

Strategies and Guidelines for Essays

Any communication task requires a strategic approach to suit your purpose and your audience. The purpose of your 21F.076 essays is to demonstrate that you have studied, analyzed and understood the materials well enough to develop a reasoned argument. You are not required to agree with the authors we have read. You *are* required to respond to the essay prompts in a clear and organized manner.

First impression. You want your readers to be motivated to “enter” your documents. Do the following to provide a good psychological incentive:

- Use conventional font (12 point Times New Roman)
- Use conventional 1 “ margins
- Double-space
- Indent paragraphs, but do not put extra space between them
- Include an interesting or informative title
- Write four pages

Ease of reading. Provide your readers with the following features so that they can easily find your key message, evaluate your supporting details, and engage in the subject matter with ease:

- A clear thesis (e.g., key message or position) in the first paragraph of a short paper
- Coherence between sentences & paragraphs
- Integration of materials from class to support your points (no new sources, please)
- Sources cited according to convention
- Formal style: no contractions or slang
- No empty words: thing, very, quite, rather

Materials on communication. Read the notes on logic, reader-friendly writing and defensive documentation to prepare for writing. These can be found under the section called “Communication Notes.”

Process: The first version of your essay is due in class. This first version will be read, commented on in general terms, and given a provisional grade by Profs. Resnick and Tang and returned to you in the next class. Then you will have a full week to meet with Tom Delaney and write a final version that will be graded in a second reading by Profs. Resnick and Tang.

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21F.076 Globalization: the Good, the Bad, and the In-Between
Fall 2009

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.