

INTRODUCTION TO GRAD WRITING

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**University
of Victoria**

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At the **Academic Skills Centre (ASC)**, we offer one-on-one consultations, workshops, and more both online and in person. Our **free** services are available to all University of Victoria students. We are here to support you with writing, reading, presentations, time management, and other aspects of academic communication/skills.

www.uvic.ca/asc



What are the **typical expectations** and standards of academic writing and research?

What are some **practical strategies** to write in a way that follows these expectations?

How can we **help**?



Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, the participants will:

- be able to identify the 5 main qualities of academic research
- be able to identify the 5 main qualities of academic writing
- be able to identify the 3 main stages of academic writing
- know how **the ASC can help** with academic writing



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Getting started

Take a moment to think about these questions...

Feel free to share your responses in the chat 💬

What defines academic research? What qualities set it apart from a Google search?

It's peer reviewed

discern good
sources from
questionable ones

It attempts to add something new to the conversation rather than simply gathering information.

clear narrative and in scope

Using academic sources to argue for or against a thesis

it can be replicated

What is research?

In General (broader sense):

Finding the answers to **questions**.

In Academia (narrower sense):

“Academic research refers to the systematic search for answers to specific, original questions in order to create new knowledge.”

(Academic Writing Essentials)

significant

Part of the scholarly conversation



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What is research?

1. answers **questions**
2. specific
3. original
4. significant
5. part of the scholarly conversation



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Getting started

Take a moment to think about these questions...

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What about academic writing? What makes academic writing in your mind? How is it different from other types of writing?

includes resources -references

Might use very specific language

It should be structured

Academic writing is a structured , planned writing

Aims to deepen understanding of a nuanced topic and to demystify something that seems complex

Academic Research

1. answers **questions**
2. specific
3. original
4. significant
5. part of the scholarly conversation

Academic Writing

1. Focuses on a central **thesis**
2. Supports it with evidence
3. Offers a rationale for topic
4. Includes a literature review



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Academic Writing

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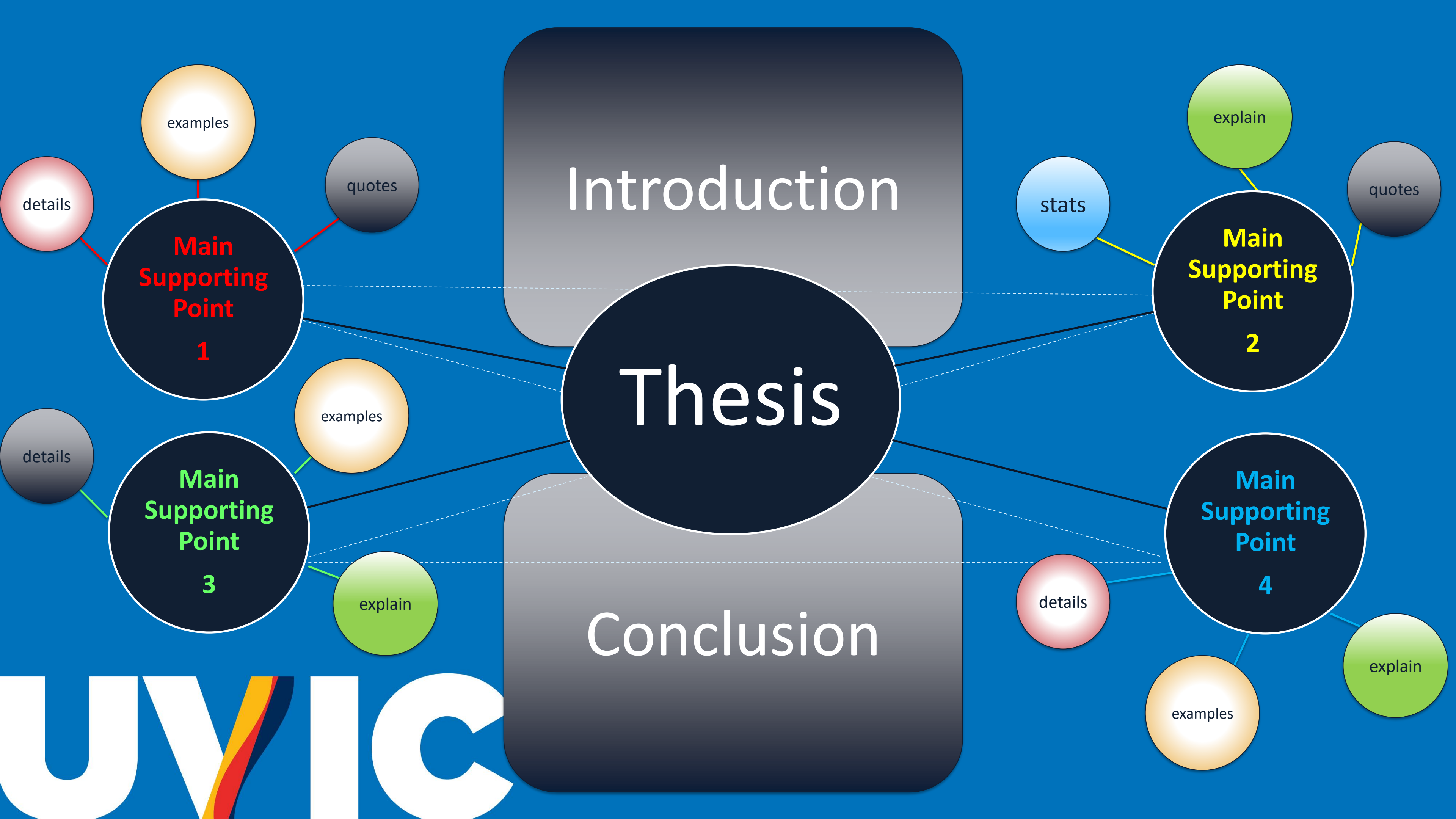
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Academic Writing

1. Focuses on a central **thesis**
2. Supports it with documented evidence
3. Has specific sections
4. Is structured clearly
5. Uses clear and concise language



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Introduction

Thesis

Conclusion

Main
Supporting
Point
1

Main
Supporting
Point
2

Main
Supporting
Point
3

Main
Supporting
Point
4

examples

quotes

details

examples

details

explain

stats

explain

quotes

examples

explain

details

Getting started

Take a moment to think about these questions...

Feel free to share your responses in the chat 💬

What major steps do you take to complete an academic writing project?
How much time do you spend on each step? You can answer in %

Finding an idea/ a question (5-10% of the time)

Researching previous research/has this question been answered already? (5%)

Researching and reading other sources that can in part help answer the question (60%)

Actual writing (25%)

Start the project (5%)

Decide the question (10-15%)

Planning (5%)

Researching phase (15%)

Writing drafts (20%)

Fixing mistakes (5%)

Citations (10%)

Finishing everything up (5%)

Fighting procrastination (30%)

(im not sure if this makes 100% but i think ppl will get the idea)

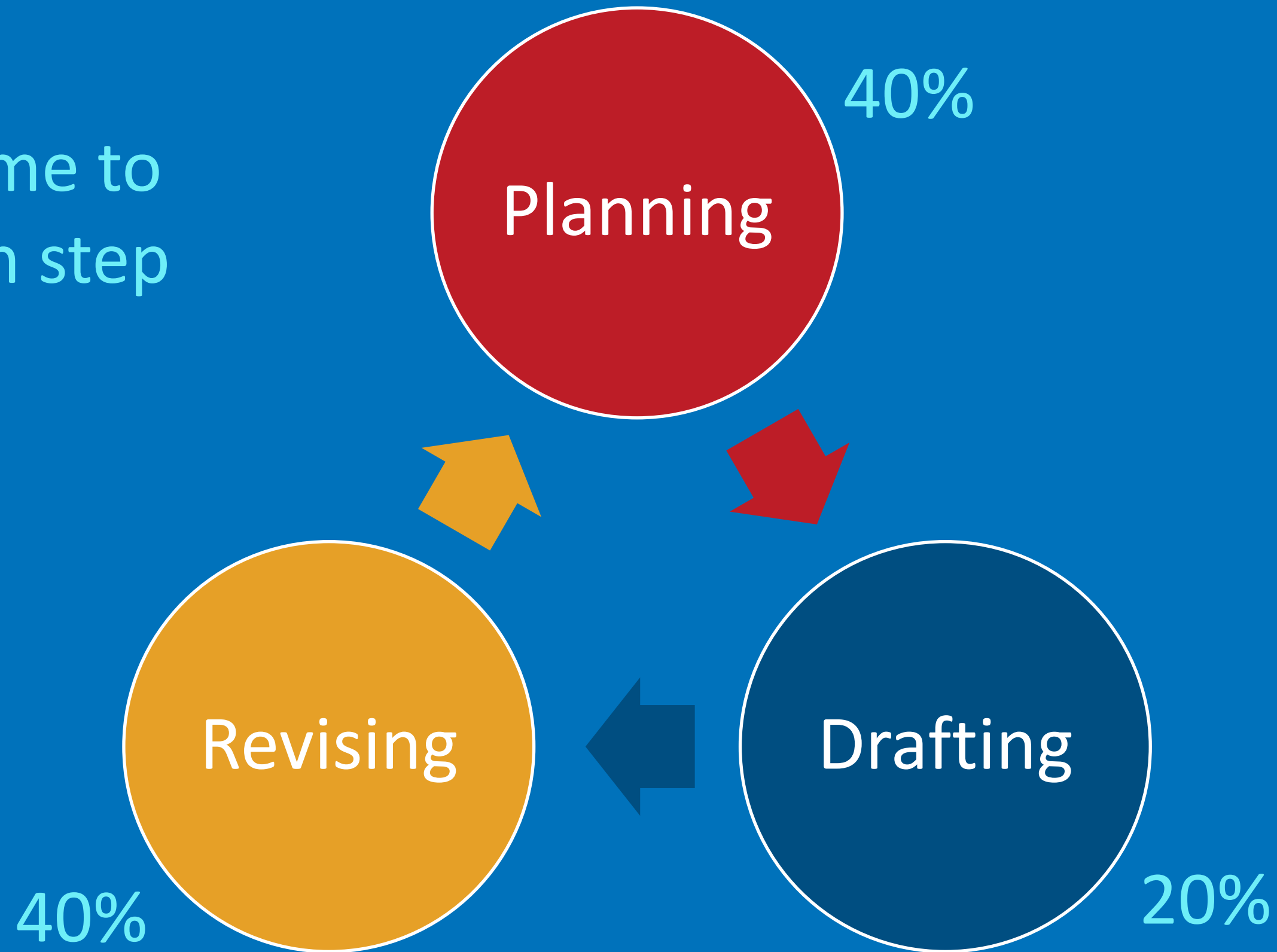
1. Find your topic and objective. 2. Collect information.. 3.

Organize it and start writing with a clear structure and

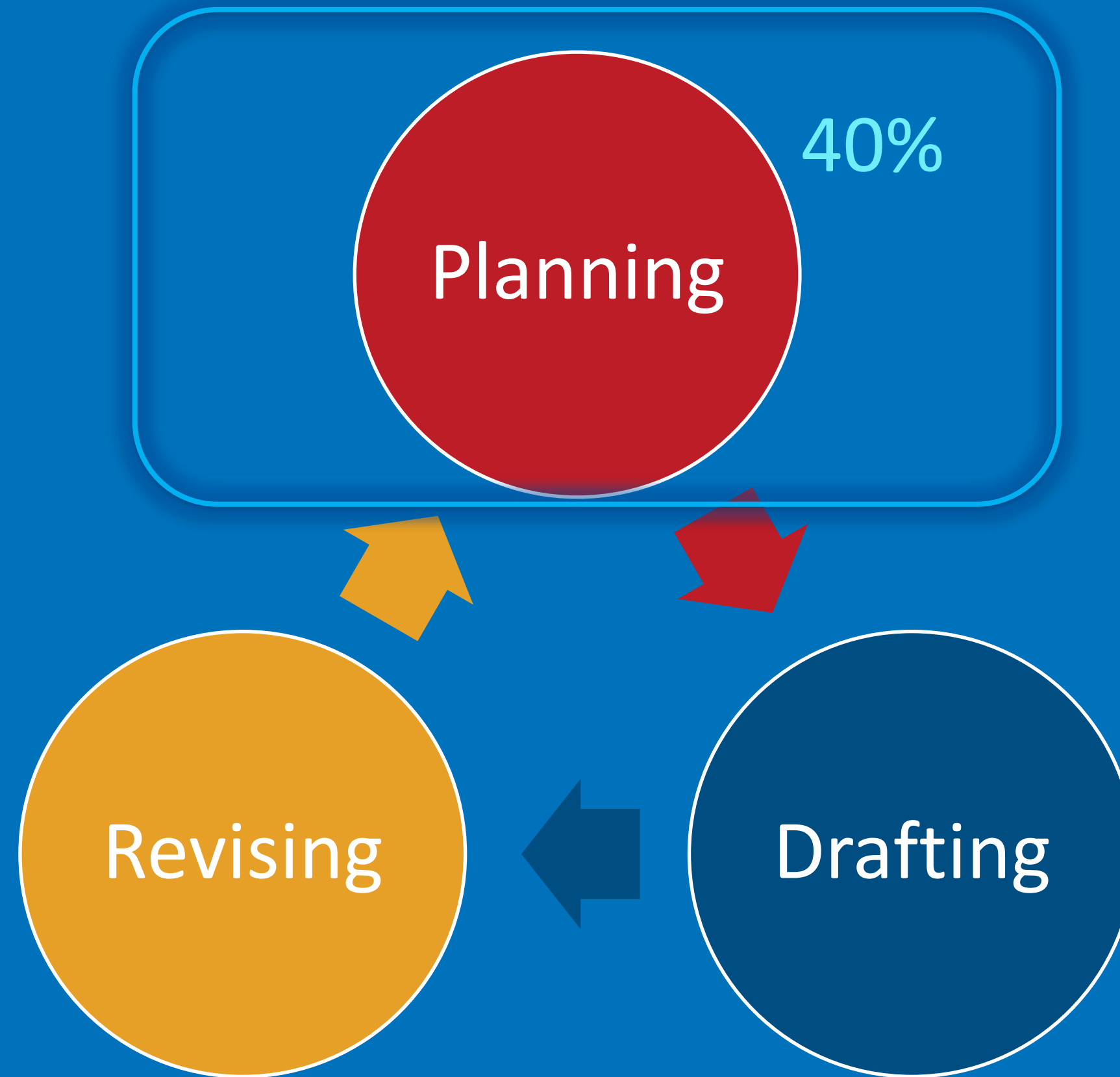
meaningful data. 4. Revise it. 5. Cite

THE BASIC **STEPS** OF ACADEMIC WRITING

Suggested time to
work on each step

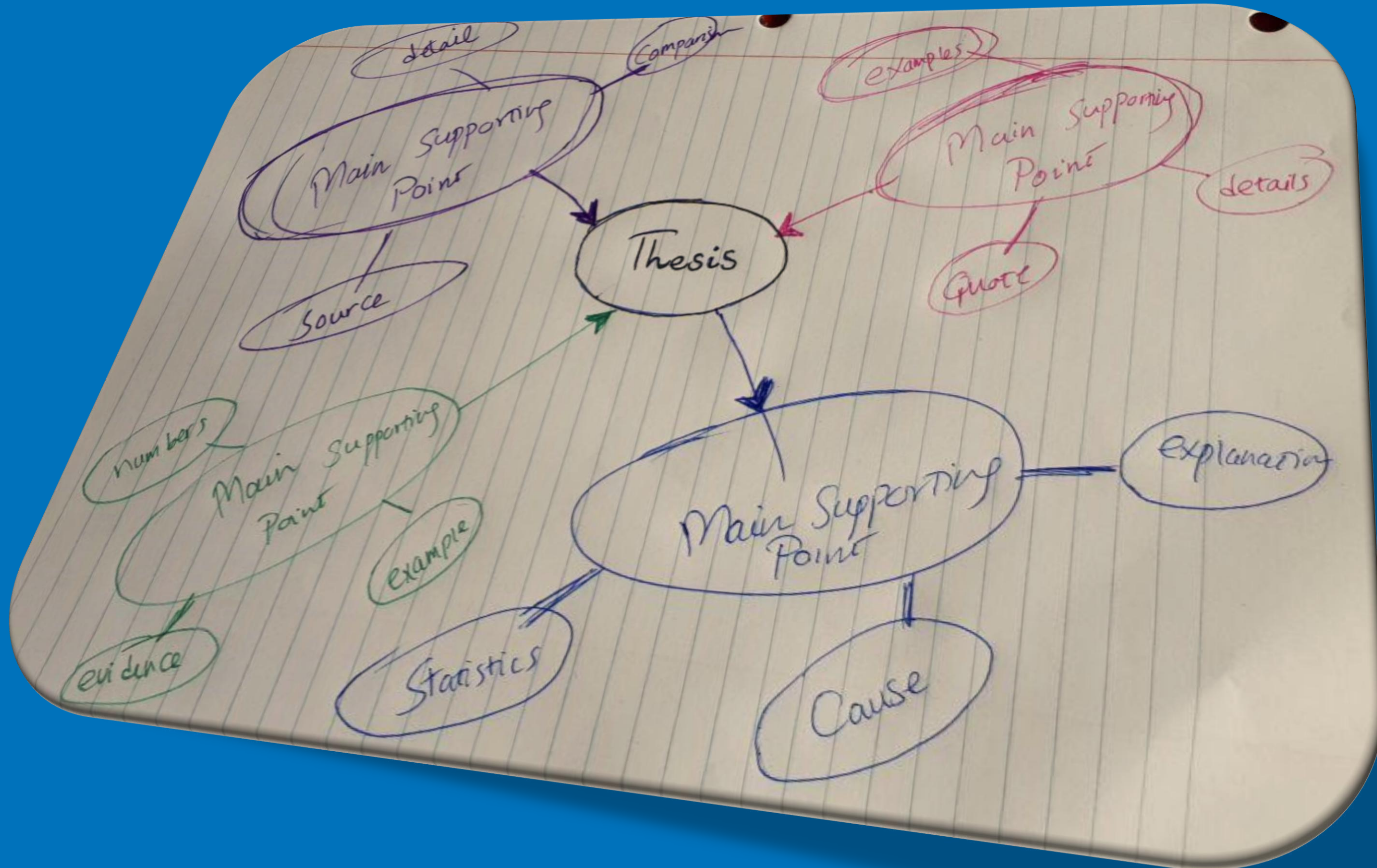


THE BASIC **STEPS** OF ACADEMIC WRITING



PLANNING

- ❖ Gathering Information
 - ❖ Note Taking
 - ❖ Coming up with a Narrowed-Down Topic
 - ❖ Coming up with Research Questions
 - ❖ Coming Up with a Thesis and Main Points
-
- ❖ Mind Mapping
 - ❖ Outlining
 - ❖ Topic Sentence Outline



Make Use of Mind Maps and Outlines

- While a mind map presents your ideas spatially, an outline is a linear structure that shows the **order** in which you want to present your ideas.

Research Paper Outline

Introduction

Main point 1

Main point 2

Main point 3

Conclusion

OUTLINING

- More detailed outlines help you prepare better for drafting
- Use levels and indentations
- Without an outline it would be harder (and will take longer) to revise.

I. Introduction

- a. Describe *The Federalist Papers* are and when they started
- b. Thesis: *The Federalist* influenced the ratification of the Constitution by making some of their most important arguments, including the importance of being in a Union by having a Constitution, answering to the objections made by the Anti-federalists about separation of powers, and defending opposing arguments made against the characteristics of the executive and judicial branch as provided in the Constitution.

II. Background

- a. State when *The Federalist* was printed and published.
- b. Discuss the intentions and purposes of *The Federalist*.

III. Argument for the benefit of a Union

- a. A Union would guard against external dangers
- b. A Union would guard against internal dangers
 - A. The “extended sphere” argument about how it will control factions. (Federalist 10)

IV. Argument of the problem with complete separation of powers

- a. Anti federalists wanted a complete separation of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches
- b. *The Federalist* said the maxim of complete separation of powers is misunderstood. (Montesquieu)
- c. The branches need some limited power of the other branches to protect themselves from encroachment of the other branches (Federalist 51)
 - A. The branches need to have the interests of maintaining their powers, and not letting the other branches take that away.

V. Argument for a single executive, and against a plural executive

- a. Anti-federalists didn’t want a single executive, too much like a monarch
- b. *The Federalist* need the executive to be “energetic” and a plural executive would make this impossible (Federalist 70)
 - A. It would take too long for the people in the executive position to make decision in an emergency, because they might disagree.
 - B. In a plural executive, it is hard to tell who is responsible for a wrongdoing because they can all blame each other, so a single executive would lead to more responsible behavior

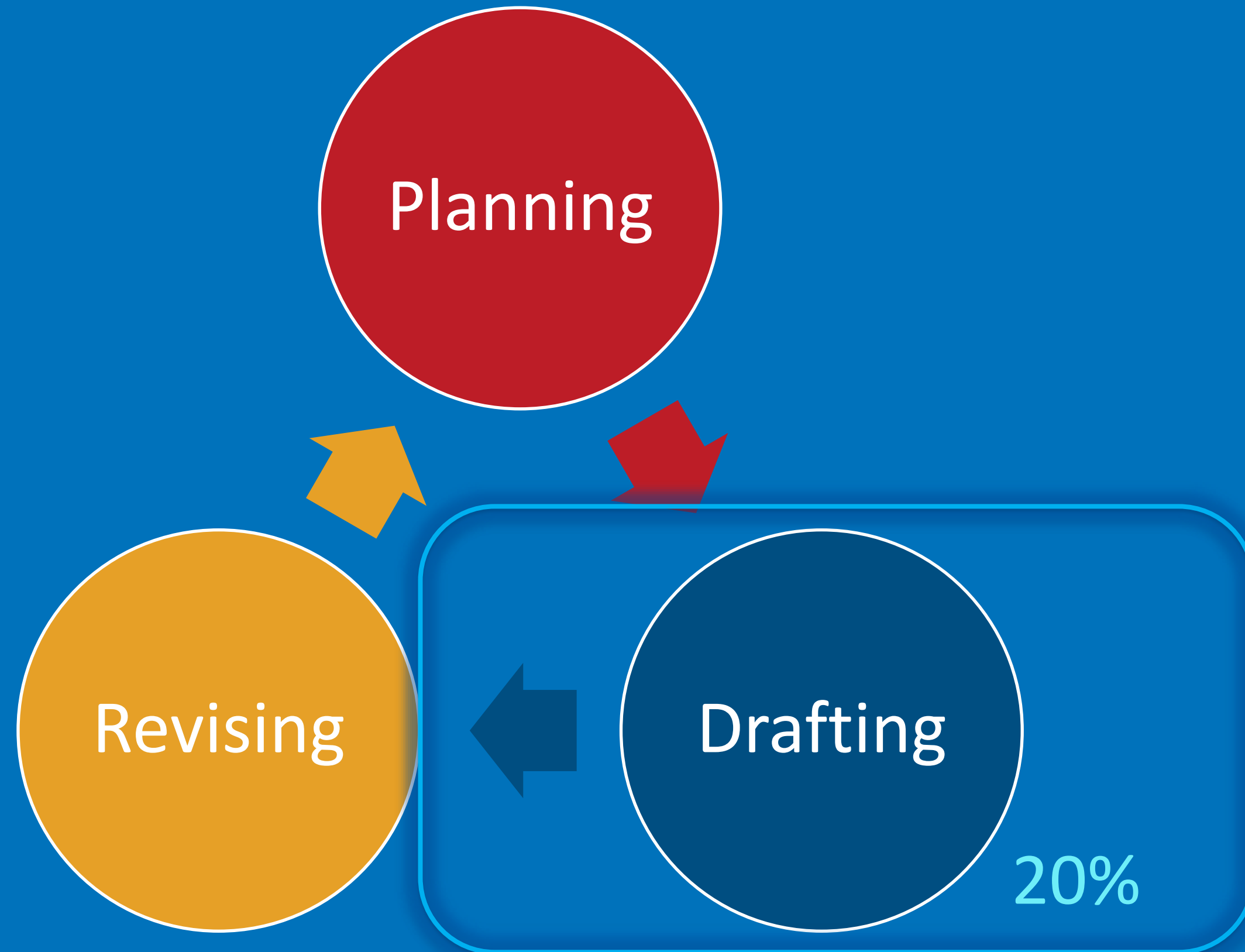
VI. Argument in favor of judicial review and terms of good behavior for judges

- a. Anti-federalists didn’t like judicial review and the term of good behavior
- b. The Federalist argued that judicial review was necessary to protect the judicial branch from the Legislature.
- c. A term of good behavior was necessary to get qualified people for the positions; it would also give them time to develop knowledge.

VII. Conclusion

- a. Thesis
- b. The dates of the ratification of the Constitution by the States
- c. *The Federalist’s* influence beyond the ratification

THE BASIC **STEPS** OF ACADEMIC WRITING



WRITING YOUR FIRST DRAFT

- Write a first draft by simply turning your outline into a text.
- Write a paragraph at a time.
- At this stage, **you are not** analyzing, revising, or second-guessing yourself.
- Writing the first draft should take **very little of the total time** you spend working your writing project.
- Try not to review what you have written until you have finished your first draft.
- You can **highlight and/or add a comment** in the text to remind yourself to revise later.
- Use **“free writing”** techniques to avoid going back and revising yourself.



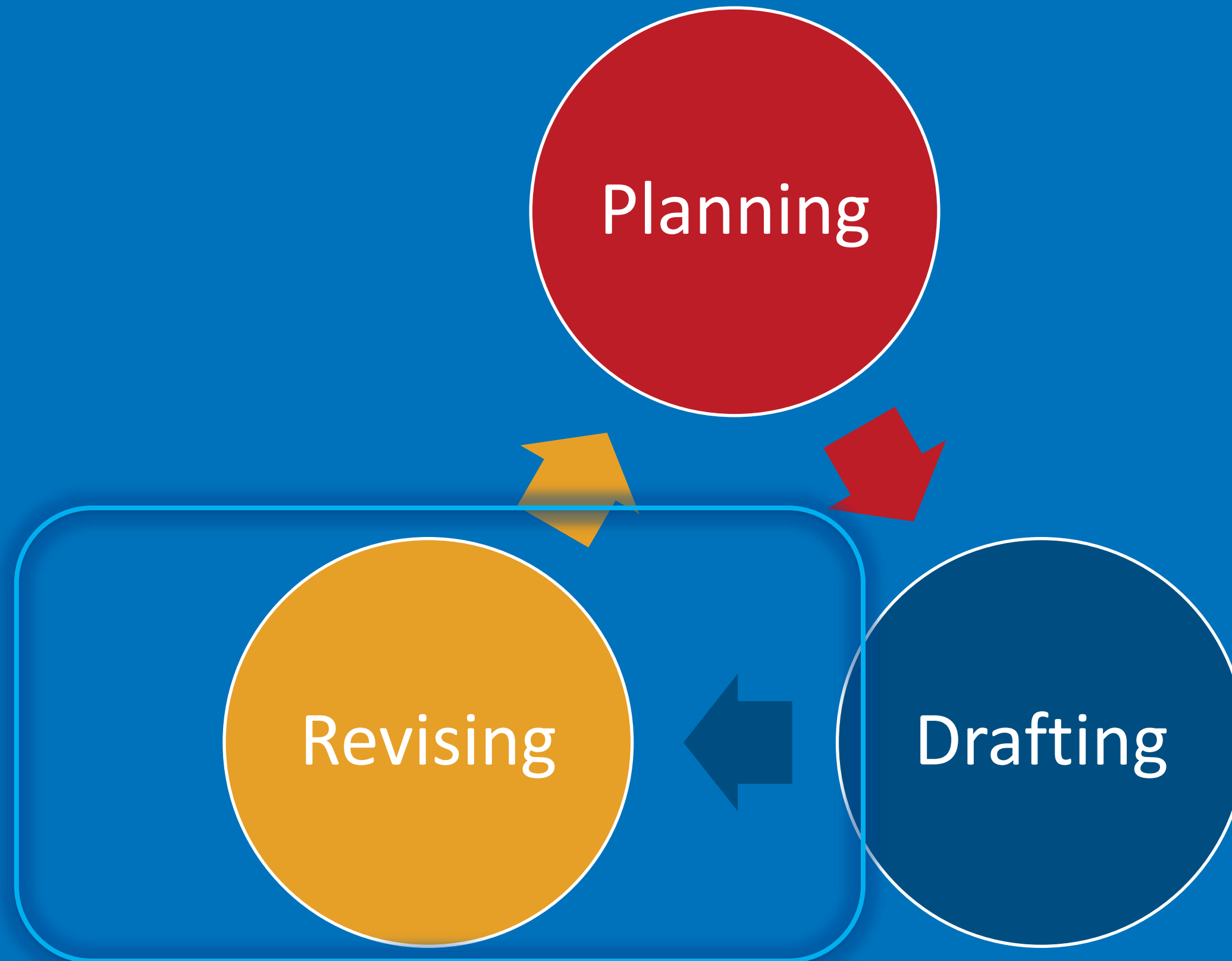
WRITING YOUR FIRST DRAFT

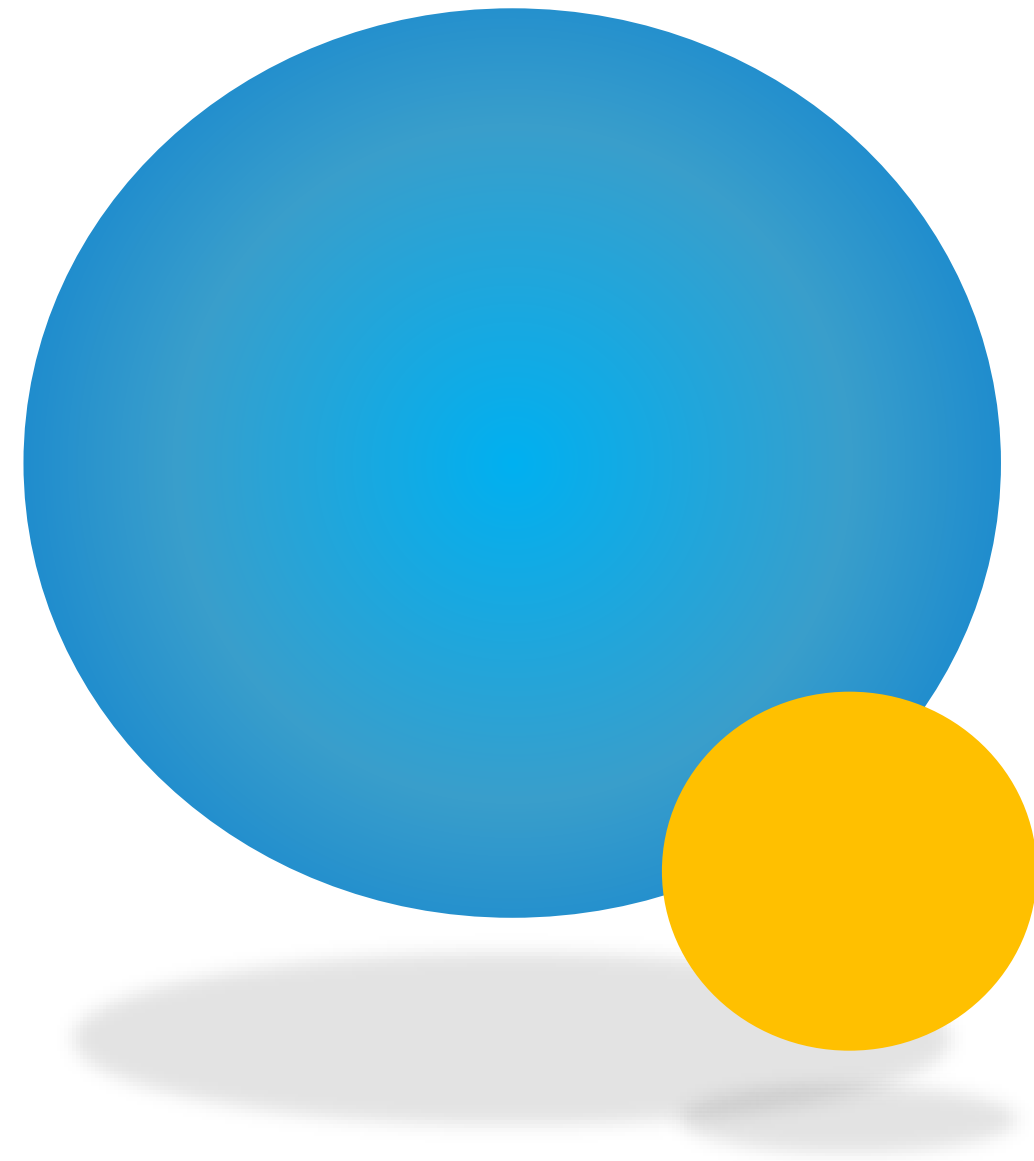
- You can plan and then draft your work in its entirety
- Or you can plan and draft your longer work a section at a time
- You can choose to draft your introduction at the very end
- Think about the coherence and flow of your paragraphs as you draft
- Also try to write in clear, concise, and correct sentence structures
- There are **ASC resources** on writing strong paragraphs, clear sentences, and creating flow



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THE BASIC **STEPS** OF ACADEMIC WRITING





Focus on the big things first

Know the **hierarchy** of writing concerns



MOST IMPORTANT SELF-EDITING STRATEGIES

- ❖ Know the **hierarchy** of writing concerns
- ❖ Edit **in rounds**



Strategize your revisions

1. Revise more than once
 2. Know the hierarchy of writing concerns
 3. Revise in different rounds starting from higher order writing issues and move toward lower-order issues
 4. Take some time out
 5. Try a different medium
 6. Read loudly and slowly
 7. Make a self-editing checklist
- 

HOW WE CAN HELP...

University of Victoria Library, Academic Help Hall, Room 135J-M

First visit? [Register for an account](#).
Returning? Log in below.

Email Address
gillians@uvic.ca

Password

Log In

Register

Choose a schedule and log in

SELECT A SCHEDULE

☐ Get written feedback

☐ Academic writing + more: Meet in person

☒ Academic writing + more: Meet online

☐ Learning strategies: Meet in person

☐ Learning strategies: Meet online

Check this box to stay logged in: ☐

Welcome to the [Centre for Academic Communication!](#)

Winter program information available; check out our academic writing and additional resources!

Choose a schedule ("[Get written feedback](#)", "Meet online", or "**Meet in person**"), and log in.

In your chosen schedule, 1) select an available space, 2) complete the booking form, and for written appointments, 3) attach a Word document and your assignment instructions.

WOnline email notification that we have reviewed and offered written feedback (by 7pm* on

meet online" schedule and click on your tutor's Zoom link at the time of your appointment.

- To meet in person, please come to the CAC, located at the end of the Library's Learning Commons hallway (offices 135i-m).
- Is the schedule full? Email cacmgr@uvic.ca for schedule updates or to be put on a wait list

*If extenuating circumstances impact this deadline, we will email you with an update.

[Click here for detailed booking instructions: check out our website](#) for more information about the CAC.

You may self-book TWO 25-minute appointments per week; if you need additional weekly appointments, please email cacmgr@uvic.ca. If you do not "show up" to a **meet online** appointment or have an assignment attached within 10 minutes of the time you've booked for **written feedback**, your appointment will be marked as "missed". If you miss two appointments, your account will be temporarily disabled. For assistance, please reach out to cacmar@uvic.ca.



HOW WE CAN HELP...

University of Victoria Library, Academic Help Hall, Room 135J-M

Welcome, Kaveh ▾ My Appointments Schedules ▾ Log Out

Meet in person or in zoom 2025

September 9 - 15, 2025

[Previous Week](#) | [Current Week](#) | [Next Week](#) | 🗓️

Meet us in the library (offices 135i to l, in the Learning Commons hallway in the Mearnes Centre - McPherson Library) to discuss your academic writing and more!

If you can't meet us in person, please email your tutor for a zoom or written feedback appt instead! :)

To make an appointment, please

1) select an available space and complete all fields in the appt form, 2) come to the Centre for Academic Communication in our library location at the time of your appointment, and 3) meet your tutor :)

Display Options

Show All Staff & Resources

Sep. 9: Tuesday

10:00 am	11:00 am	12:00 pm	1:00 pm	2:00 pm	3:00 pm	4:00 pm	5:00 pm	6:00 pm	7:00	4:00 pm
Kaveh (kaveht@uvic.ca) ✉️										

Sep. 10: Wednesday

10:00 am	11:00 am	12:00 pm	1:00 pm	2:00 pm	3:00 pm	4:00 pm
Gillian (gillians@uvic.ca) ✉️						
Kaveh (kaveht@uvic.ca) ✉️						
Natalie (nboldt@uvic.ca) ✉️						

Click on a free (white) appointment slot to book it.



WHERE WE ARE LOCATED

McPherson Library



- uvicmywconline.com (for appointments)
- [UVicLearn](#) (for resources)



Thank you so much for your participation! 😊

Kaveh: kaveht@uvic.ca

