

## **Body Paragraphs**

SLO: Clearly express ideas in appropriate academic language, demonstrating reasoning, an understanding of audience, context, and the mechanics of academic writing in an organized, clear, and coherent manner.

### **What are body paragraphs?**

Body paragraphs support the thesis statement that usually comes at the end of the introductory paragraph. The body paragraphs present evidence to support the thesis sentence.

### **What is evidence?**

Evidence demonstrates the validity of the writer's claims. Evidence is the proof, the support for the thesis sentence.

Students should find a variety of sources to support the thesis sentence.

### **Types of Evidence**

- a) Facts: verifiable statements
- b) Statistics: numbers, percentages
- c) Examples: specific cases
- d) Expert opinions: information from authorities
- e) Appeals to readers' beliefs or needs: accepting because of need

**Examples:**

## **Facts**

- The city council adjourned without taking a vote.
- In 2005 there were 1,370,237 men and women on duty in the U.S. military.

**Examples:** Specific instances of the point being made, including historical precedents and personal experiences.

Besides broadening students' knowledge, required courses can also introduce students to possible careers that they otherwise would have known nothing about. Somewhat reluctantly, Joanna enrolled in a psychology course to satisfy the requirement for work in social science. But what she learned in the course about human behavior has led her to consider becoming a clinical psychologist instead of an engineer.

## **Expert Opinions**

Despite the fact that affirmative action places some individuals at a disadvantage, it remains necessary to right the wrongs inflicted historically on whole groups of people. Howard Glickstein, a past director for the US Commission on Civil Rights, maintains that "it simply is not possible to achieve equality and fairness" unless the previous grounds for discrimination are now considered as grounds for admission to schools and jobs (26).

## **Appeals to Beliefs or Needs**

Thus the chemistry laboratory is outdated in its equipment. In addition, its shabby, antiquated appearance shames the school, making it seem a second-rate institution.

## **Judging the Reliability of Evidence**

Ask these questions to make sure your evidence is valid.

- Is it accurate?
- Is it relevant?
- Is it representative?
- Is it adequate?

### **Structure of the Body Paragraph**

---Topic sentence

---Explanation/clarification of the topic sentence

---Example 1 with explanation

---Example 2 with explanation

---Concluding sentence relating the paragraph to the thesis sentence