



Preparing Your Synopsis

CS 4993
Fall 2004



Formatting Guidelines

- Must be word processed (not handwritten)
- Title Page (does NOT count towards 4 pages)
 - Name, authors, journal, volume, number, pages, year of paper
 - Your name, ID #, date submitted, class (CS 4993)
- 4 pages (may go slightly longer)
- **Double spaced!!**
- One inch margins
- Minimum 11 point Times New Roman font
- Maximum 12 point Helvetica font
- Number your pages
- You may include figures if especially relevant



Purpose of the Synopsis

- Your synopsis should summarize the arguments of the authors
 - Do not impose your viewpoint
- Your synopsis should mention all relevant arguments made by the authors
- Your synopsis should make clear what the thesis of the paper is and what arguments have been made to support that thesis



Writing Your Synopsis

- Find the thesis statement (or distill it if it is not obvious) – should be a small number of sentences statement of the central argument of the paper
- Determine all of the relevant arguments of the thesis
- Create an outline of the overall argument in the paper and try to capture that argument in your own words
 - DO NOT COPY from the paper you are summarizing



Getting Started

- Examine the structure of the paper (if any) and use that as an initial outline
- Go through the paper, find one critical sentence for each paragraph, and accumulate these sentences
- Attempt to find the central thesis of the paper and the key arguments from among these sentences
- Organize in a way that makes sense to you
- Reword the arguments using your own words



Some Basics

- Start the paper with a sentence like - In the paper, "How Many Chucks Could a Woodchuck Chuck?," *Journal of Woodchucking*, Volume 13, pages 15-25, B. Beaver's central thesis is that a woodchuck can chuck as much ..."
- Then indicate the key supporting arguments
- Your paper should conclude by reiterating the central thesis and the arguments made in support of that thesis