

DUE: April 16

Paper due on
Canvas (11:59pm)
(*doc, docx*)

Research Folder
due in person by
class time

English 104, Unit 4: Research Paper

Assignment's Writing Program Goals:

*-Create and complete
research projects*

*-Employ critical thinking
in evaluation,
speculation, analysis, and
synthesis required to
evolve and complete a
research project.*

*-Use a variety of
strategies to gather and
organize information
appropriate for the
context and persuasive to
the intended audience.*

*-Employ format, syntax,
punctuation, and spelling
appropriate to various
rhetorical situations in a
stylistically sophisticated
manner.*

Additional goals:

*-Write in a rhetorically
effective manner for your
intended audience*

You have conducted primary research (Unit 1), rhetorically analyzed a documentary (Units 2), created and researched a question inspired from the documentary, and written a proposal and annotated bibliography (Unit 3). In this unit, you will be combining all of these skills to write a rhetorically effective research paper of 8-12 pages.

Why should I care about this?

This assignment functions as a one of the culminations of the semester:

How does this help me for the next assignment?

⇒ In the next assignment, you will be remixing this research paper in a multimodal format for a different audience of your choosing.

How does this help me for this course?

⇒ Not only is one of the defining projects of English 104 since it puts all the building blocks together, but this project will also help you for the last unit where you remix all of your research in a creative way.

How does this help me in my life?

⇒ For a research paper, you have to organize, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize a variety of information. These are skills that you will use in every major as well in the workplace. Additionally, this paper is a much longer work than you are probably used to, so it will help you develop better critical thinking, organizational techniques, and writing endurance. Finally, in this paper, you have to be rhetorically effective for your intended audience, which is something that you have to do every day.

Thesis Statement

Your claim comes from all the research that you have done, and here are three important considerations for you are that your thesis:

- *Answers a question*—In this case, the question you should answer is from your proposal and annotated bibliography's research.
- *Is innovative*—This is not the time to be clichéd. You want your argument to go above the “common.” Hence, you want to synthesize and evaluate your sources to create an insightful argument.
- *Is contestable*—It's okay if your audience doesn't agree with your claim, but your thesis needs to have enough weight and tension that it attempts to successfully convince your audience, even if they may not agree. It may seem counterintuitive, but you want to write a focused thesis with which people may disagree. For example, compare the two thesis statements:
 - The War on Drugs was meant to deter drugs.
 - This thesis statement lacks innovation. Why should we care about this statement? A reader would not be motivated to keep reading. Additionally, it lacks contestability and focus---if that's what it was meant to do, was it successful? Did it actually do something different?
 - Although many people see the war on drugs as necessary in our society to deter drug use, it actually unfairly incarcerates minorities and acts as modern-day slavery.
 - This statement is focused, contestable, and innovated. However, some readers may disagree with the choice. Maybe a reader doesn't agree that there is “modern-day slavery.” So, it becomes this writer's job to understand the contestability of their thesis and still convince their reader that their argument has value.

Supporting Your Research

You need to think about who would be the audience for your paper and take that into consideration as you write. You will need to use rhetorical strategies to establish your credibility (*ethos*) and also appeal to your intended audience's sense of logic (*logos*) and emotion (*pathos*).

You want to make sure that you have an organized argument (depending on your topic, you may want to use section headers to organize your argument). To support your thesis, you need to incorporate and synthesize credible evidence as well as entertain objections to your argument.

You will need to use **at least 6 credible sources** (including at least 2 peer-reviewed articles) from your annotated bibliography. Remember, your sources support *your* argument; they aren't just dropped in for the sake of using them. So, this means that you should use them to add to your points as well as providing your analysis for every quotation. Also, don't use huge blocks of quotations just to fill up the page---every quotation should have a purpose in your argument.

Additionally, make sure that you properly cite every source, both in-text and on the Works Cited page. These sources should also be in an updated research folder that you submit too in person.

Submission Criteria:

- Electronic upload to Canvas
- **8-12 full pages** (*not including visuals or Works Cited page*)
- Paper formatted in MLA8
- Works Cited page
- **Due in Physical Form during class--** Updated research folder with only the sources that you used in the paper. Quotations you used should be highlighted

Grading Criteria (250 points/25% overall grade):

This paper will be graded holistically with all components (incorporation, analysis, and synthesis of research as well as your argument) taken into consideration. You'll primarily be graded on how you use support and evidence to support your contestable and innovative claim. In this, you will be evaluated for how well you integrate, analyze, and synthesize your research into your paper to support your claim. Additionally, you'll be graded how rhetorically effective you are in presenting your own argument (this includes stylistically appropriate conventions and citations). A paper that merely summarizes others' research, does not make an argument that adds to the conversation, plagiarizes, and/or does not meet this assignment's requirements will not garner a passing grade.