The Research Project

The main product of your semester's work will be a research essay of 10-12 pages on a subject of your choice. Throughout the semester, you will work through the process of narrowing a topic, shaping a research problem, locating supporting evidence, and presenting a scholarly argument. Research takes time, so plan to work steadily on your project, which is divided into several assignments to keep you on schedule. Chris and I are ready to assist you at all stages, as is the library staff. The library liaison for the Honors Program is Andrew Lee. He can be reached at yli7@gmu.edu or 703-993-8268.

In your Honors 110 research paper, instead of simply reporting on a topic, you will make and defend specific claims about it. You will need to demonstrate your understanding of research on your topic and articulate a specific position of your own with respect to it. You will show how you arrived at your position by explaining controversies about your topic in a related academic field. If you write about a topic you truly care about, then you will be able to better engage your readers.

Your research project includes the following assignments:

> **Specifications** for all assignments listed below (except for the Research Log & Presentation):
> ❒ typed
> ❒ double-spaced with one-inch margins
> ❒ standard, 12-point font
> *Points will be deducted for work that does not meet these specifications.*

Conferences/Conference Assignments
☺ September 20 & 22 - Topic & Proposal, Conference Assignment #1 due
☺ October 25 & 27 - Drafting, Conference Assignment #2 due
☺ November 22, December 1 & 2 -Revising
You will receive conference assignment handouts.

You will meet with Professor Koch and Chris for three conferences about your research project. Come prepared with your completed conference assignments, including any questions you have. We will help you shape your project at these conferences.

Research Proposal
☺ Complete Draft due Tues., September 27
☺ Revised Proposal due Thurs., September 29

You will write a research proposal that is 2-3 pages long. Attach a "Works Consulted" list in correct MLA format that contains at least five sources, no more than 1/3 of which may be Web Sites.

Your proposal will consist of five components that you integrate into a cohesive essay; instead of dividing your proposal into sections, write it as a formal paper.
(1) Research Question: This question should be specific and should address clearly the purpose of your project.
(2) Working Thesis: Provide a preliminary thesis, a main claim that answers your research question. It should be specific, arguable, and answer, "so what?".
(3) Sub-Questions: List sub-questions you plan to explore to prove your main claim.

(4) <u>Significance</u>: Show how and why the answers to your sub-questions are significant to prove your thesis.

(5) <u>Controversies</u>: Name the applicable academic field(s) for your topic, and show how your paper fits into one or more controversies.

Note: Any topic changes after you submit your research proposal must be approved by Professor Koch before you complete any additional work.

Research Log

☺ Parts I & II due <u>Tues., September 2</u>
☺ Part III due <u>Tues., September 27</u>
☺ Part IV due <u>Fri., September 30</u>
☺ Completed Worksheet due <u>Tues., October 4</u>

      The research log is designed to lead you through the process of locating sources and creating the bibliography you will need for your project. Chris will provide directed library research to help you with this assignment.

Workshops/Peer Conferences

☺ 1-page draft and working outline (2 copies) due <u>Tues., October 18</u>
☺ 3-page draft (3 copies) due <u>Tues., October 25</u>
☺ 6-page draft (2 copies) due <u>Thurs., November 3</u>
☺ 8-10 page draft (2 copies) due <u>Tues., November 8</u>

      On designated dates throughout the semester, we will have drafting workshops and peer conferences, during which you will get feedback from your peers, Chris, and me. Attendance is required at all peer conferences. We will also devote class time each week to discuss your questions and challenges.

Complete Draft of Research Paper

☺ <u>Thurs., November 10</u> (in 2-pocket folder)

      Your complete draft is an 8-10 page essay plus a bibliography. Your "Works Cited" or "Works Consulted" page must be in correct MLA format and must contain at least ten sources. No more than 1/3 of your sources may be from Web Sites, unless your topic demands so, which must be discussed with Professor Koch by Conference #2. Six sources must be cited in the body of your paper, using correct MLA parenthetical documentation format. *See handout for the list of other items to submit with this draft.*

Revised Draft of Research Paper

☺ <u>Thurs., December 8</u> (in 2-pocket folder)

      Your revised draft is a 10-12 page essay plus a bibliography. Your "Works Cited" or "Works Consulted" page must meet the same requirements as specified for the first draft. *See handout for the list of other items to submit with this draft.*

Presentation

☺ <u>November 17-December 6</u>

You will receive a handout that specifies the format of your presentation.

      During a class period in the last few weeks of the semester, you will make a 10-minute presentation on your project. The purpose of the presentation is to help you to clarify your research project and to enable you to share your insights into the research process.

<u>**Academic Honesty Reminder**</u> – See the statement on academic honesty and plagiarism in the Course Policies, and re-read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 201-4 for clarification.