

English Composition 106

Project #2: Citation and Documentation

Instructor: Elizabeth Cuddy

Final Draft Due Date: Wednesday, October 21st

Format Specifications: a minimum ten entries in a properly MLA-formatted annotated bibliography composed of five books, two scholarly journal articles, one website, one newspaper article and another potential source, all on a topic you will explore more thoroughly in Project #3. Each description is expected to contain a minimum of 150 words and should also include an explanation of how each source will contribute to your research paper.



Research is scholarship's lifeblood. While teaching (sharing the knowledge accumulated through research with future scholars) and publishing (sharing research with those in one's field) are both part of every academic's mandate, accomplishing original research and contributing to the sum of humanity's collective knowledge is the primary goal of all scholars and proper citation and annotation have central roles in this endeavor.

Although innovation and creativity are unquestionably necessary for advancements to be made in any field, a solid grasp of both past and contemporary scholarship are crucial as well. The ability to understand and build on this scholarship is what allows scholars to communicate with one another and further progress to be made.

This project will focus on the process through which topics in your respective fields will be explored as you each prepare to write a research paper. While not always the most interesting of tasks, a thorough understanding of how (and why) bibliographies are arranged will assist you as you utilize both library catalogues and your sources' bibliographies which, in turn, will ultimately help you write your own. Documenting a source is not a difficult task, but it does require attention paid to detail so future students and scholars can benefit from your work. In the interest of uniformity we will be working with the guidelines provided by the MLA citation guide found this course's assigned textbook, *The Short Guide to College Writing*.

In addition to increasing your familiarity with the fine and subtle art of source documentation, this project will also help you expand your understanding of the conversations being held by scholars in your field(s). A careful evaluation and analysis of each potential source will provide you with a framework in which you may formulate questions of your own, and these questions will become the foundation of your research paper. The completion of this project should generate several potential ideas for your argumentative research paper as well as provide a collection of sources capable of assisting you as you develop your paper's final argument.

A brief (150-200 words), typed description of your proposed topic is due in class on Friday, October 9th.

English Composition 106
Project #3: Adventures in
Researching

Instructor: Elizabeth Cuddy

Final Draft Due Date: in class on
Wednesday, November 16th

Format Specifications: 7-8 pages,
double-spaced, Times New Roman
10-12 point font. A bibliography
(with a minimum of ten sources, six
of which must be books or scholarly
articles), a design plan, and two drafts
are also expected to be turned in with
the final draft.



Unlike the columns written for the blog and meant for general consumption your next paper will be intended for an academic audience. Consequently, this paper will have a more scholarly bent which in turn will affect your standards of research, argumentation, and language—all of which will need to be more formally and rigorously considered and constructed. Furthermore, as you work through all the stages of writing this piece it is important to remember that this is a research *paper*, not a research *report* and that it is crucial that your paper possesses an original argumentative structure. (Also, be aware that papers missing this argumentative structure cannot receive a grade higher than a C.) While your paper topic should be somehow connected to your field of study and must be approved by your instructor don't be surprised if the focus of your chosen research topic shifts as you shape it into an argument—alterations often beget a whole host of additional changes including the way in which you present a new argument and the conclusions drawn at the end of the paper.

It is important that you do extra research for this project, not just on what is supportive, but also on what counters your argument. In your paper, you will need to address these disputes. If an editorial asks you to be stylishly polemical, an academic approach asks you to be careful, methodical, and measured in your conclusions. You need to be much more attentive to making sure your logic is sound and that your evidence supports what you claim. This requires you to think about counter-evidence, or about the fact that what you take to be supporting evidence can be turned around. In summation, this paper needs to be a carefully researched and thought-out essay written in the mode of academic argument. (Note: you may include visuals to aid you in your argument. However, your use of visuals should mirror your overall approach—this is formal writing.)

Your audience is a general academic community, who may or may not know much about your topic. They will have relatively high standards of proof, and will be more swayed by logical appeals over emotional appeals. However, ethos will matter to them, so be aware of how your writing conveys your credibility.

A design plan is due at the beginning of class on Friday, October 23rd. This design plan is to consist of a typed paragraph (200-300 words) describing your initial discoveries in your research and the (preliminary) thesis you wish to investigate.