

Research Project Assignment Guidelines

Purpose: The purpose of the research project is to allow students to investigate an area of interest that allows them to construct an argument or stance on their topic of choice. Using rhetorical strategies and evidence-based research are skills that college students will need in any major, and this assignment will give them practice in doing so.

Assignment: Students will consult with the instructor to generate an approved topic for the research project. Students who do not get a topic approved will have a 10-point reduction in their final grade. Students will write a researched argumentative paper that convinces an academic audience that their stance is valid based on solid evidence. Students will gather appropriate sources from recognized and reputable publishers and writers.

Sources: Sources for the research project should adhere to the following criteria:

- At least two peer-reviewed academic journal articles from the Randall Library databases
- At least two reputable magazine articles or articles from an online magazine
- At least two articles from a reputable newspaper
- At least one print or e-book from the Randall Library collection
- At least one online source from a reputable website
- No Wikipedia.

Students may, of course, have more sources than those listed above—the list above is the minimum requirement.

What constitutes a reputable source will be a topic of discussion and conversation in class. If students have questions about the validity or bias of a source, it is their responsibility to ask the instructor for advice or guidance.

Format: MLA format. All sources cited in-text and appropriately referenced, cited, and listed in a Works Cited page.

Due Dates: There are several due dates listed in the course schedule. Students will turn in multiple drafts of the research project. Each page requirement minimum is listed in the course schedule when the drafts are due. Each draft must be accompanied by an appropriate Works Cited page. Students who do not have their drafts ready and available in class in the format required (print or digital) will have 10 points deducted from the final grade for each draft that is not ready. I cannot accept any late final drafts since final course grades are due right after the end of the semester.

Conferencing: Students will conference with the instructor about the research project prior to turning in the final draft for a final grade.

Writing Center: I strongly encourage students to make use of the University Writing Center in each phase of the writing process for the research project.