

Breaking Down Assignments

A large essay or assignment can seem daunting at first, but like any big undertaking, breaking it into smaller tasks helps you stay on target and keeps you motivated.

Before breaking down your assignment, consider...

- How many steps do you want? This can vary depending on how much time you have to work on the assignment. It can be 5 steps or 15 – whatever makes it easier for you!
- What exactly do you need to do? Be specific! (It's okay if this changes as you go).
- How difficult is the assignment? Rate the difficulty on a scale from 1 to 10.
- How much time will each step take? Be as realistic as possible and *overestimate!*
- When should each step be finished? What is a reasonable deadline for each step?

Example:

Steps/Tasks	Details	Difficulty	Est. Time	Deadline
1. Understand Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm due date, citation style, etc. • Determine requirements/criteria to achieve 75+ (maybe speak to TA or prof) 	2/10	1 hour	March 16
2. Focus topic & write working thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm possible topics • Do initial research overview (research starters, course material) 	4/10	1 hour	March 17
3. Find Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use abstract scanning to find possible sources • Take preliminary notes on what the sources tell me 	8/10	4 hours	March 19
4. Evaluate Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a deep dive into most relevant sources, continue to make more detailed notes keeping working thesis in mind • Modify thesis to reflect new research/argument if necessary 	6/10	3 hours	March 21
5. Outline & 1 st Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create detailed outline using PEAT, then take a break • Write 1st draft, create finalized and polished thesis/transitions 	10/10	5 hours	March 23
6. Editing & Revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the read aloud method to check for spelling/grammar errors • Use reverse outlining to refine and check arguments 	7/10	2-3 hours	March 24
7. Final Review and Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review changes made in editing and revision • Make last minute changes and polish formatting (citations etc.). 	5/10	2-3 hours	March 25

Course: Assignment:					
Start Date:					
Due Date:					
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