**English 250** Spring 2019  
**Assignment 5 (A5) : Documented Essay  
Word count:** 1,250+ words for a person working alone; 800+ words per partner in groups of two, a reduction in individual work that accounts for the extra effort of working in a pair; if you’d like to work in a group of four, discuss this with your instructor.

For this assignment, you will use the sources from your annotated bibliography.

What you *will* do with your annotated bib from this point on: Use this research in your paper. Cite your sources and use the MLA citations (and only the citations) that you made at the end of the paper for the citations page.

What you *won’t* do with your annotated bib from this point on: You will not turn in the annotated bib a second time instead of turning in a full research paper. You will not paste the entire annotated bib including the summary and quotations at the end of your paper as a works cited page, as that is not what a citations page is.

**What is this assignment?**

You have already conducted an exploration of a topic of your choosing and created an annotated bibliography, which will be an integral part of this longer project. For this project, you will thoroughly investigate a specific topic, answering the research question you composed for A4. You will present multiple viewpoints on a specific topic and discuss the reasons that some people think one way and others think other ways (you will need to explicitly identify each group of thinkers; that is, not just “some people”). This is *not* a binary assignment—that is, you will not focus on the pro-con of a topic. Rather than discovering who is “right,” your goal is to understand the issues that impact how people view this particular topic. Any non-neutral language used to discuss a viewpoint must be attributed to that specific viewpoint (that is, if one of your viewpoints thinks something is “unethical,” you need to attribute that characterization of the issue to the thinker so that it does not appear to be *your* characterization of the issue). You should look to what informs an author’s opinion on a topic, as well as the rhetorical choices they employ to shape their position.

A reader of your paper should *not* be able to determine which side of the issue *you* agree with. (If you feel particularly passionate about a topic and will find it an especially difficult task to put your own viewpoint on hold, reconsider whether that topic is the best choice for your paper.) Your audience for this paper will be an educated person who may not know a lot about your particular topic but does have access to the resources to investigate your topic for themselves.

If working as a pair, you will color-code the paragraphs of your essay so that your instructor knows which partner wrote each piece. One person should write the opening paragraph, one person should write the conclusion paragraph, and the body paragraphs should be divided evenly. When you turn in your digital copy, color-code your names at the top of the document to match the color-coding of the paragraphs, and please make innocuous color choices.

After concluding this essay, include a **personal discussion** about the topic you have analyzed. If working as a pair, **each person should write their own discussion independently**. This should be a thorough examination of what you have learned about this topic since beginning your exploration. You should include your own opinion here, as well as a discussion of how your opinion might (or might not) have shifted or changed in light of your research. This discussion should be between 100-150 words. Do employ the personal “I” and “my” pronouns for this portion of the assignment. These words may count toward your overall word count.

You may not use a paper or portion of a paper that you have written for another course. If you plagiarize (including using any direct quote without marking it as a quote and/or citing it) you will receive a zero for the Delivery section of the rubric.

Once you complete this paper, you will also **present on your topic.** Your presentation can be a “regular” presentation with a PowerPoint, or preferably, you can do something creative—make a John Oliver-esque video exploration, make a podcast, make a fictionalized/scripted video, interview people on your topic. You're welcome to focus your presentation on your opinion about the topic if that’s what you like to do, but do ensure that the info you choose to present is unique and interesting for your classmates—don’t just repeat popular information they’ve likely already heard in the popular media.

**Note that your research question is due earlier than the annotated bib.** This deadline will help you to ensure that you have a solid exploration of the idea for your project before you begin drafting the project. This deadline will also give you plenty of time to think about the topic. *All topic choices are subject to my approval. Meeting this deadline is important in case, for whatever reason, you need to change topics; this way, you will have enough time to do so.*

Notes on topics:

Your paper topic must be pre-approved by your instructor in order to ensure that the scope of what you plan to investigate is not too broad for a paper of this length and that your paper has a tangible focal point. For an example, if you choose to discuss religions/cultures, you need to identify a tangible connection between the religions/cultures you choose. For instance, it would not make for a strong project/presentation to choose to investigate modern Christianity, modern Catholicism, and ancient Egyptian religions because these are apparently chosen at random and have no clear connection. It would, however, make sense to choose Catholicism/Christianity, Judaism, and Islam since these are all Abrahamic religions and are thus explicitly connected.

**Topics I do not want to hear about unless you supply a nuanced, unique, and interesting viewpoint and obtain express approval from your instructor beforehand**:

▪Capital punishment (the death penalty)

▪Abortion  
▪Gun politics  
▪Marijuana

Why don’t I want to hear about these topics? These are topics most of us are familiar with and thus make for boring projects and presentations. Unless you can pitch me a unique take on these topics, they’re off the board.

**What is the purpose of this assignment?**

This assignment helps you learn about how arguments are constructed through integration of 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 to plan out when you will accomplish different parts of this paper. 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