Construct an OUTLINE of your Research Paper. Outlines will be graded on clarity, logical organization, and degree of effort in achieving a good roadmap for your paper.

Outlines help you think through your topic carefully and organize it logically before you start writing. They help organize the material for the reader and for you, and help you to begin developing a coherent argument that flows well. You can then use it as a skeleton of your paper, one that can be “fleshed out” as you add sources, arguments, etc.

Here’s one example of what one looks like:

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**Gendered Development: Women’s Rights and the Success of Micro-Credit**  
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**OUTLINE**

I. Literature Review

A. Micro-credit
   1. Background
      i. Definition, requirements & goals for loans (Robinson, 2001; Wright 2000; Woller and Woodworth 2001).
      ii. Idea behind it: credit as a human right [to opportunity] (Yunus, 1998; Wright, 2000).
   2. Top-Down vs. Bottom Up
      i. Top-down approach & its critics (Parpart, Rai, and Staudt 2002, 8).
   3. Support for why micro-credit works
   4. Critiques of micro-credit
      i. limited as result of larger systemic forces (Parpart, Rai, and Staudt 2002, 3).
   5. Women in micro-credit
      i. Women’s empowerment = goal of micro-credit (Lairap-Fonderson 2002, 183).

B. Gendered Analysis
   1. Rationale for gendered analysis of human rights
      i. The gender component has been largely disregarded in classic studies of human rights. Women fit into human rights studies not as separate actors but as associated with the rights of men (Sardar Ali, 2002, 61).
   2. Rationale for gendered analysis of development

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3. Feminist IR Theory, Gendered economics
   i. Many development plans center around the head of the household/patriarch (Elson, 1993; Whitworth, 1994). If the woman of the house is in control of finances, she will customarily invest in children or household expenses more than the man of the house.
   ii. Neo-classical model is gender-blind but not gender neutral; does not give the same value to women as it does men; assumes that “women’s work” is infinitely elastic (Elson, 1993).
   iii. Identity of a woman in a particular culture plays a large part in their status and role in the economy (Sardar Ali, 2002). Micro-credit focuses on giving women the opportunity to enter the economic sphere in an empowered way. Gender equality difficult to achieve without violating religious and cultural rights in states where oppressive gender roles is embedded in religious and cultural contexts.

4. Women vs. men in development

C. Development associated with oppression
   1. How does oppression affect development?
   2. Macro level vs. micro level
      i. IOs universalize women’s human rights (Sardar Ali 2002, 61). But states and cultures have influence over whether human rights are applied locally, regardless of conventions.

II. Theory

A. Hypothesis: The level of women’s oppression has affects the success rate of micro-credit enterprises
   1. Arrow diagram

B. Explanation of how specifically women’s oppression would have an affect
   1. Gendered analysis
   2. How do men fit in with this?
   3. Balanced development

C. Alternate explanations
   1. Opposite relationship exists- how higher levels of oppression might provide for more success of micro-credit
   2. Other factors- state stability, geography, infrastructure, etc.
   3. What would I expect to see in my results if those alternate explanations are the real ones?
WRITING AN ANNOTATED OUTLINE

Start with a basic outline of your research paper. Make this outline as close to final form as possible. Remember, changing the outline is a global revision issue that is generally more difficult than local revision issues. The outline is the foundation of the paper—the basic framework on which you hang your ideas. The annotations indicate the content level of each section and the substance of the paper’s argument.

Keep the outline simple—no more than four or five sections in a 15-page paper. It should look—roughly—like a table of contents with abstracts underneath each major heading.

Keep the headings proportioned at the same level throughout the paper. Each heading should express the main idea of that section. The annotated outline is not the place for details.

Keep the annotations brief and directly stated, at a level of generalization that summarizes the entire section. Discuss the main idea—the major contribution—of each section, not the details.

The annotations should reveal an orderly movement of thought from introduction to conclusion. The reader should immediately recognize a relationship between the sections.

For each heading, use a topic sentence that directly expresses the main idea of the section. Your annotations must be directly related to this topic sentence—do not ramble about the details of the section, but rather elaborate on the section’s main idea. The annotations should contain roughly three to six sentences under each heading—enough to give the reader a clear idea of each section’s contents, and no more.

Remember—the annotated outline should help you conceptualize the larger paper and make timely progress toward the paper’s completion.

Or, approach it this way, as adapted from:
http://acc.roberts.edu/NEmployees/Hamilton_Barry/Tips%20for%20Writing%20the%20Annotated%20Outline.htm  Barry W. Hamilton, Northeastern Seminary (Rochester, NY)