

How to write your research paper

This is not meant to be a project on par with a senior research project; this project is an opportunity for you to read more about something that interests you. Not to state the obvious, but the end of the semester can be a stressful time. One major contributing factor is ambiguity. To mitigate ambiguity's stress and perhaps make the research process more pleasurable, I've constructed an outline of the research process. You are welcome to organize your research paper as you see fit. You may even have a method that already works for you. What I offer below is merely a suggestion.

*Keep in mind that you are only required to consult three articles, books, or book chapters and two primary sources. One of your primary sources should be Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. You are welcome to read more, and you may want to consult a couple of different sources before determining which will be most useful to you. You are also welcome to use readings that have been assigned as class readings and anything else that I have sent you. Keep in mind that the course website is an excellent place to start looking for secondary readings.*

Step One: Understanding what it all means.

Paragraph One (introduction): Identify how your topic relates to the *Ars Amatoria* and why you have chosen it.

Paragraph Two: Summarize what you've learned from your first secondary source. Explain how this chapter/article helped you understand the *Ars* as a whole or a specific moment in it. Be sure to include references and quotes. If the author includes an analysis of another of Ovid's works or a different ancient writer, feel free to consider how the secondary author's treatment of the primary source material offers insight into Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*.

Paragraph Three: Summarize what you've learned from your second secondary source. Repeat the process from paragraph two.

Paragraph Four: Summarize what you've learned from your third secondary source. Repeat the process from paragraph two.

Paragraph Five: Synthesize. This is where you tie together your research and offer some new insight into your research topic. How has this insight led to a new interpretation of a specific moment in Ovid's *Ars* or the text more generally?

Paragraph Six (conclusion): What have you learned from your analysis? Your answer to this question should be broader than the findings presented in paragraph five.

****If each of these paragraphs is between 200-300 words, you will easily make the 5-6 page goal (spacing 1.5).

Step Two: Revise.

1) Identify your argument by examining paragraph five.

What new insight did you gain from the research on your topic? You've already answered this question in paragraph five. This will be your thesis statement or argument.

2) Return to your introduction.

First explain why you have chosen your topic, and why it is relevant to the *Ars*. You've already accomplished both of these goals in paragraph one above, but you may want to make some adjustments to it. Then end with your thesis statement.

3) Reread paragraphs two through four.

This is where you reorganize the content of paragraphs two through four to reflect your argument rather than your research. Rather than organizing your paper around sources, now you need to structure it so that you lead your reader through your argument. This will involve quite a bit of copying and pasting, but also some new writing. Be sure to include textual analysis, i.e. an analysis of Ovid's Latin and maybe even his style.

4) Revisit paragraph six.

In the process of revising, have you come to a different conclusion? What have you learned from your analysis about Ovid? What are the broader implications of your argument?

5) Honor code and works cited page.