POL 201 Assignment Guide

There is a written assignment in weeks 2-5 of the course. Each assignment builds toward the Week 5 Final Research paper. After you receive feedback in Weeks 2, 3, and 4, use it (and any additional research) to construct your Week 5 Final Research paper. In the sections following, you will see specific guides for each week of the course to help you understand each part of the overall process.

It is important to understand the overall purpose of the final paper before beginning your assignment in Week 2, 3, and 4, as we will build towards your final paper. The first part will involve selecting your topic and finding your research in the Week 2 Discussion and the Week 2 Annotated Bibliography Assignment. The second part will focus on establishing a thesis statement and developing a detailed outline in the Week 3 Outline Assignment. In Week 4, you will develop a rough draft of your paper and send it to the Ashford Writing Center for feedback. In Week 5, you will combine all of the parts and the feedback you have received to develop your Final Paper.

**Week 5 Final Paper**

The primary goal of your final assignment is to critically analyze the specific policy you will choose that focuses on aspects of the American national government.

Each week, you will prepare for the final assignment by constructing an Annotated Bibliography (Week 2) and a detailed outline of the Final Paper’s main points (Week 3). In these assignments, you will focus on the policy you choose and find research to support your ideas relating to these four areas:

* Historical and constitutional basis for the American Government’s structure
* The system of checks and balances
* The various roles (i.e., public opinion, media, special interest groups, etc.) concerning public policy and elections
* The voting system and election process.

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Your paper will evaluate a specific policy of our national government and recommend ways to enhance what works and repair what is not working well. It is important that your Final Paper utilizes your previous research and assignments, including the feedback that you will receive from the Ashford Writing Center in Week 4.

The Final Paper should utilize the POL 201 Final Paper template and be at least six pages in length (not including title page and references) and based on your previously submitted assignments. It is important to utilize [APA Style Elements](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style-elements) headings for major sections of your paper in order to ensure that the paper is easy to follow. A model POL201 Final Paper Guide is provided for you to download and utilize when completing your Final Paper.

Scaffold your paper around the following outline:

* + Title page (see [Introduction to APA](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/introduction-apa))
  + Introduction (half page) (see [Introductions & Conclusions](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/introductions-conclusions))
    - Describe the paper’s overall thesis.
    - Provide an overview of main points.
  + First Main Point (one to one and a half pages) describes the historical and Constitutional basis of American government’s structure and how this relates to the policy.
    - Describe the main point.
    - Support the main point with research.
  + Second Main Point (one to one and a half pages) explains how the policy is involved within the process of checks and balances.
    - Describe the main point.
    - Support the main point with research.
  + Third Main Point (one to one and a half pages) describes how the policy relates to public policy and elections and how the policy is portrayed by the media.
    - Describe the main point.
    - Support the main point with research.
  + Fourth Main Point (one to one and a half pages) explains how the policy impacts voting and the election process.
    - Describe the main point.
    - Support the main point with research.
  + Conclusion (see [Introductions & Conclusions](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/introductions-conclusions))
    - Review your main points.
    - Review your overall thesis.
  + References page (see [Formatting Your References List](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/format-your-reference-list))

The Final Paper Assignment

* Must be at least six double-spaced pages in length (not including title and references pages) and formatted according to [APA Style](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style) as outlined in the [Ashford Writing Center](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/).
* Must include a separate title page with the following:
  + Title of paper
  + Student’s name
  + Course name and number
  + Instructor’s name
  + Date submitted
* Must use at least eight scholarly sources in addition to the course text. A minimum of five of the resources must be from peer-reviewed scholarly sources from the Ashford University Library.
  + The [Scholarly, Peer Reviewed, and Other Credible Sources](https://bridgepoint.equella.ecollege.com/curriculum/file/b2d6fb25-629e-42e1-a13e-43bf67043c8a/1/Scholarly%2C%20Peer%20Reviewed%2C%20and%20Other%20Credible%20Sources.docx) table offers additional guidance on appropriate source types. If you have questions about whether a specific source is appropriate for this assignment, please contact your instructor. Your instructor has the final say about the appropriateness of a specific source for a particular assignment.
* Must document all sources in APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center.
* Must include a separate references page that is formatted according to APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center.

Now that you understand what the Final Paper will focus on, let’s focus on the different parts of the assignment that will help you to research and develop a strong final paper.

**Part I: Week Two – Annotated Bibliography**

In Week Two, you will begin the process of developing your final paper. The first part of this process will be to determine your topic in the Week 2 discussion forum using the list of potential topics.

The next step will be to start the research process through your Week Two assignment, which focuses on the Annotated Bibliography.

Utilizing the Week 2 Annotated Bibliography Worksheet, you will complete the following:

* + 1. Discuss and develop the topic/policy you will focus on for this assignment. Policy suggestions can be found in the Week Two Question and Policy Resource and are also addressed in the Week 2 Discussion.
    2. Annotated Bibliography of sources
       1. Identify four peer-reviewed scholarly sources obtained through AU Library Databases to support the four main points of your final research paper, AND briefly explain what the sources are about.
       2. Detail how and why those sources are important to the point you will be making.

Model Annotated Bibliography Example: The library provides an example of what an APA formatted Annotated Bibliography should look like.

**Part II: Week 3 Final Paper Outline Assignment**

The next step in the development of your Final Paper is developing an outline and a thesis statement.

You will scaffold your paper around the following outline that is provided for you in the Week 3 Outline Worksheet.

* + [Title page](https://awc.ashford.edu/cd-formatting-headings%20in-apa-style.html)
  + [Introduction](https://awc.ashford.edu/essay-dev-introductions-and-conclusions.html) (half page)
    - Describe the paper’s overall thesis.
    - Provide an overview of main points.
  + First Main Point (1 to 1.5 pages) describes the historical and Constitutional basis of American Government’s structure and how this relates to the policy.
    - Description of the main point.
    - Research that supports the main point.
  + Second Main Point (1 to 1.5 pages) explains how the policy is involved within the process of checks and balances.
    - Description of the main point.
    - Research that supports the main point.
  + Third Main Point (1 to 1.5 pages) describes how the policy relates to public policy and elections and how the policy is portrayed by the media.
    - Description of the main point.
    - Research that supports the main point.
  + Fourth Main Point (1 to 1.5 pages) explains how the policy impacts voting and the election process.
    - Description of the main point.
    - Research that supports the main point.
  + [Conclusion](https://awc.ashford.edu/essay-dev-introductions-and-conclusions.html)
    - Review your main points.
    - Review your overall thesis.
  + [References page](http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/format-your-reference-list)

At least 4 of your sources must be peer-reviewed scholarly sources obtained through the Ashford University Library database (completed in your Week 2 Annotated Bibliography). The additional 2 sources for this assignment do not have to be from the Ashford Library, but should be reliable, verifiable, and as free of bias as possible.

**Part III: Week 4 Final Paper Draft Assignment**

Utilizing your work on your Weeks 2 and 3 Assignments, you will develop a draft of your Final Research Paper, that you will submit to the Ashford Writing Center Paper Review for feedback.

Instructions: Review the Final Paper Assignment instructions for the full requirements. Be sure to download the POL 201 Final Paper Model, utilize any feedback provided by your instructor, and use APA formatting throughout your draft. Your draft should be complete with an introduction, thesis statement, full body paragraphs to support your ideas, a conclusion, and a full reference list of at least eight resources as detailed in the earlier assignment instructions.

Once your draft is complete, you will upload your paper into Ashford’s Writing Center Paper Review area for feedback. Feedback is typically returned in approximately 24 hours. You will need to have your draft complete by Day 7 (Monday) to have time to upload it to the Writing Center and receive feedback. You will upload the feedback you received from the Writing Center into Waypoint to confirm completion of your draft and feedback received, to earn the point for the assignment. You may submit your Writing Center feedback up through Day 3 (Thursday) of Week 5 without a late penalty.