Thesis: Structure & Organization

for Graduate Students

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What are some common challenges experienced by writers of theses / dissertations?

Common responses from graduate students in prior presentations

unclearexpectations
formatting
overwhelmed
methodology
structure
findingtimetowrite
communication
settingitup   isolation stress
gettingstarted
deadlines   fearofdisappointingmyadvisor
makingsteadyprogress
writersblock
makingaplan
anxiety
competinginputfromcommitteemembers
technicalformatting
gettingfeedback

This presentation will explore strategies for:

- Organizing the Thesis

- Managing the Thesis-Writing Process

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Organizing the Thesis – Models

- Talk to your advisor / department

- Look in UofM Libraries' *MSpace*

  http://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.jsp

- Check out *Theses Canada*

  https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/theses/Pages/search.aspx

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Organizing the Thesis – Models: Look for . . .

- Structure / Organization
  - Chapters (order, length, content)
  - Headings, sections
- Scope
  - How have others chosen to limit their projects
- Secondary Sources
  - What kinds of sources? Within the field? Interdisciplinary?
- Scholarly context
  - How do others position their work within the broader scholarship?
  - How do they (effectively) show their engagement with the field?
    - *what phrases signal participation in the scholarly conversation?*

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Home

community health sciences   Go

← Search by field of research

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Select a community to browse its collections.

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- **Research Publications from University of Manitoba Researchers** [1316]
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Discover

Author

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hossain, e (23)
bernstein, charles n. (20)
hoban, daryl j (19)
becker, allan (17)
katz, alan (17)
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canada (105)
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- yu, bo nancy (3)
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- ball, t blake (2)
- battle, paula c. (2)
- bayrampour, hamideh (2)
- bellay, susan. (2)
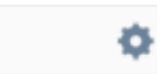- ... View More

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- medicine (12)
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- 1863 - 1899 (1)

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You can also choose "Add filters" to see additional search options, including an option to search by department.

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| 1 2 3 4 . . . 355 Next Page | ⚙ |

Practices of **community health** nurses rel...
health advice given to caregivers of infant...   (2018)

This study examined the oral **health** knowl... ...nd what
oral **health** advice is given to the caregive... ...ces in oral
health knowledge of rural, northern and u...

Community health assessment through an income-related   Lemaire,   (2017)
health equity lens: a retrospective case study of three   Jacqueline
regional **health** authorities in Manitoba

Community Health Assessment (CHA) is a legislated process in Manitoba, Canada, which provides
an overview of **health** in each Regional **Health** Authority (RHA). This process is important for
operational and strategic planning, and provides...

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  education (20)
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  winnipeg (17)
  planning (14)
  epidemiology (13)
  health (13)
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  Faculty of Health Sciences
  Manitoba Historical Pamphlet Collection
  Research Publications from other Manitoba institutions
  Research Publications from University of Manitoba Researchers
  University of Manitoba User Experience Assessment Data

Practices of **community health** nurses related to oral **health** advice given to caregivers of infants and children   Coutu, Jennifer   (2018)

This study examined the oral **health** knowledge of **community health** nurses in Manitoba and what oral **health** advice is given to the caregivers of infants and children. In addition, the differences in oral **health** knowledge of rural, northern and urban...

Community health assessment through an income-related **health** equity lens: a retrospective case study of three regional **health** authorities in Manitoba   Lemaire, Jacqueline   (2017)

Community Health Assessment (CHA) is a legislated process in Manitoba, Canada, which provides an overview of **health** in each Regional **Health** Authority (RHA). This process is important for operational and strategic planning, and provides...

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Discover

Author
- bowen, sarah j. (2)
- chartier, mariette j. (2)
- cohen, benita esther (2)
- cui, yang (2)
- erickson, julie (2)
- finlayson, marcia. (2)
- jolly, ann (2)
- leclair, leanne (2)
- marchessault, gail d. m. (2)
- martens, patricia j. (2)
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Subject
- manitoba (12)
- epidemiology (11)
- canada (9)
- epidemiology (9)
- older adults (9)
- aging (7)
- health (7)
- aging (6)
- first nations (6)
- aboriginal (5)
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"community health sciences" [🔍]

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1 2 3 4 . . . 48 Next Page ⚙

Gender, deprivation and health in Winnipeg	Haworth-Brockman, Margaret J	(2013-04-03)
Understanding the meaning of the head and neck cancer patients' oral/dental lived experiences	Mackay, Deanna	(2018)
Tuberculosis prevention, diagnosis, and care in Manitoba, 2008-2010: a performance analysis	Basham, C. Andrew	(2016)

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Author
    abraham, sneha (1)
    bhojwani, dimple (1)
    bombak, andrea elaine (1)
    chizari, hanieh (1)
    chowdhury, nasrin ahosan (1)
    craig, bethany (1)
    cui, yang (1)
    ... View More

Subject
    older adults (3)
    canada (2)
    canadian longitudinal study on aging (2)
    developmental disability (2)
    health service utilization (2)
    income (2)
    intellectual disability (2)
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Department
    community health sciences (14)
    psychology (10)
    family social sciences (7)
    anthropology (1)
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    college of rehabilitation sciences (1)
    disability studies (1)
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Faculty of Graduate Studies (Electronic Theses and Dissertations)

"community health sciences" shooshtari

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Refine to search by topic/department *and* advisor

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1 2 3 4 Next Page

Characteristics that determine complete physical examination rates in Manitobans with an intellectual or developmental disability: a retrospective cohort study   Ratnayake, Iresha   (2017)

A population-based comparative study of health and health care utilization of Manitoba children in care with and without developmental disabilities   Heinrichs, Dustin   (2015)

Hepatitis B vaccination coverage among foreign-born Canadians: data from the community health measures survey   Gunaratna, Hasantha   (2018)

Sample master's thesis table of contents

Most thesis and dissertation proposals include an introduction and a review of relevant studies on the topic. Most also include a formal or informal explanation of the methodology that will be used. In the social sciences, these three elements are typically presented as separate chapters. Notice the specific elements that are included in each chapter.

Sample master's thesis table of contents

Contents

Notice how this thesis combines the introduction and lit review into a single chapter, which is common in some fields, especially in the physical and biological/medical sciences.

Sample doctoral dissertation table of contents

Notice the increased length of chapters in a doctoral dissertation.

Once you have reviewed a few sample theses, you might find it helpful to sketch out a draft table of contents, which you may want to discuss with your advisor.

Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!

Pause and think for a moment: What do *you* do

- to get started?

- to work through/past/around obstacles?

- to keep moving forward?

Common responses from graduate students in prior presentations

You might find it helpful to create a timeline with important dates and deadlines.

Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!

Timeline (top row): ----A---- F   D   B --F---C------ E D   E

Timeline (bottom row): G--- H--- I J   -K- -L- M N O P Q   R S T   U

Timeline axis: Jan   Apr   Sept   Jan   Apr   Sept   Jan   Apr   Sept
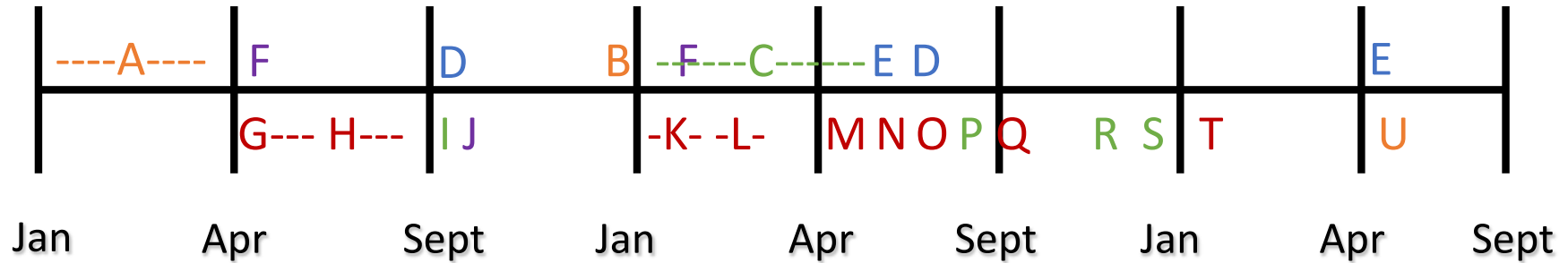
A – Course

B – Student away

C – Advisor away

D – Conference CFP

E – Conference

F – Grant Application

G – Literature review

H – Thesis proposal

I – Thesis defense

J – REB submission

K – Data collection

L – Data analysis

M – Results chapter

N – Discussion chapter

O – Figure preparation

P – Chapter(s) to advisor

Q – Revisions

R – Thesis to committee

S – Thesis defense

T – Submission to FGS

U – Convocation

Adapted from a timeline created by Dr. Dean Kriellaars, College of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Manitoba

| Name	Description	Status	Term	Amount	Location	Deadline	Ad. source	Further info.
ASECS – Kolb Trav. Fell	younger 18c scholars inc. "adv doct. cand"	"doct. can."	TRAVEL	$500	us/intl TRAVEL	01.01	ASECS	
ASECS – Williams Trav	18c English LIT. – documentary research	diss	TRAVEL	$700	TRAVEL	01.01	ASECS	
ASECS – Popkin Travel	travel to collections	open	TRAVEL	$250	us/intl TRAVEL	01.01	ASECS	
Penn. Hist & Mus Comm "Scholars in Residence"	PA Historical & Museum Commission mss. & artifact collection	open	1 – 3 mo.	1,500 / mo	Harrisburg, PA	01.16	OAH 29:4	phmc.state.pa.us
AAS: K&H Peterson Fel.	strong AAS holdings	"doct. cand."	1 - 3 mo.	1,000 / mo.	Worcester, MA	01.15	US #111	csloat@mwa.org
Harvard Atlantic World	short-term research for archival research	"adv. doct"	unspec.	2000-2500	OPEN	01.15	AHA #?	pdenault@fas.harvard.edu fas.Harvard.edu/~atlantic
AAS: Joyce Tracy Fell.	newspaper & magazine as primary sources	"doct. cand."	1 mo.	1,000	Worcester, MA	01.15	US #111	csloat@mwa.org
AAS: Legacy Fell.	any AAS holdings	"doct. cand."	1 mo.	1,000	Worcester, MA	01.15	US #111	csloat@mwa.org
John Carter Brown Lib. include. Ekstrom Fell. & Ctr.NewWrld Comp	short-term Research Fell. -- Lib. holdings Ek: "cultural influ. on gender formation" Comp: "definite comparative dimensions"	exams by 1/15	2 - 4 mo.	1,400 / mo.	Providence, RI	01.15	JCBL 7/03	jcbl.org
U. of Michigan Library Price Visiting Res. Fell	research grants for UofM collections (specialization: $16^{th} – 19^{th}$ c. America)		1 wk +	500	Ann Arbor, MI	01.15	OAH 29:4	clements.umich.edu
Winterthur Museum	diss. and short-term fellowships (art/mat.)	"doct. cand."	1 – 3 mo	1,500 / mo	Winterthur, DE	01.15	P 39:6	winterthur.org
Yale U. Walpole Lib.	18c Brit prints, drawings, mss, bks. paintings (largest coll. outside Brit. Mus.	open	1 mo.	1,800 / mo	Farmington, CT	01.15	IRIS	www.library.yale.edu/Walpole/fellowsh.htm
Princeton U. Lib Vis. Fell	Eng/Am hx, lit, mss, theater, arts	open	1 mo.	2,500	Princeton, NJ	01.15	IRIS	libweb.princeton.edu
IHR Mellon Fell.	original sources - humanities, UK archives	PRE-DISS	≤ 2 mo.	3,000	UK	01.17	email	ihr.ac.uk
Harvard Houghton Lib	research on unique materials of Houghton	"ABD grad"	1 mo.	2,500	Boston	01.17	IRIS	hcl.harvard.edu/houghton/
Newberry: ASECS Fell	Newberry collections 1660-1815	"doct. cand"	unspec.	1,200 / mo.	Chicago, IL	01.20	US #111	newberry.org
Newberry: Wolfenbüttel	use of both library collections -- for applicants of other Newberry fell's	"doct. cand"	unspec.	2000DM / mo + travel	Wolfenbüttel, Germany	01.20	US #111	newberry.org
Newberry: Ec. d. Chartes	grad. studies at Ecole Nat. des Chartes		3 - 12 mo	unspec.	Paris, France	01.20	US #111	newberry.org
Newberry longterm (Spencer, Kade)	research in residence		6-11 mo.	unspec.	Chicago, IL	01.21	Pers. 40:1	newberry.org
Louisville Inst. (LPTS)	Am. relig. life, relig. institutions	cand.	12 mo.	18,000	anywhere	01.31	IRIS	louisville-institute.org
NYState Arch: Hackman	(at least in part) holdings of NY State Arch to-be-published understudied NY topic	open (incl grad)	unspec.	100-4500	Albany, NY	01.31	US #111	nysarchives.org
Peabody Essex Museum	N.E. history & culture		≤ 2 mo.	750 / mo	Salem, MA	01.31	OAH 29:4	pem.org
Council for Euro. Studies	pre-Diss	PRE-DISS	2-3 mo.	4,000	Europe	02.01	email	europanet.org
N.E. Regional Research	use coll's of at least 3 NE inst's--2 wks ea.		8 wks	5,000	New England	02.01	Pers. 40:1	masshist.org
Va. Hist. Soc. Res. Fell.	research at the Virginia Historical Society	"doct. cand"	≤ 4 wks	500 / week	Richmond, VA	02.01	P 40:2	804.358.4901
Haverford Coll. Gest Fell	ways of expressing religious belief	open	1 mo.	1,500	Haverford, PA	02.01	AHA	haverford.edu
IU Summer PreDiss Trav	Pre-Diss. Travel Grant	PRE-DISS	TRAVEL 6-8 wks	1,000 + travel	int'l TRAVEL	02.15	email	C. Bankart - OIP
Newberry Lib.: shortterm	Newberry collections	"doct. cand"	1wk-2mo	1,200 / mo.	Chicago, IL	02.20	OAH 29:4	newberry.org
APS Lib. Resid. Res. Fel	"need to work in Society's collections"	post-exams	1 - 3 mo.	2,000 / mo.	Philadelphia, PA	03.01	US #111	amphilsoc.org
Lib. Co. Phil./ Hist. Soc. Penn. short term diss.	Col. Am.; Atl. World; Mid-Atl. regional; immigrant/ethnic hist. ***for diss. res.***	"diss. res."	1 mo.	1,750	Philadelphia, PA	03.01	h-net (h-oieahc)	librarycompany.org hsp.org
Lib. Co. Phil..: diss. fell.	"research at the Lib. Co. & Phil. region" esp. "early American economy & society"	"diss. res."	9 mo.	15,000	Philadelphia, PA	03.01	US #111	librarycompany.org

If your field has many funding options, such as archival research funding, you might find it helpful to create a table to keep track of fellowship requirements and applications deadlines.

Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!
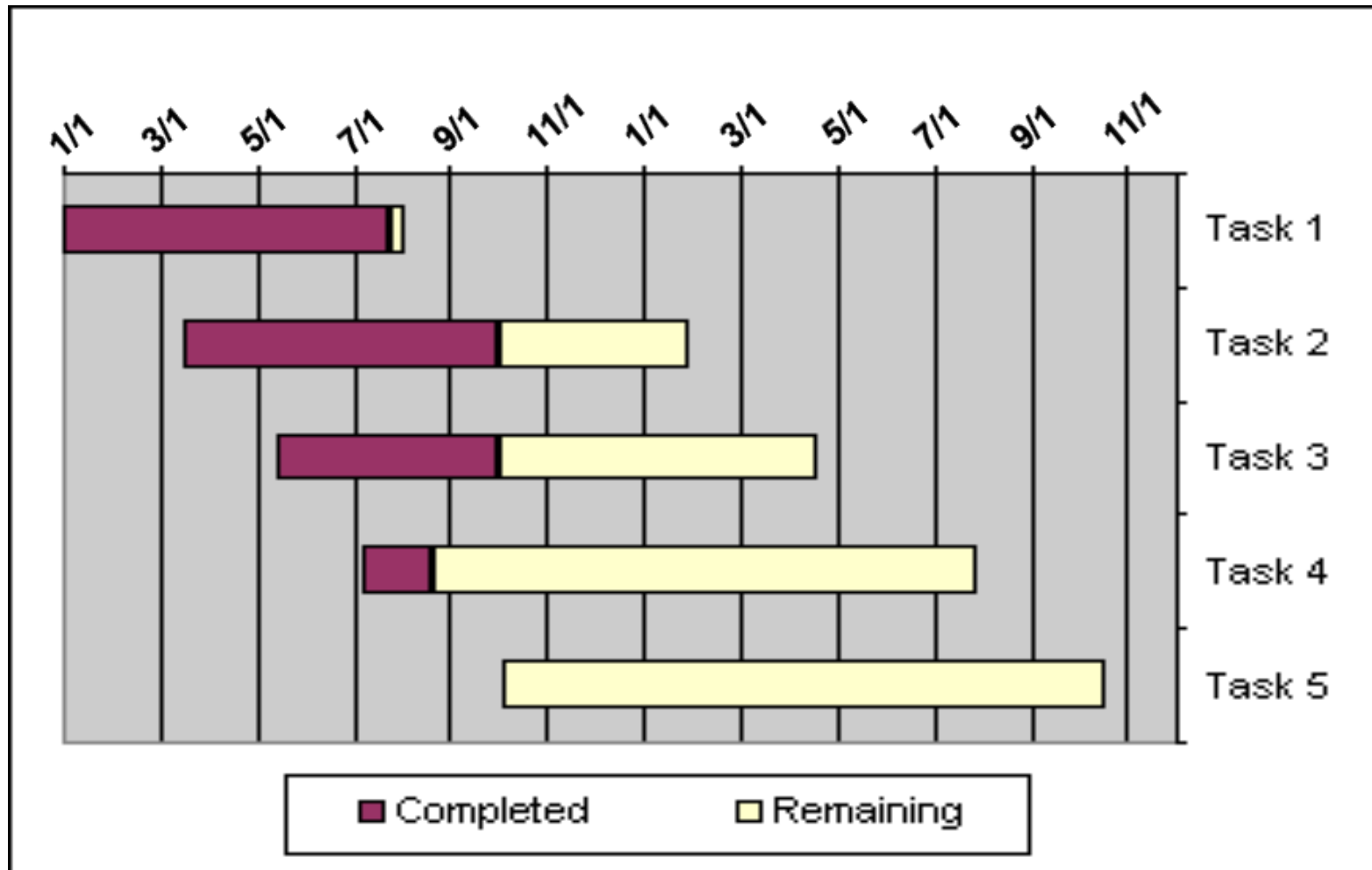
Gantt Chart
allows you to track your progress toward multiple goals

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Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!

- Write every day and do it at an established / fixed time

- Pair writing with something you enjoy

- Build rewards into your schedule

- Use small blocks of time

- Break down thesis writing into small, manageable tasks

- Create deadlines for each task, chunk, and section

- Develop a support group

- Park (your writing brain) "on the downhill slope"

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"Parking on the downhill slope" means leaving yourself a plan for your next session before you quit writing. That can make it easier to get started during the next session, much like starting a car that is parked on the downhill side of a street.

Photo by J Honeyford. Used with permission.
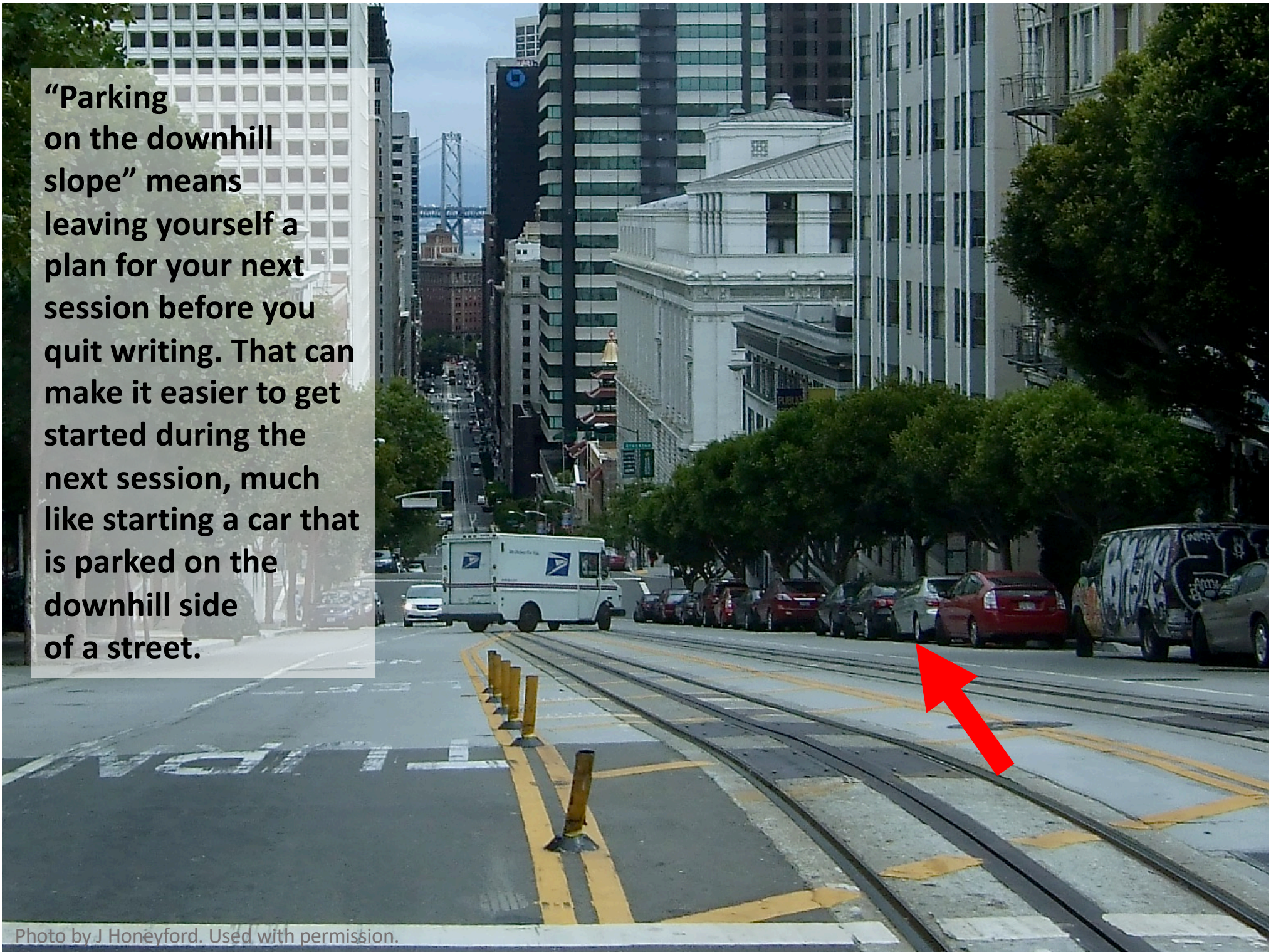
The last full paragraph completed during a writing session.

Woodward's role as both participant in and first historian of the religious societies and SRMs has perhaps <u>led</u> many English social and religious historians to accept Woodward's explanations of the origins for both and to elide the two societies on occasion. The claim of primacy appears justified with respect to the SRMs, and even, at first glance, for the religious societies. A letter from Boston printed in *A Help* alludes to the "orders" for the religious societies, presumably those of Woodward's Poplar parish, seemingly suggesting that the societies in Boston had copied their rules from those of the Poplar society:

> Every day having heard and read some Accounts of the Religious Societies of Young Men in London, they were encouraged to endeavour the like among them. And beyond their Expectation (God working with them) prevailed with the greatest part of the Youth to form themselves into Societies for Religious Exercises, signing some good Rules to be observed by them therein, much like the Orders of the Societies of young Men in London.

Before ending a writing session, write the first sentence of the next paragraph, and list the main points that you want to cover in that paragraph.

Perhaps on account of this interpretation, English historians have tended assume that the religious societies and SRMs on both side of the Atlantic . . .
- Overton
- Simon
- Portus
- Bullock
- Curtis and Speck
- Walsh?

You can also list some ideas for any subsequent paragraphs that you anticipate writing.

American religious historians, however,...
- antinomianism
- Lovelace
-vs- Levin

My argument . . .

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Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!

- Use "free writing"

- Create diagrams or other schematics

- Begin anywhere / Move to a new section

- Go back to your notes – look for insights that you have forgotten about

- Give up striving for perfection in your writing; remember, writing is a process.

- Take a break

Adapted from Elbow, P. (1998). *Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process.* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

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Self-Management & Writing: Making Progress!

- Be organized from the start (as organized as you can be)

- Be systematic and consistent

- Be thorough - better to be safe than sorry

- Know the rules of your department, faculty, and the university

- Leave out paraphrases/data/images/figures/quotes if you can't verify them or get permission to use them

- Ask! Ask! Ask!

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Additional Campus Resources

- Your advisor and other faculty and students in your department

- Your department's supplementary regulations (if any)

- Faculty of Graduate Studies Thesis Guidelines
  http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/graduate_studies/thesis/index.html

- Libraries, Reference Librarians and library subject guides
  http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/

- Academic Learning Centre writing tutors https://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/academic-supports/academic-learning

- Student Advocacy http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/

- U of M Copyright Office http://umanitoba.ca/copyright/

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Select Print and Electronic Resources

Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day: A guide to starting, revising, and finishing your doctoral thesis*. Henry Holt.

Boyle Single, P. (2010). *Demystifying dissertation writing*. Stylus.

Elbow, P. (1998). *Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Glatthorn, A. A. (1998). *Writing the winning dissertation: A step-by-step guide*. Corwin Press.

Ridley, D. (2008). *The literature review.* Sage Study Skills.

Proquest [U.S. theses and dissertations]:
http://proxycheck.lib.umanitoba.ca/libraries/online/proxy.php?http://search.proquest.com?accountid=14569

Theses Canada: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/theses/Pages/search.aspx

UofM Libraries' *MSpace:* http://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.jsp

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umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning

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