

Rutgers Learning Centers

At Camden Campus

WRITING: TERM PAPERS

Before you start, know what kind of paper, how long, when it is due, then:

Choose a topic that:

- really interests you
- has easily available sources of information
- is the right size topic to fit the paper requirements and your time

Collect

- check the periodical indexes, abstracts, card catalog, etc. for sources
- skim sources quickly and let them determine your topic direction
- on index cards (4X6 work well):
 - write down major points on one side
 - on other side, copy all information you will need for bibliography (saves time later)

Thesis Statement

- create a single sentence that formulates both your topic and point of view
- as you write the paper, you may need to refine the thesis statement as you discover new ideas
- some instructors may require the thesis statement before the "collect" step

Organize

- arrange your note cards in an order that makes sense to you
- create a simple outline or use the cards as an outline

Write

- write as quickly as you can to capture your ideas
- for each major idea, get to the point quickly
- then, support it with concrete examples and details

Edit

- check for smooth transitions, effective expression, grammar, punctuation, clarity
- make sure the introduction and conclusion tie together

Finish

- follow the format required by your instructor
- use computer to check for spelling errors
- proofread final copy before submitting

For more information, visit or call your nearest Rutgers Learning Center, or visit our website:<http://rlc.rutgers.edu>

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