

ENGLISH 1302 RESEARCH ESSAY

Introduction

We will not write the research paper all at once; rather we will follow a sequential progress that includes my responses to you. In order to keep the process on track, timeliness is essential. It is *imperative* that you note the due date of each assignment as listed on the schedule.

Assignments have termination dates after which you cannot turn them in. ***Again, check your schedule.***

Overview

The aim of the extended research paper is to allow you to explore an issue or question related to a specific topic that interests you by researching primary and secondary sources to advance your own interpretation. Your final essay will be a 5-8 page paper, exclusive of the title page/ references page(s)/graphics/appendices. (That means a minimum of 5 pages of writing, plus the title and references pages.)

Consult with me during the process of choosing a topic to make sure that it will be viable and to get help finding suitable resources. In addition to my office hours, I am most available via email (kwood@epcc.edu), and you can email with questions. I will *generally* get back to you with a quick answer in a few hours, excluding weekends. Remember, I do have other classes and responsibilities for the college.

The process will include the following assignments:

- [Topic Questions](#) (only accepted 2 days late)
 - [Sample](#)
- [Annotated Bibliography](#)
 - [Sample](#)
- [Research Essay Draft](#)
 - [Basic Outline](#)
- [Final Researched Essay & Grade Criteria](#)

We will write the paper step-by-step. The information below outlines the general overview of the paper, so read it to get an understanding of where you're going with it. After that overview, the individual assignments are listed. You will need to review them for a basic understanding of each step, and will also need to come back to them and re-read the section as we begin to work on it.

Sources: Your paper does not have a chance to be substantive unless you have solid, credible sources. You must use at least **6 VARIED, COLLEGE-LEVEL** sources. They must meet these criteria:

- All sources must be college-level sources; that is they should be written for an adult audience and have authors who are involved in the field and have education and/or experience that illustrates a depth of knowledge in the field.
 - **At least 3 of these sources must be professional journal articles or professional publications**
 - Others may be Internet sources, and possibly (but not required) an interview
 - Any websites must be professional organizations, governmental departments or agencies, or non-profit organizations that carry on research in the area.
 - All sources should have a research and scholarly focus and back their claims and arguments with clear citation and sources unless they are examples of your topic or otherwise relevant. You should consult me about these.

If you use multiple pages from a specific website, the website only counts as one source. For example, if you use information from the Center for Disease Control's website, then that counts as one source, even if you use multiple pages from it.

DO NOT USE sources from *Cliff Notes*, *Spark Notes*, *Wikipedia*, *Grade Saver*, *e-Notes*, *Monarch Notes*, *History Channel*, *Biography Channel*, or *A&E*. Also, avoid content farm websites like *About.com*, *Yahoo Voices*, *Suite 101*, *Articlesbase*, *Answers.com*, *Helium.com*, *Buzzle.com*, and anything from Demand Media. You may use *Huffington Post* articles *with my permission*. In all of these cases, you will be able to find better sources for the information posted. These may lead you to good sources, but should not be the source you cite.

You **may not** use textbooks or encyclopedias unless they are specialized encyclopedias in your field of study and you are using them for definitions of concepts—you must clear them with me. Reference sources (dictionaries, textbooks, specialized encyclopedias, and the like) should be in **addition** to the minimum sources.

Trade magazines or special interest group sources have built in biases, but can have some valuable information. However, if you were writing about the value of advertising on the internet, a company whose product is internet advertisements would probably not be an objective source, but might be a good source for showing what is being done with internet advertising (a primary source).

Check the source of all information for reliability. Is the internet site sanctioned by a reputable institution or organization? What biases of your own might you have to be aware of to produce a scholarly look at this subject? We will study credibility in more depth as we go through the course.

In this paper, do not feel like you must solve a problem or necessarily reach a conclusion. What I am looking for is evidence that you can gather a body of knowledge on a particular subject, narrow it down to a particular focus, and show that you can synthesize the information and make some intelligent, insightful observations about the subject. What I don't want is just a regurgitation of information strung together. A significant part of the paper should be your

interpretation of the information and discussion of your point of view after having studied your research.

Documentation: Follow the **APA** Style Guide (latest version) for documenting the sources in your text and on your References page. If you are unsure about a particular source, bring it to me so that I can help you with it.

Final advice - try to relax and consult me when needed throughout the process—I'm here to help. Remember that you want to turn in the best essay you can to me, but also keep in mind that you'll be able to revise the paper.

Please make use of my office hours to come by and get my help with research, documentation, and ideas. Also, remember that the writing center tutors are well practiced with this too, and going to get their help will not only make the practice easier for you, but also provide you with extra credit for the part of the assignment you're working on.

Remember, for all steps from the Annotated Bibliography on, you can get extra credit by going to the writing center. For more information on the online writing center, [check out this link](#).

SEQUENTIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Topic Questions

Why take this step?

- Taking time to think through questions you have about a topic will help you to go beyond just finding information for a report and focus on deeper issues required for college-level writing.
- Questions also help you think about different parts, points, and paths you might take in doing your research.
- This lets me give you advice and tips on researching your topic and helps make sure you are choosing a topic that is both acceptable and researchable in the time we have.

You will begin by finding a topic that will give you a wide range of issues to explore. While there are numerous topics you can write about, there are some that are forbidden. **I will NOT read essays on the following topics:**

- Abortion
- Body Modification
- Capital Punishment
- Child Abuse
- Gun Control
- Happiness/Positive Thinking
- Media/Video Game Influence on Violence
- Obesity
- Parenting Styles
- Politics
- Professional Athlete Salaries
- Religion/Religious Issues
- Same-Sex Marriage
- Serial Killers

The topic you choose may require some discussion of the issues above, but your paper should not focus on them. Discuss this with me if your topic veers toward these issues. If you have an idea that you think takes a *very unique* perspective on one of the topics above, ask me about it. The worst I could say is no, and I might say yes.

Here is a list of topics to give you ideas. *You can come up with a topic that is not on this list; this should just get you thinking.* I really want you to choose something you want to know about. What's something you've always wanted to learn more about, or something that some research would help you with?

- Advertising's methods or effects
- Appropriate Conduct/Manners
- Art or a Specific Artist— influence and impact
- Beauty
- Body image
- An ethical dilemma in your Career or Major
- Conformity/Rebellion
- Copyright/Universal Access
- Cultural Traditions—birthday parties, proms, backyard barbeques, etc.
- Death and Dying
- Diversity at school or work
- Education
- Fashion
- Food
- Games
- History—era, event, etc.
- Individual and Society
- Literary Era or Figure
- Masculinity/Femininity/ Gender
- Music
- Popular Culture Trends
- Race/Ethnicity/Nationality
- Rites of Passage
- Impact/Role of Sports
- Technology
- Teen/Adult/Elderly Culture
- TV/Film
- War
- Writing/Story genres (i.e.: crime, comedy, action, chick flicks, etc.)
- Workplace Ethics

Once you have identified a topic, begin thinking about a particular issue to research. What are some things you want to find out about this topic? Would you look at the social aspects, the psychology, the economics, the cultural role or implication? *Your paper must go beyond just being informative. **You must look at some aspect and make an argument about its role, effect, development, feasibility, or impact.***

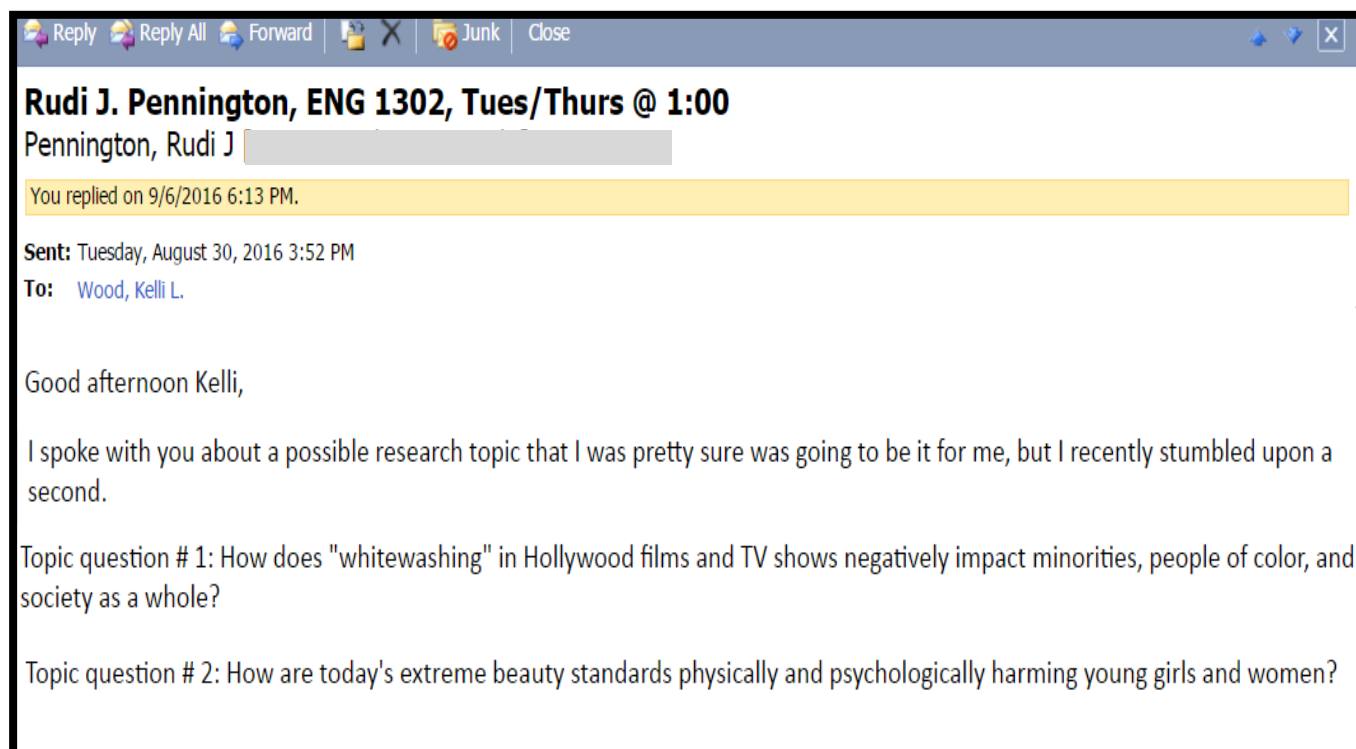
Think about how you would take your topic and put it in a sentence that started with something like this: What is the significance of _____? or How does _____ have an effect on _____? Look at the readings we did on research questions and think about your topic in terms of their examples and the structure of those questions.

Develop **two** different but specific questions you would like to investigate about your topic, or if you're not sure, you can do a question for two different topics. Use the readings we've done about developing research questions to help you with these.

Turn those questions in by the due date listed on the syllabus schedule. DO NOT attach a document with the questions. I will not read and respond to that.

- *I will only accept these late for two days.*
- DO NOT ATTACH YOUR QUESTIONS. Just type them in the email. See the sample below.
- If you do not phrase these as questions, I will ask you to resubmit them as questions. The assignment will not be considered turned in until you send me your research *questions*. You will need to resubmit before the late period ends. (See the first bullet point for late timing.)
- **Due via email: Email them to me at kwood@epcc.edu**

Here is a sample:



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Annotated Bibliography

Why take this step?

- Your annotated bibliography makes you think really carefully about the research you have gathered and gets you ready for the next step in writing the paper: combining the research you've found with your view and points about it—the essay itself.
- It enhances your skill in formal writing through explaining basic facts about a source.
- It also requires you to cite your sources so that you make sure you have all information you need for your citations.
- It is a skill you will likely need for classes in your field. I've been told by many former students in a number of fields that many teachers in higher-level classes (think nursing, the sciences, engineering, etc.) require these, often in place of a paper, and it counts toward a big chunk of their overall grades in the course.

An Annotated Bibliography is an assignment often required in college that collects your research, provides a citation for each source with an annotation—a paragraph about it. Your teachers will have different requirements for what goes in the annotation, so you'll need to attend to that with each course.

To do your annotated bibliography, you will need to find and read your sources. We will read about citing sources, writing summaries, and doing an annotated bibliography as well as look at some sample annotated bibliographies.

An annotation is simply a paragraph in which you most often discuss the content of the source and explain how it fits into your research. I also require that you begin by providing the author's credibility. *This should be at least 300 words long! Include your word count at the end of the summary.* You can, and should, use some quotes from the source.

(Here are links to figuring out Word count in [Word](#) or in [Google Docs](#). See the sample below for an example. If you use another word processor, ask the internet how to find word count.)

The final version should

- Be formatted in APA format
- List the sources alphabetically. [See this link for any questions you have about APA alphabetizing.](#)
- Include an annotation of at least 300 words following each citation with
 - The author's credibility,
 - a discussion of the content of the source including the main points and information in it, and
 - a short sentence about how you see this fitting into your final essay. (This is just a guess—what you think as you're writing the annotation.)
- Use spell and grammar check in your word processor as well as Grammarly.
- Optional: Writing Center. Don't forget that with this assignment, I will give you up to 10 points for visiting the writing center instead of the usual 5.) If you go to the writing center, include a picture of the draft with the verification (stamp or form), or if you go to

the online writing center, include the response from them, a screenshot of the confirmation email you received, or other screenshot showing you working with them when you upload your work. ([Online Writing Center information](#))

Grading Criteria

Professionalism

- Laid out in current APA format
- Completeness (required number citations and annotations)
- Organization—sources arranged in alphabetical order

Content

- Sources meet standards described in the assignment and other texts/videos
- Citation is correct (In-text and Reference citation)
- Credibility is established for each author/source.
- Annotations are well developed and discuss the major points made in the source.
- Annotation ends with ideas about where the source can be used in the essay.

Style

- The tone and voice in the document fit the level of formality and are clearly aimed at the intended audience. No use of personal pronouns (I/me/my/you) unless in quotes from the source or in the final sentence about usage in the essay.


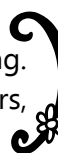
Grammar and Mechanics

- The document is free of error and represents professional attention to detail.

Feedback

I will give you quick feedback and a tentative grade on your annotated bibliography, that way you can fix any citations and work on any of the writing/wording for your essay. You will be able to revise the annotated bibliography.

When I give you initial feedback, I may tell you a source is not acceptable and that you need to find a different one. You will lose points for that, but by finding a new source and replacing the unacceptable source with it in your revision; you will get those points back. ☺

 This is why it's very important to verify credibility as you go along.
If you're not sure about a source, bring it to class, my office hours,
or send me a link via email, and I'll help you out. 

Below is a sample. *Read it carefully and my notes explaining how each part is integrated.* I suggest you read it out loud—it will help. Then stop and read my notes as you come to them. After that, click on the link below the sample and take a good LOOK at the complete sample.

NOTE: In your paper when you give credibility for sources with multiple authors, you shouldn't list each one and their credibility separately. You can either talk about them in terms of having the same background (I.e.: "Smith and his colleagues who are all researchers in the field of communication . . . " or "Smith and his colleagues, who teach and research at Columbia University. . . "), or if they come from different places and backgrounds, you can talk about the first author (lead author), (I.e.: "Smith, a researcher at Columbia University, and his colleagues examined how we text. . .")

See this link for how to treat [multiple authors in the in-text citations](#), and this one for how to treat them in the [References page citations](#).

Step 1: Format your paper.

Format your paper in APA. This example does not show the title page, but make sure you include it.

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Annotated Bibliography:**Or Your Title Here if You Already Know It**

Engeln, R. (2013, October 21). *An Epidemic of Beauty Sickness* | Renee Engeln | TEDxUConn 2013. [Video]. TED Conferences. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63XsokRPV_Y

Engeln, a psychologist and body image researcher at Northwestern University,

admits that her inspiration for her research was brought to fruition after listening to her undergraduate students who would obsess over their appearances and their quest to modify their bodies. In her TED Talk, "An Epidemic of Beauty Sickness," Engeln explains that

although there is a legitimate scientific perspective of beauty, which is based largely on symmetry, modern perceptions of beauty have changed drastically. A majority of American women today suffer from, what Engeln (2013) has termed, "beauty sickness" (3:47). It can be described as an obsession with appearance, a persistent lack of self-satisfaction with body image, and a strong and relentless drive to achieve beauty, as it is defined by American society. Engeln notes that beauty sickness is not an affliction specific to women; men are just as susceptible as women, "but women are much more likely to hate their bodies. Women spend more money on beauty, they spend more time on beauty, they are at 10 times greater risk for anorexia and bulimia" (3:53). Engeln claims that it is impossible to engage with the world while chronically monitoring one's body's appearance: "When you are beauty sick, you cannot engage with the world, because between you and the world is a mirror. And it's a mirror that travels with you everywhere; you can't seem to put it down" (11:10).

Step 2:
Cite your sources alphabetically.

Step 3:
Write the annotations for the required number of sources.

This provides the main topic and point that the author is making in the source.

The rest of the annotation discusses the main points that the author makes to support that, and includes significant quotes using in-text and parenthetical citations as required.

This provides credibility. Begin your annotation with that. Your first focus should be on the author/organization and his or her education and/or experience in this field or topic.

If you have a source written by a reporter for a newspaper or magazine, make sure to tell who they write for. As long as that source is credible, the credibility suffices for the writer.

Why doesn't Rudi continue to put the date in after Engeln's name in her sentences after the first one in the paragraph? Find out on this webpage.

3

Finally, Engeln's (2013) suggestion to turn the tide against beauty sickness is to invest less in beauty. For example, if watching shows like *America's Next Top Model* or reading magazines like *Cosmo* makes people think more about their appearance, stop watching/reading. She also suggests limiting mirror time, much like a parent limits their child's screen time, and

[s]top worrying about the size of your thighs, and think about the strength of your thighs, because those legs, after all, are the legs that walk you around in the world. And stop talking about your upper arms as though they are "*diseased*." Those are the arms that reach out and bring the things you love close to you. (Engeln, 2013, 13:31, emphasis in original)

See this webpage for how to show that you've added emphasis in a quote or that the author has provided the original emphasis.

Explain how this source will fit into your research—that's just as you see it now. What's your best guess? 1 sentence.

This article provides support for the idea that there is a dark side to the desire for beauty and will be helpful in defining some of the terms and in explaining both what can go wrong as well as ways to combat that. (472 words)

Step 4:
Make sure to provide the word count for your annotation.

Feng, C. (2002 December 6). Looking Good: The Psychology and Biology of Beauty." *Journal of Young Investigators*, (6). Retrieved from www.legacy.jyi.org

In the peer-reviewed article, "Looking Good: The Psychology and Biology of Beauty," an undergraduate of Human Biology at Stanford University, Feng, gives a historic and scientific look into the perceptions of beauty. First, Feng (2002) suggests that beauty has serious implications, stating that the Trojan War was instigated by Helen of Troy, a very beautiful Spartan queen who was celebrated for

[See the complete annotated bibliography here.](#)

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Developing a Draft

Not accepted more than two days past the due date.

Why do this step?

- Developing a version you think of as your draft gives you space to just get ideas out without worrying about any type of perfection.
- Understanding a version is a draft allows you to experiment with things and work on ideas primarily, letting you to focus on the technical details in later stages.

Now that you have done your Annotated Bibliography, you are familiar with your research. Next it's time to think about the paper as a whole. Begin by going back to one of our samples on the English 1302 Research page and reading it through. Think about how the writer there interweaves both the research and their thoughts and ideas. That's what we're going for. In essence, there are 3 basic parts to the final research paper.

- **Your main point** should be the answer to the question(s) you started with (or what those questions have become as you researched).
 - What do you think now that you know what you know?
- **Your evidence** for that belief is your research.
 - Share what you know (much of your annotated bibliography can be used for this)
- **Your points and explanation** of how that research shows or illustrates that answer you arrived at.
 - So what? Why is this important? What does it show us about this topic? How does it help us deal with it? (There are lots of possibilities here depending on your question/topic.)

Basically, the missing ingredient you will develop in drafting is your point of view—your discussion and explanation of what the research shows—your “so what?”

You will turn in your draft to me. This should be typed and correctly formatted and represent a solid start on the essay even though it is a *draft*. In essence, it should be near the final stage.

I will give you feedback and advice to help you finish it before it gets a final grade. You will get a 100 for turning in the draft, though it must be substantial to get full credit. You may go to the writing center with this and get extra credit on the draft grade.

Once I get the feedback done and return the draft to you, read my feedback, ask me questions, work on finalizing your paper, and go to the writing center before turning in the final version.

While we have readings and activities/videos to help you do this, here are some overall tips and reminders for your draft.

Use quotes judiciously: Use them when paraphrasing will make the statement unclear or a kernel of an idea is so perfectly stated that trying to paraphrase in your own words will ruin the impact of the statement. See the **APA Style Guides** for how to handle long quotes Consult your *Writer's Reference* and the [Purdue OWL](#) for more information.

It is poor form to begin a paragraph with a quotation—letting the source speak for you instead of incorporating the source into your text. Additionally, it is poor form to end a paragraph with a quote or paraphrase instead of interpreting the idea and putting it in context of your argument. DO NOT DO THIS!

Use correct in-text citation: Make sure to use in-text citations for all quotes and specific paraphrases. Specific paraphrases come from 1-2 pages. Remember, when you give a source's name, put the publication year in parenthesis right after it (unless you've used it in your sentence).

Using Tables, Figures, and Examples: These should only be used if absolutely necessary in your essay. The better option is to put them in an appendix. If, however, you need to place one in your paper, remember that it does not count toward the page length. [Consult this source](#) as a starting point, but also discuss it with me if you think you need these in your paper.

Appendices: Graphics or charts should **only** be used if they can clarify some concept in your paper. Don't use them just for a flashy effect or for "gee whiz" value. If you include large graphics or charts, include each on a separate appendix page and label each one A, B, and so on. Refer to such appendices in the text where you discuss that issue Graphs, charts, and appendices are not included as pages of text. They must be **in addition** to the **5** pages. See your *Writer's Reference* or the [Purdue OWL](#) for more on this, and consult with me about doing this in your paper.

Here's a basic outline of what should be going on in your research paper:

- I. Your introduction paragraph should
 - A. Introduce the audience to the issue being addressed through discussion of the overall topic, history, major issues, etc. Basically, get readers into the subject matter.
 - B. Provide your thesis. (Now that you've read all of this research, what's the answer to your question, and what's the significance of understanding this? Write that out in one clear sentence. NO QUESTIONS—your paper is the answer.)
- II. The body of your paper should
 - A. Provide a clear topic sentence for each section of the body. What is the main point you're making?
 1. Provide relevant research to follow up on each topic sentence. Make sure to include proper attribution and in-text citations.
 2. Interpret your evidence. What does it show or illustrate about the point you're making at the moment, or how does it show something about your point the paper?

- B. Repeat the process in section II.A. above as needed for each point or subtopic in your essay.
- III. The conclusion should
 - A. Bring together all information and interpretation discussed, explaining how all of the parts come together to illustrate the bigger point made in the thesis. You should not simply summarize what you said in your essay. Now that you've gathered all of this research and you've thought about it, what's the big deal? How does this all come together and what does it show, mean, or suggest? I suggest that you set everything else aside and draft this by just beginning with "after researching and reading about this, I think. . ." Just let yourself write, then once you've done that, come back to it and shape it up to college-level writing.
- IV. References page
 - A. A References page for all sources you have used in your paper. Your final paper must use at least 6 sources, but can use more. Remember that definitions don't count toward the base 6 sources.

You will receive a 100 for turning the draft in on time, and I will return it to you with a tentative grade to let you know what it would get if it were submitted as the final draft.

If you are happy with that grade, you can turn in the feedback version I gave you in my response to your draft as your final.

If you are not happy with that grade, use my comments and advice as you finish it up, and make sure and submit it by the date I announce.

Review the grade criteria for the final version in the next section.

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Final Researched Essay

Why do this step?

- If you've written a draft and then taken a break from it for a while, you will see the final version much more clearly and be able to clarify any confusing points that may be in the draft because you were trying to get words on the page.
- Another benefit to having done a draft and then moving to a final version is that taking a break between the drafts allows you to find simple mistakes you may have read over many times like having *they* when you meant *the* or other simple things like that.

Essay Grading Criteria

Your paper must use the conventions of standard written English (appropriate diction, no omitted words, grammar, punctuation, and spelling). The omission of running spell check and proofreading your essay (using [Grammarly](#)) will adversely affect your grade in a very significant way. **Not including a references page will result in a grade no higher than a 50.** The same is true of not including in-text citations.

I grade based on the following questions. You should make sure that you can answer *yes* to these questions when you read your final draft of your essay.

- **Document design and requisites**
 - Is the essay correctly formatted?
 - Does the essay include a References page?
 - Is the essay developed to the required minimum length? (5 pages)
- **Introduction**
 - Does the introduction work to move the audience into the issue being addressed though discussion of the overall topic, history, major issues, etc.?
 - Is the thesis clearly articulated at the end of the introduction in a concise declarative statement? (No questions—just the answers.)
- **Body**
 - Is there solid, college-level evidence to support the thesis?
 - Is the evidence clearly interpreted and explained in light of the thesis?
 - Is the evidence integrated into the writing, using signal phrases and correct in-text citations?
 - Is it organized in a coherent, logical manner?
- **Development**
 - Is the paper developed with a depth that represents college-level thinking?
 - If appropriate, does it examine various sides of the issue?
- **Conclusion**
 - Does the conclusion bring together all information and interpretation, explaining how all of the parts come together to illustrate the bigger point made in the thesis?
- **Overall Essay Focus**
 - Does the paper as a whole work together to explain and support the thesis throughout?

- **References Page**
 - Is the page titled correctly?
 - Are the entries formatted and arranged correctly?
 - Are the entries cited correctly?
 - Are sources used varied and appropriate for college level writing?
 - Are all sources listed used in the essay? Are all sources used in the essay listed?
- **Style and Grammar**
 - Is the grammar representative of college-level writing?
 - Do the style and voice reflect the tone of the academic conversation?
- **Late points and extra credit**
 - Is the paper turned in on time?
 - Writing Center extra credit?

Turning in Your Final Draft

Make sure to include

- Final Essay
- Final Grammarly Report
- (Optional) Writing Center documentation for **all** writing center visits with the essay. Just take a picture of the first page with the stamp or form so that I can see it's this essay if you went to an on-campus writing center, or, if you went to the online writing center, upload their response/link to it, a screenshot of the confirmation email from them, or other proof you went.

Due on Blackboard

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