

Essay IV: Researched Position Essay

Length: 8-10 full pages

Min. 8 full pages, max 11 full pages

Follow MLA Conventions*

*double-spaced with one-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.

Three pages due: Thursday, April 7th

Six pages due: Tuesday, April 19th

Complete draft due: Tuesday, April 26th

Final Draft Due: Thursday, April 28th

This project is a thoroughly researched, thesis-driven, argumentative essay that demonstrates competence in both research and composition. The audience is a diverse, college-educated group of people, most of who know relatively little about the topic and are neutral or slightly skeptical of your position.

Topic:

The topic should also be limited to a manageable focus so that the paper can adequately discuss every major aspect of the issue in detail. Your topic must be approved by Ms. Kelm. Your thesis may change as your research informs your argument, but the topic must remain the same after Tuesday, April 5. You must take a clear and debatable position on an unresolved issue, rather than simply presenting a list of facts from your sources.

Content:

This essay must be a thesis-driven argument. The essay should have an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion. Include an interesting and informative title.

- **The Introduction** should grab the reader's attention, provide necessary background information on the topic, and state a clear and precise thesis. The introduction may be more than one paragraph long, but your thesis should herald the transition to the body of your argument.
 - **The Body** of the essay should offer a clear argument driven by textual proof and engagement with critical, scholarly sources. Your essay should defend your thesis through presentation of sound evidence and logic. It should contain nothing that is not directly relevant to the thesis. Your paragraphs must begin with strong topic sentences that clearly guide the audience through the argument. Further, your paragraphs should be detailed, unified, and coherent, and they should avoid vague/generalized assertions and any logical or emotional fallacies. At some point, the essay must address possible objections to its argument, but the exact place of such acknowledgement and response/rebuttal will depend on your essay's organizational structure. You will want to pay particular attention to your essay's organization due to the length of this argument.
 - **The Conclusion** should bring adequate closure to the paper. While it should reemphasize the thesis, it should also avoid excessive repetition of previous points. It should also address the implications of the topic on the audience, answering the question "So What?"
 - **The Works Cited** page must contain all sources used in your essay, with citations correctly formatted in MLA style.
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Organization:

This essay should be organized in a way that best fits the essay's content. Regardless of the organizational pattern, the essay should employ logical organization, clear and smooth transitions, and coherent and developed paragraphs.

Sources:

This essay must use and cite a minimum of eight sources. It must use at least six scholarly sources. In addition to these six sources, the essay may cite other media such as newspaper articles, popular periodicals, government documents, published interviews and speeches, studies, surveys, etc. Do not rely on only one or two sources for the majority of your information. All quotations must be quoted exactly, smoothly integrated into the paper, attributed to the proper source, and explained adequately. The essay should avoid using more than three block quotations (quotations four lines or longer) and more than 500 total words (about two double-spaced pages) of quoted material.

Documentation:

MLA citation must be used correctly and consistently throughout the essay and the works cited page. In-text citations should be used whenever you are using a quotation, a paraphrase, or even a summary of an idea from a source. The works cited page must be arranged alphabetically by the authors' last names, and it must give full, accurate bibliographic information for each source. The works cited page should list only those works that are actually cited in the text, and every citation in the text must clearly refer to a citation on the works cited page.

Important reminders:

- You must achieve a passing grade on the research paper in order to pass ENG 1304.
- Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity; plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the paper and the course. Use Turn-it-in on Canvas to avoid this problem.
- You have a wealth of resources in your textbooks, your peers, the research librarians, the Writing Center, Ms. Kelm's office hours, etc. so use those resources regularly.
- You may earn extra credit for going to the writing center. Review the syllabus for details.
- Your paper is due at the start of class on Thursday, April 28th. You must upload your paper to Canvas before class begins. Late papers will be penalized according to the policy in the syllabus.

One Last Thing:

I cannot stress this enough: SAVE everything that you do on at least two different storage devices (hard drive, flash drive, GoogleDrive, Box, DropBox, etc.). At the end of every work session, email what you have completed to yourself. Excuses such as "my computer won't read my flash drive" or "my computer didn't save my most recent draft" are unacceptable when it comes to your research essay.