

Explanation of Formal Outline Examples

- ❖ Last name appears in upper-right-hand corner ½ inch from the top of the page; the word “Outline” (not all caps, not in quote marks) appears centered one inch from top of page
- ❖ Thesis statement appears next, with the words “Thesis Statement” underlined and followed by a colon, then your thesis. The thesis as phrased here should be EXACTLY the same as your thesis appears at the end of your first body paragraph at the beginning of the essay.
- ❖ The body of the outline does NOT need to be double spaced, but it’s okay (with me) if you want to double space. You may single or double space to suit your preference.
- ❖ Your research paper requires a topic outline, not a sentence outline (as illustrated on page 49 in the Basics Handbook).
- ❖ All items which are at the same level of generality should be parallel grammatically; that is, if under your first main subtopic I you have reasons A, B, and C, those three items should all begin with or be the same part of speech (e.g. all are nouns, verbs, adjectives, or phrases beginning similarly with those).
- ❖ At each level of generality, there MUST be at least TWO parts to warrant subdividing the previous item. In other words, you shouldn’t subdivide I into A unless there is a B, or subdivide A into 1 unless there is a 2, and so on.