# Getting Started

Writing an Academic Paper: A Process Approach

* Brainstorm topics
* Choose something that interests you enough to ask, “Why is this happening?”
* Think about the purpose of your paper
* Think about your audience
* Think about your position as the writer

# Prewriting Ideas

* Free write: 10-­‐15 minutes of just getting black marks on paper (nonsense is acceptable). Repeat starting with any helpful ideas gained.
* Diagram topic: The “web” strategy. Start with your main topic and connect it visually to related and/or supporting points.

# Developing a thesis

* A thesis is
  + Your claim: a clear statement of the main idea of the paper.
  + Your rationale for that claim: the answer to “so what?” Why should your reader care about your claim and want to read on?

# Writing the Body

* Every paragraph must have a clear connection to the thesis point.
* A clear journey from the introduction to the conclusion should be developed throughout the body of the paper. The ending should not be a surprise!

# Concluding

* The conclusion should be a culmination of the points made in the paper.
* The conclusion should flow logically from the discussion of the thesis, not simply restate it.
* The reader should leave the paper with a clear sense of your thinking.
* The reader should feel that your objectives have been fulfilled.

# Revision

* Writing is a process, and revision is a HUGE part of that process. Revise, revise, revise!!
* Go back and look at the original assignment. Does your paper fit the criteria? Are all aspects of the assignment sufficiently responded to?
* Read your paper aloud. You will hear awkward sentences and grammar mistakes much easier than you see them.
* Use the Writing Center or other opportunities for peer review. Other people will be able to point out missing information or ideas that are hard to follow that are easily missed by you.