1. For proper footnoting and bibliographic form, refer to either Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Theses, Term Papers and Dissertations*, the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or the latest edition of Diane Hacker’s writing guide (which gives examples of the three standard footnote forms). If you use the APA citation form, e.g., (McAdam 136) you must include a list of references at the end of the paper. You don’t have to use the date of publication in parentheses unless there are more than one work by the same author. Remember that you must give the page number, whether in-text or footnotes/endnotes are used. The only exception to this is when you are referring to a general argument that runs throughout the work, on too many pages to be cited individually. But this is rare.

2. Remember that just because you found a source on the internet does not mean it is public domain. You must always cite internet sources just as you would any other work that is not your own. Include the author, title and all identifying information, as well as the link itself so that the work can easily be located by the reader.

3. Always avoid over-reliance on a few sources. A string of *ibid* is indicative of this problem. (In a short essay based on the syllabus, you will not be expected to use a lot of sources—but use as many of the readings as you can).

4. Avoid over-reliance on *quotes*. A paper that strings together quotes clearly shows little originality. Paraphrase wherever possible, saving quotes for extraordinary, pungent language. Don’t be misled into thinking that changing only a few words is “paraphrasing”. The latter means really putting the idea into your own words, using as few of the original words as possible (while being, of course, faithful to the original meaning). Be very careful not to twist or misinterpret the text you are paraphrasing. For example, don’t attribute to an author an idea she lays out only to refute it. (In that case, say in your note “This argument was refuted by Anne Smith in her article…”)

5. *All material taken from the works of others must be attributed to its source* – whether it is quoted OR paraphrased, and whether it comes from print or on-line sources. To use information or ideas of others without citation is plagiarism, a very serious offence which could result in expulsion from school, and legal prosecution. At the very least, suspicion of plagiarism will result in a formal hearing with the professor and another department official, and a letter will be placed in your file. You really do not want to go through this. Write your own paper, and do it carefully.

6. You may use one footnote at the end of a paragraph IF all material therein is from the same source. Always footnote page numbers unless the reference is to a general theme or argument running throughout the work. There should be no paragraph without a citation UNLESS all the ideas in it are yours alone, or a summary of previously cited work.

7. In research papers always use as many sources as possible, and use the most recent works on the subject, along with (where appropriate) older studies. Be very careful about “second hand” citations. For example, if Smith’s book cites an article by Jones, you should not cite Jones as if you read it yourself. If you want to refer to the Jones article, the way to do is to either read it yourself, or say “Smith cites Jones as arguing…” and in the note, cite Jones’s article and then say, “as cited in” Smith’s book.

8. For research papers using sources you find yourself, use the Social Science and Humanities indices and the P.A.I.S. index to scholarly and sophisticated lay articles.
The Index to Legal Periodicals many also be helpful. Scholarly papers generally do not use mass market publications like U.S. News and World Report.

9. Avoid informal, colloquial language. Avoid “flowery” or judgmental language (“The political campaign was horribly run”; “The 102nd Congress was fantastically productive”). Lay out the evidence for your argument and let the reader make up her own mind about how to evaluate it. An argument that does not hit readers on the head with a message will be much more effective than passionate advocacy. A research paper is not a political tract. Avoid contractions. Avoid broad generalizations not backed up with evidence (“People loved Ronald Reagan because he seemed to be a kindly father figure”; “Southerners are always suspicious of Catholics”). It is also usually advisable to avoid first person usage.

10. Do not confuse contractions, plural forms, and possessive forms (e.g., "The Mullah's have a lot of power" is wrong). Edit spelling and grammar VERY carefully. Make sure you know the difference between hyphens and dashes (two hyphens). A hyphen is used for a compound adjective or adverb ("He discarded the twice-used napkin"); a dash separates a clause or phrase from the rest of the sentence, in much the same way two parentheses would. ("She grabbed her raincoat—the sky had suddenly darkened—and headed off to the demonstration"). Know the different uses of commas and semi-colons. The latter set off a series of phrases separated by commas, or two complete (subject + verb) clauses.

11. Watch your use of pronouns, as they often introduce vagueness. Instead of "This", when the noun you are referring to in the previous sentence is not perfectly clear, repeat or paraphrase the noun.

12. Use simple words and sentences. It is much better to use simple, straightforward language than to try to be “fancy” and use long, convoluted, hard-to-follow sentences and words that don’t mean what you think they mean. If you use any word in a paper that you don’t use a lot, look it up in a dictionary. Always aim for clarity in word choice, and simplicity in sentence structure. It is much more important to get your ideas across clearly than to use “fancy” words (which, when used inappropriately, make a bad impression on the reader). You are unlikely ever to get a paper back with the comment “you should have used longer sentences and more multi-syllabic and unusual words.”

13. Try to avoid repeating the same word in close proximity, as it interrupts the flow of meaning.

14. Always number your pages. Use standard fonts (10 or 12), and standard 1” or 1.5” margins. Don’t play tricks on the reader to make the paper appear longer or shorter. This will always be recognized.

15. Bibliographies should list only works actually cited in the paper, not background reading. If a work does not merit a citation in the text, do not list it in the bibliography or list of references. Note that the formats for footnotes/endnotes and bibliography/references are different (e.g., beginning with first or last name, using commas or periods, etc.)

16. Always save all your notes and rough drafts until you receive your final grade, in case any question of authorship arises.

17. Never turn in your only copy of the paper. If you turn it in late, tell the professor in advance that it will be late, and get the date stamped on the front by a department representative.
18. For research papers, make sure your topic is approved before beginning work on the paper. If in the course of research you need to change the focus, make sure this change has the approval of the instructor.