

## **The Research Project (Initial Handout)**

Your research project asks you to develop a paper that focuses on a topic of your choosing but which must be approved by me. This paper will need to incorporate a variety of sources as you make your own claim and substantiate your ideas.

The final research paper will be a researched argument where you stake out a position on a topic and demonstrate how this position is stronger or more persuasive than other positions or perspectives. Your paper must be a mile deep and an inch wide—not a mile wide and an inch deep. It will follow MLA conventions.

All research papers must be 9-10 pages in length, excluding the references, and must use at least 9-10 sources. Your use of sources should be roughly balanced: you cannot have 90% of your citations come from 1 or 2 sources. Be careful on using sources from the internet; ensure they are scholarly and germane to your research. If you use interviews, limit these to one. I expect a variety of appropriate sources such as scholarly journals, newspapers, news magazines, a real book, etc. Most of your sources should be recent—less than six years old.

A good paper will contain, in some sequence, the following:

- An engaging introduction
- Clearly defined terms, if needed
- Clearly stated thesis (assertion, claim, position, etc)
- Evidence supporting the thesis
- Counterargument(s) (what the opposition says about your topic)
- Response or rebuttal to counterargument/opposition
- Good closure

Of course, effective organization, apt quotations, correct grammar, and correct format, etc. are also included in the overall grading.

**The final research paper is due 19 May (Monday).**