Academic Writing & Logical Thinking

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What is a Dissertation?
A dissertation is a final year project that must be carried out by each of you independently!

It is one kind of research writings.
Your dissertation must demonstrate the following two major achievements in order to be satisfactory:

(i) You have acquired, over a four-year period of undergraduate studies, the requisite knowledge in the academic discipline you have chosen.

(ii) You have developed, based on the knowledge acquired, an original point of view in a particular area of interest you chose to focus on.
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What is a dissertation’s ultimate goal?
Besides demonstrating your overall intellectual and management skills, the ultimate goal of writing a dissertation is to convince your professors, through logical argumentation, to accept the original point of view you have developed based on the knowledge acquired.
Besides demonstrating your overall intellectual and management skills, the ultimate goal of writing a dissertation is to convince your professors, through logical argumentation, to accept the original point of view you have developed based on the knowledge acquired.
Why is it important to write a dissertation?
(i) Graduation
(ii) Postgraduate studies
(iii) Job interviews
(iv) Develop self-learning ability
What are the major difficulties?
(i) Time management

(ii) Developing an original research idea

(iii) Providing a convincing support for the idea.
Applying logical thinking to research writing
Logical Thinking Skills

Dissertation

Graduation
Logical Thinking Skills → Clear & Convincing Paper → Graduation
What is a **Clear & Convincing** paper?

A paper with a (clear) **Thesis Statement** and a (convincing) **Logical Argument** for the statement.
**The Logical Writing Process Cycle**

1. **Build the Thesis Statement**
   - Build a one-sentence thesis statement from scratch, based on one or two research keywords.
   - Eliminate the linguistic & structural ambiguities.

2. **Build the Logical Argument**
   - Build a logical argument based on the thesis statement developed.
   - Find and eliminate the known counterarguments.

3. **Build the Abstract**
   - Build the paper’s abstract based on the thesis statement and argument developed.
   - Background->Goal->Thesis Statement->Procedures->Implication.

4. **Build the Body**
   - Build the full paper based on the abstract developed.
   - Modify the thesis statement, argument, abstract again and again.
Why is logical thinking training important?
What is “convincing”?

According to Oxford Dictionary of English, “convincing” means the following:

**capable of causing someone to believe that something is true**

Thus, to make X convincing is to have the capability of causing someone to believe that X is true.
But *how* to make X "convincing"?
Try doing this exercise:

Find out which one of the premises (1) ~ (5) helps to make the conclusion (C) convincing. Note that additional premise or premises will be needed in order to make C fully convincing.

**C: Peter is in Nagoya.**

(1) Peter loves Nagoya castle.
(2) Peter bought a house in Nagoya.
(3) Peter only wants to be in Nagoya.
(4) Peter has a girlfriend in Nagoya.
(5) Peter is not in Tokyo.
The key lies in

An Inferential Relation between Premise and Conclusion
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Challenge!!

Try the following logical puzzle.
Alonzo, Kurt, Rudolf, and Willard are four creative artists of great talent. One is a dancer, one is a painter, one is a singer, and one is a writer, though not necessarily in that order.

(1) Alonzo and Rudolf were in the audience the night the singer made his debut on the concert stage.

(2) Both Kurt and the writer have had their portraits painted from life by the painter.

(3) The writer, whose biography of Willard was a best-seller, is planning to write a biography of Alonzo.

(4) Alonzo has never heard of Rudolf.

What is each man’s artistic field?
Workshop schedule

1. Oct 15: Introduction to Academic Writing & Logical Thinking

2. Oct 29: Developing a central idea for your dissertation

3. Nov 19: Developing a convincing support for the central idea - 1

4. Nov 26: Developing a convincing support for the central idea - 2

5. Dec 10: Writing an abstract for your dissertation

6. Dec 17: Plagiarism and Logical Thinking Education
Homework

Write in English a summary highlighting what your dissertation is about. (about 100 Words)
Additional Challenge!!

Try make the following conclusion fully convincing.

Peter is in Nagoya.
Take home message...