminary notes on Petri nets are presented in Section 2. Section 3 provides a scheme for formulating planning. In Section 4, we show the result simulated by hybrid nets. The paper ends with a discussion and a forecast for future work.”

2. State the Problem: Fully Define the Problem with Details

3. Literature Review

Relate a narrative (story) that derives a few major facets, concepts, or ideas (major themes) from across your research articles. Present and fully explain each major theme individually by connecting different articles, rather than summarizing each article individually. This section of the paper will often have several sub-parts: the themes that run through different articles presented one theme at a time.

4. Apply Information from the Literature Review (Part 3) to the Problem (Part 2)

5. Conclusion

Summarize in abbreviated form your main points and findings and link them together to make your big point. Recall and highlight the evidence presented throughout the paper to structure a logical sequence, but recall and highlight only in brief terms because you have already covered this material and do not need to repeat it in full later in the same paper. Draw a conclusion linking and following logically from your main points. Create something new out of existing parts, that is, synthesize, like Dr. Frankenstein.

Address any limitations of your study, where you are leaving the subject, what is still unknown, and any areas open either to future research or investigation through other methodologies.

6. References

7. Appendix or Appendices

**II. Good Writing & Sample Phrases**

Good writing says something important and says it well: it uses the correct words in a logical order and gives relevant examples using synonyms and different sentence structures. It is organized, easy to understand and follow, and includes explicit road signs to the reader. Academic, scholarly sources may provide examples of good writing upon which you can model your work. Good writing also flows naturally, which requires that parts of the paper transition from one idea to the next. Transition is difficult, and students often have difficulty writing transitional phrases. Transitions declare how one idea connects with or flows from another idea.

Sample Phrases:

“Although the latter is beyond the scope of this paper, a brief word would be enlightening (or *useful* or *helpful*).”

“The impact of these new views will be explored later.”

“The impact of this act is discussed further below.”

“This paper does not claim that ....”

“These discrepancies can be approached by asking some simple questions. This analysis will be limited to five examples.”

“This model is described in more detail elsewhere (Potter-Efron, 1989) and will not be further reviewed in this paper.”

“Here we will focus only upon the core concepts of X and in particular those ideas that are most relevant for the topics of A and B.”

“It was argued above that ....”

**III. Using Sources**

Generally, you should

–feel free to state your sources’ assertions without using their names in the sentence. Explicitly naming the author of a source is not required—that’s what the citation is for. It is a matter of preference, that is, authors’ preferences and professors’ requirements.

–not include the title of the article or book in the body of your paper. For example, do not write, “According to the article ‘Ice Core Record of the 13C/12C Ratio of Atmospheric CO2 in the Past Two Centuries,’ ....”

–look at your sources to see how they use sources. For example, are all their sources about the same topic 100%, or do the sources cover different aspects of a topic? A paper on solutions to juvenile delinquency, for example, may cite a source that does not present solutions but instead offers statistics on rates of juvenile delinquency in order to establish the magnitude of the problem. Another source may just define a term. How do your sources use their sources?