

English 250

Assignment #5: Documented Essay (1,250+ words excluding the citations page)

Spring 2018

Date Due:

What is this assignment?

You will write a 1250-word minimum essay in which you will present multiple viewpoints on a specific topic and discuss the reasons that some people think one way and others think other ways. Rather than discovering who is “right,” your goal is to understand the issues that impact how people view this particular topic. Your audience for this paper will be an educated person who may not know a lot about your particular topic.

You must use a minimum of four sources for your essay. If you use sources that we have not read as a class, you must provide those materials to your instructor. Failure to provide those materials will result in an automatic “Needs Work” on both the Substance and the Delivery portions of the rubric for this paper. *You may not use a paper or portion of a paper that you have written for another course.*

Once you complete this paper, you will also give a brief presentation on what you have written.

What is the purpose of this assignment?

This assignment helps you to achieve several objectives from the syllabus: constructing arguments that integrate logical, ethical, and emotional appeals; writing source papers analyzing a rhetorical situation and identifying and accurately documenting appropriate source material; and avoiding distracting or confusing sentence-level errors.

How can I write this assignment?

Planning: First, make a schedule for yourself to plan out when you will accomplish different parts of this paper. Use the calendar example on p. 159 of *The Everyday Writer* to get you started!

You’ll need to restrict your topic to an area of a subject that you can cover in a short paper. Develop a research question that your paper will need to thoroughly answer. Once you’ve got a research question, you can use this to guide your research. Gather evidence from readings we’ve done in class and any necessary outside sources. These readings should help you figure out how to answer your research question.

Drafting:

As you write, make sure you’ve got the purpose of the paper in mind: presenting a multifaceted view of positions on your topic and a discussion of what is most important to those who adopt one point of view over others. To do this successfully, you’ll need to weave your sources together and make sure you’re not relying too much on just one to support your argument. Also, consider your audience: how much do your readers already know about your topic and what sorts of opinions might they already bring to your paper?

Finally, make sure that you're keeping copies of your sources to provide to your instructor.

In particular, pay attention to citation conventions so you can avoid any plagiarism problems! You should be using a mixture of quotation, paraphrase, and summary. Remember that if you use exact words from a source, you need to mark this quote with quotation marks, the appropriate parenthetical information, and an entry on the citation page. Paraphrases and summaries also need to be cited. If you need more information about how to properly cite your sources, be sure to reference your handbook.

Revising:

As you revise, consider your audience and purpose. Are you successfully meeting the needs of your audience and fulfilling the purpose of the paper? Check that your thesis statement is clear and matches what you've written throughout your paper. Make sure your introduction are clear and do a good job of setting up and then wrapping up the entire paper.

How will this assignment be evaluated?

At a minimum, your paper needs to satisfy these criteria. However, the grade is based not just on whether a feature is present or not, but on *how well* it has been integrated into your paper. The visual analysis should

- Orient the reader to the purpose of the documented essay
 - Present a focused thesis that goes beyond the points made in the essays we read
 - Establish clear purpose for writing
- Incorporate well-developed substance
 - Use relevant, concrete details that support your thesis (i.e., quotations, paraphrases, and summaries)
 - Fully develop claims and arguments
 - Sources used in thoughtful ways
- Use audience-oriented organization (not writer-oriented organization)
 - Use a logical pattern of organization
 - Transition from one idea to the next in a way that guides your reader through your material
 - Create unified paragraphs
- Use appropriate style
 - Use language and tone adapted to your subject, purpose, and audience
 - Have few or no errors in correctness that distract the reader
- Look professional
 - Properly format the analysis in MLA style
 - Use accurate, well-documented sources, including summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotations

What if I want more help?

In addition to peer response, feel free to talk to me during my office hours and/or schedule an appointment at the Writing and Media Center (<http://www.wmc.dso.iastate.edu/>).