

Major Assignment #3: Research Essay

(20% of course grade)

**Process Work (5% of course grade) due throughout unit as assigned /
Final Essay (15% of course grade) due Thursday, 5/2/23, before midnight**

Length: 2000–5000 words (maximum is at your discretion—just write a good paper)

(Word requirement here does NOT include your title page, abstract, Works Cited list, or appendices; those items are likely to raise your total word count significantly.)

Overview:

You've survived the gauntlet of gathering what should be the bulk of your research—now you get to turn that work into a well-crafted, college-level essay. As you work through this unit, you will participate in drafting your own essays, careful reading and critique of others' work, and multiple revisions as you learn to incorporate source material smoothly and build upon that research thoughtfully in crafting your own substantive contribution to your chosen conversation. As you begin your project, I encourage you to think about the following:

- Audience—how does this topic matter to your readers?
- Contribution—how much of this subject is already basically settled, and how can you add something meaningful (whether small or large) to the conversation?
- Purpose—what do you want your readers to DO at the end of reading your paper? how should reading this paper affect them?
- Voice/tone—what kind of voice do you want to achieve in this paper, both to represent yourself and to reach your audience effectively?
- Organization/development/pacing—how can you organize your material in ways that will best help your audience “get” your message (whether your goals are informative or persuasive)?

You may make this paper purely informative or more argumentative, more scientific or more humanities-based, for an academic or a public audience, but regardless, you will be making a claim (thesis), supporting that claim with evidence (and citations), acknowledging legitimate challenges to your thesis, and justifying in some way why your contribution to the conversation matters.

Essay Requirements:

- Your final paper must be between 2000-5000 words (that's about 6.5-18 pages of body text in MLA, NOT including the title page, abstract, reference list, or appendixes). Going over the word count is discouraged; going under is unacceptable.
- Your initial draft, at least, **must include section headings** to distinguish the structure of your essay. You may remove these prior to the final draft, at your discretion.
- Includes a minimum of 10 credible sources, including at least 7 of the sources from your Discovery project. In other words, you might not cite your archival piece, your survey, or one of your original articles, but then you should include all of your other sources. If you believe you need an exception to this rule, see me for advance approval.
- Your page layout and citation style need to demonstrate MLA format in page layout, the Works Cited page, and all in-text citations.

Process Work Requirements:

- Outline (at least ONE draft)
- Introduction drafts (at least TWO DIFFERENT drafts)
- First draft submission prior to workshop
- Supplemental research as needed
- 300-500 word cover memo, reflecting on the assignment. In particular, you should address the following questions:
 - Who helped you with writing your essay? (Be sure to disclose any friends, family members, tutors, classmates, online tools, etc., who helped you, to avoid charges of collusion.)
 - Throughout the entire project (the research process in Unit 2, the drafting/revision process in Unit 3), what has this experience taught you about academic writing?
 - What do you most want to remember and implement as an academic writer in future courses?
 - Optional: After you've answered all of the above, feel free to vent about things you hated about this assignment. :)