Final Research Essay

Your Final Research Essay should be argumentative, analytical, critical, and evaluative. Make sure to have a clear and consistent focus that will allow your readers to gain a rich understanding of what you are trying to say. Use your thesis statement as a guide to write your paper, and make sure that all your paragraphs stay “on topic” with your thesis. For this paper you will choose your own research topic. This topic must be approved after the submission of your Topic Proposal. Your finished essay must be uploaded to Blackboard/E-Campus before 11:59 PM on Wednesday December 12, 2018.

**A successful essay will:**

* “Hook” the intended audience with an interesting introduction.
* Include a clear thesis statement as the last sentence of the introduction.
* Be clear and consistent with purpose, audience, genre, and tone.
* Use vivid vocabulary that is appropriate, professional, and used correctly.
* Use correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, etc.
* Develop an unambiguous conclusion that reinforces your thesis.
* Give relevant details that help develop the claim.
* Carefully avoid repetition and wordiness.

**Minimum requirements:**

* Minimum of **1200 words** (use Microsoft Word’s word count tool to check this). You cannot pass unless you meet the minimum word count.
  + Word count is from first word of intro through last word of conclusion
  + Title, header, and Works Cited page do not count toward word count
* Conform to **MLA format** in all particulars, including but not limited to:
  + 12 pt. Times New Roman font
  + 1” margins on all sides
  + Double-spaced
  + Original title
  + Last name and page number in header (upper right-hand corner in margin)
  + Full MLA heading (upper left-hand corner, below margin; four lines)
* Save document as Word **.doc** or Word **.docx**.
* **Minimum of five sources:**
  + **At least two peer-reviewed articles are required.**
  + General encyclopedias or dictionaries **do not count** as one of the five required print sources. This includes print and electronic editions of works like *World Book, Wikipedia,* *Webster’s,* and *Encarta*.
  + A specialized encyclopedia, such as the *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, **does** **count** as one of the five required sources.
  + **TWO** of your sources **MUST** be journal articles from the academic library databases.
  + **One** of your sources must be an actual book that you must check out from the Eastfield College Library.
  + All Internet sources MUST be credible, expert, authoritative, reliable, academic sources. Do not use sites such as about.com, WebMD, eHow, booknotes.com, Wikipedia.org, etc. Avoid Google altogether (unless it’s Google Scholar).

--Do not cite Wikipedia, quote list websites, SparkNotes, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest etc. Do not paraphrase Wikipedia. It will incredibly obvious if you attempt to do this and a major points deduction will be made.

**--Do not rely on EasyBib.com for your citations.** This resource will never be accepted in this class as an excuse for format mistakes with your in-text citations and MLA Format Works Cited page.

* **Utilize all of your on-campus resources.** Ask an Eastfield librarian for help with this assignment (for finding sources and/or and evaluating sources that you have found). Take advantage of the Writing Lab (located in the Eastfield Library) and get feedback on early drafts of this assignment.
* **Embed** all direct quotations (this means that all quotes need lead-ins). You cannot make higher than a C on the paper if you do not embed your quotes.
* **No first person**, especially “us,” “we,” and “our.” If you think the singular first person (“I,” “me,” “my”) must be used in a particular paragraph, email me in advance. I’ll either help you edit it into third person or give you special permission.
* **No second person** (you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves). This is never appropriate in a formal essay. Automatic 50. A person can use third person-pronouns in his or her paper instead.
* **No contractions** (can’t, isn’t, let’s, wasn’t, won’t, it’s). *That’s* too informal for a formal essay.
* **NO colons or semi-colons.**
* **No plagiarism.** Automatic 0.
* Include a **Works Cited page** for sources (in proper MLA format).
* Include **evidence/support** in each body paragraph. (Two citations per paragraph from one of your two required sources—minimum to pass.)
* **Reminder:** You must cite page numbers for journal articles even if accessed online (because page numbers are provided in the digital pages you access online).
* **If it is clear that you used Wikipedia as your main source you will receive an automatic 35point deduction.** There is absolutely no excuse for this. You will have more than enough time to do research before this paper is due.
* **Essays should answer questions, not ask them.** Avoid them altogether. You are allowed at most one question per essay—only in the introduction, and only if you answer it immediately in the following sentence. Questions are not permitted in body paragraphs. It is best not to use any at all.
* **All body paragraphs must have a clear topic sentence as.** This means that a body paragraph must never begin with a statement of fact, a question, or a quote.

Use the above minimum requirements as a checklist before submitting your paper. You will be disappointed with your grade if you overlook any. **Rather than viewing these requirements as a burden, consider them a tool to defend yourself from a failing grade. It is impossible to fail this assignment if you meet all the minimum requirements.** This instruction sheet is your friend. Pay attention to it.

Your Research Paper is due Wednesday December 12, 2018 before 11:59 PM. Late submissions will not be accepted. This assignment accounts for 20% of your grade. Therefore, it is imperative that you do not wait until last minute to compose this essay. In addition, do not wait until 11:50 to submit your final essay. Leave yourself some time for error in case you experience any one of a myriad of possible technical or human errors occur.

**Things I’m looking for while grading:**

CONTEXT

* Purpose: Your essay provides a clearly defined purpose.
* Introduction: Your introduction captures the attention of your readers and your main points (thesis statement) are clearly articulated.

SUBSTANCE

* Scope: Key ideas are focused throughout the paper and descriptive examples of ideas are included.
* Depth: Complete and relevant development of ideas supported by specific.

ORGANIZATION

* Focus: Organized around a focus stated in a thesis statement. Your paper is written in a logical order.
* Relationship: The relationship of ideas is clear; transitional sentences are used to guide the reader.
* Structure: All paragraphs support your main idea; paragraphs are structured around controlling ideas.

STYLE

* Outside sources must be cited using MLA style in-text citations AND listed on a works cited page, as the last page of the paper. All quotes must be embedded. All information gleaned from an outside source must be attributed to that source with an MLA citation.

Conventions/Correctness:

* Your paper reflects careful proofreading (checking for errors).
* Your paper employs the correct verb tense throughout.
* Your paper should not have any spelling or capitalization errors
* Your paper should not have any punctuation mistakes