

## Paper 3: Researched Project

English W131

Instructor: Ryan P. Shepherd

- **Assignment:**
  - **The Paper:**
    - Thoroughly analyze an issue of your choosing, arguing from a certain perspective. The paper should:
      - Provide a well-supported stance on a controversial issue. The issue may be political, historical, moral, or otherwise.
      - Take a position on an interpretation of facts or claims.
      - Back up all claims with sound reasoning, appropriate evidence, and substantial research.
      - Take into account what those *opposed* to your position might say.
      - Use appropriate quotations, paraphrases, and summaries to help support the point-of-view expressed in the paper.
      - Properly cite all outside material.
    - All arguments in the paper should be *your own* and not those expressed in your research. Use the research to help support *your own* points, not as the points themselves. I'm interested in *your* perspective, not in that of other authors; if I wanted their perspective, I could read their text.
    - Topic selection should be specific enough to cover fully in the page limit. For example, appropriate topics would include:
      - Why ADD is over-diagnosed but appropriately medicated.
      - How TV advertising negatively affects human sexuality.
      - Why Neanderthals were actually a form of Homo Sapiens.
      - Why drug use by professional baseball players should be monitored more closely.
    - Inappropriate topics include:
      - Capital punishment, abortion, gun control, marijuana legalization, and welfare. These topics are much too broad, far too general, and simply overdone. If you have a specific area of interest *and* a unique perspective on one of these issues, the topic may be considered.
      - Issues of faith. If the topic requires that the reader accept a certain religious doctrine or text, academic argument and research may prove extremely difficult. Over-reliance on *any* single text, religious or not, makes for a bad paper.
    - Students are encouraged to select topics on which their opinions have not yet formed or may be changed by their research.
  - **The Research Proposal:**
    - Early in the research process, students will be expected to write a research proposal of 250 words or greater. This proposal should:

- Detail the *exact* topic that the student is planning on researching.
- Provide a working research question.
- Detail a working research plan.
- Provide a brief explanation of what the writer hopes to accomplish with this piece.
- Provide a working thesis statement (optional)
- Explain the significance of the topic to the writer (optional)
- **The Annotated Bibliography:**
  - An annotated bibliography will be required after the student has had significant time to research his or her topic. The annotated bibliography should include:
    - A minimum of eight different sources.
    - At least three scholarly journal articles.
    - At least one book article.
    - At least one *valid* internet source.
    - An interview (optional but encouraged)

*NOTE: If the above sources cannot be found for your topic (for example, if the topic is very new), you must meet with me BEFORE the due date of the annotated bibliography to discuss alternate requirements.*
  - Each source should have an annotation including the following:
    - A proper end note citation in the style of the student's choosing, normally MLA or APA.
    - A brief (one to two sentence) summary of the materials.
    - A brief (one to two sentence) explanation of how these materials may be used in the paper.
- **Purpose:** To familiarize students with the type of argumentative research papers that they will be likely to encounter later in their academic careers. In addition, this project attempts to familiarize students with avenues of research needed for those papers, documentation formats, academic argumentation, and organization of longer papers.
- **Requirements:**
  - SIX to TEN typed pages formatted according the guidelines of the syllabus.
  - The audience for this piece is people studying in the discipline likely to deal with the issue. Voice, tone, and style should be formal, academic, and meeting with the conventions of that discipline.
  - While eight sources are required for the annotated bibliography, how many sources are used in the paper itself is up to the student. Students are encouraged to use a variety of sources and not rely on two or three; however, they do not need to use every source and may use sources found since completion of the annotated bibliography.
  - All papers must have appropriate citations and a "works cited" or "references" page (not included in page length).

- **Grading Criteria:**

- Suggested Criteria:

- Appropriate, well-formed arguments with substantial support.
- A clear thesis that is supported by the accompanying text.
- Appropriate space given to counter-arguments.
- Correct and appropriate quotation, paraphrase, and summary.
- Correct in-text and bibliographic citation.
- Academic authority established through clear knowledge of the subject being discussed.
- Clear and meaningful organization of main points.

- Other Criteria:

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- **Due Dates:**

- **October 16:** Research Proposal
- **October 30:** Annotated Bibliography
- **November 13:** First Draft of Researched Project for Peer Review
- **November 20:** Second Draft of Researched Project for Instructor Commentary.

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