Having a good essay title is useful in providing the reader with key information on the essay, and helps to set the tone for the rest of your paper.

- The writer should create something that will appeal to the audience specifically, grabbing hold of the reader immediately and drawing him or her into your essay.
- However, it needs to be concise; having a title that is too wordy or lengthy can actually lose the attention of the potential reader.

**Recommended Formatting**

Ideally, an undergraduate essay title can be formatted as follows:

- **General Idea/Hook Title:** More Specific Information Relevant to your Thesis/Main Point(s)

For example, if the subject of an essay was about privacy rights in the United States, then a title like this could be used:

- **The Land of the Not-so-Free: How America is Becoming a Surveillance State.**

The hook should be included in the first half of the title; this should grab the attention of the audience. For this essay topic, the hook is a spin-off of the American national anthem, which is a well-known and meaningful reference. The second half of the title briefly describes to the audience what position is being argued on the subject matter.

**Tips**

- Always capitalize major words in a title. Do not capitalize articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet), or prepositions (to, in, of, with) *unless* it is the first word of the title.
  - Example: The Important Words in a Title
- ‘In’ and ‘a’ are left in the lower case because ‘a’ is an article, and ‘in’ is a preposition.
- Although ‘The’ is an article, it is capitalized because it is the first word in the title.
- Write the title (or, at least revise it) *after* you’ve finished writing the essay. Chances are that it will need to be reworked by the time you finish writing your paper.
Examples

Here are some examples taken from CliffsNotes (2013) on how to change a broad, bland title into a more specific and interesting one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner Title</th>
<th>Advanced Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macbeth's Conscience</td>
<td>“Sleep No More”: The Role of Macbeth's Conscience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Dickinson and her Poetry</td>
<td>“I'm Nobody”: Finding Emily Dickinson in her Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty and Women Today</td>
<td>Only Skin Deep? The Importance of Beauty to the Contemporary Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judging Legal Sanity</td>
<td>Fit to be Tried: An Examination of the McNaughton Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Security Measures</td>
<td>Gaining Safety or Losing Freedom: The Debate over Airport Security Measures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Works Cited & Consulted:
