

Body Paragraphs

Supporting Ideas and Details



Sample Body Paragraph #1: Comparison Essay

Subtopic: _____

Supporting Idea #1: _____

Supporting Idea #2: _____

The first difference between American and Japanese universities is the professors. In the U.S., the relationship between students and professors is often friendlier and more casual than in Japan where students rarely meet their professors outside of class. Every professor at an American university has “office hours” in which students can visit the professor, ask questions about the course, or consult on his or her future. If the professor is not available, students can call him or her to make an appointment. For Japanese students, however, they feel uncomfortable visiting a professor in his or her office because they think they are interrupting the professor. They also hesitate to call their professor because they consider that to be rude (Logan, 1991, p. 23). American students therefore find it easier to approach their professors outside of the classroom.

In addition, American professors believe their students’ education is more important than their research (Pearson, 1991, p. 73). This attitude is partly due to student evaluations. At the end of each semester, students evaluate the professor’s lectures, his or her attitude towards the students, the textbooks, the workload and exams. Students have access to these evaluations, so they can plan their future courses and decide which professors they would like to teach those courses. If professors consistently receive poor evaluations, they are likely to be fired from the university. Therefore, professors in American universities try to do their best in their courses. However, few Japanese universities have student evaluations. Professors can often work until retirement without worrying about dismissal. Although there are professors who are diligent in their lesson planning, there are many professors who just teach the same thing every year. One Japanese student believes that “Though students lack the will to study hard, professors also lack the will to teach hard” (Saito, 1995, p. 14). Japanese professors therefore do not feel the same pressure as American professors to teach hard.