DAVIS – ENGLISH 112

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT
FORMAL WRITING # 1

DUE DATES
ROUGH DRAFT IS DUE Feb. 21, 2014
FINAL ESSAY IS DUE Feb. 24, 2014

ASSIGNMENT
Step # 1 –
Choose a social issue that we have studied or one that we have not studied that you would like to investigate.

Step # 2 –
Do some reading about your topic.

Step # 3 –
State, in the form of a question, what you would like to find out about the social issue that you choose. The purpose of this question is to guide you in your research. Your question needs to be stated in the form of a personal question. For example: Do I approve of our country’s involvement in the War in Iraq? Or you might try something like this: Is my body image being affected by what others say and think about females?

Step # 4 –
Get your thesis question approved by your instructor. Do this before you start gathering information. Your approved thesis question must be included in your research folder when you turn in your final essay. **If you do not have an approved thesis question form in your folder, then I will not grade your essay, and you will earn a “zero” on the project.**

Step # 5 –
Conduct library research to learn more about your topic and to find some possible answers/sources to your question.

Step # 6 –
During our time in the library, and outside class, you will need 5 written sources and 1 personal interview to complete this essay. This means that you will need a total of 6 sources. At least 4 of your written sources must be from the databases on the computers in the library; you may choose a different written source for the 5th source; for instance, you may choose to use a hard copy of a book, a hard copy of a magazine, a hard copy of a newspaper, a pamphlet, a flyer, or a printout from Google. However, if you choose to do so, all 5 of your written sources may come from the databases.

Remember: Your minimum number of sources is 6; however, you may use more than 6 sources.
Step 7 – Pay Close Attention to this Step
Print out copies of all of the sources that you plan to use in your essay. If you choose to use database sources or web site sources, and they are more than 10 pages, then you only need to copy the first page, the page with documentation (usually the last page), and any pages that you will be using in your essay. You must turn in copies of all sources with your final essay.

If you choose to use a hard copy of a book or an online book, then print out the cover page, the copyright page, and any pages that you will be using in your essay.

If you choose to use a hard copy of a magazine, then copy the cover page, the page with publishing information, and any pages, including the first and last pages, as well as any pages that you will be using in your essay, if the article is more than 10 pages. If the article is 10 pages or less, then print out the full article.

Step 8 –
When you turn in your final research folder, you must include all of the handouts that you are given in the library on the day that we go for library instruction.

FORMAT FOR YOUR ESSAY
The final report must be typed (one side of the sheet of paper only), double-spaced, and at least 6 pages in length. The final report must be in MLA format. Make sure that the print on the final report is sufficiently dark enough to be read easily.

WHILE GATHERING INFORMATION FOR YOUR REPORT
1. Gather information that will help you to answer the question that you have posed.

2. Analyze the information that you collect and determine how it answers your question.

3. What you find out may contradict your beliefs; however, you need to grapple with it and be truthful about what you find as you analyze your information. Your research is concerned with finding the truth about your subject. Therefore, you must be accurate and complete in reporting what you find.

4. All references to other people’s ideas or words (paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting) must be attributed to the source and documented with parenthetical notation. Furthermore, all sources must appear in a list of Works Cited at the end of the report.
WHAT YOUR REPORT SHOULD CONTAIN

1. **Cover page** with your name, English 112-section number, and the thesis question that you have posed.

2. **The first page** of your essay should begin in the standard MLA format, meaning your identifying information should be in the upper left-hand corner, and then that information is followed by your title and the body of your essay.

3. As just mentioned, you will need a **title** for your report.

4. **The first paragraph** (maybe even the first sentence) of your report should **answer the thesis question** that you wrote on the cover page. The answer to your thesis question is called your **thesis statement**.

5. **Draw a circle around your thesis statement**.

6. **The rest of your report** must in some way **support** your answer/thesis statement.

7. **Your concluding paragraph(s)** need to say why what you have written is relevant.

8. Your research essay will be **followed by a list of Works Cited**. This is typed separately from the report itself. This page does not count as part of your page requirement for this essay. However, you **must have a Works Cited list** at the end of your essay.

**GRADING**

Grading for this essay will be based on the Standards set forth in your Syllabus. Also, I will take into consideration how well you have handled the MLA format, rules against plagiarism, and presentation, as well as defense of your thesis.

**Notes:**

There will be **only one visit to the library** in order for you to receive instruction on how to find sources on the databases and one other possible source from the internet for your research essay. I expect you to use your time wisely while in the library. **Do not ask to be excused early.** Attendance will be taken each time that we are in the library, and if you are absent from any session, you will be assigned a ZER0 for participation on that date. Furthermore, if you leave early, you will be assigned a ZER0 for participation.
Once the reference librarian has finished with the one day of library instruction, you will have to return to the library on your own or use your computer at home in order to find the sources that you need to complete your essay.

**MLA Documentation**
If you print out sources for your essay at home or at other libraries, then make sure that the information needed for MLA documentation is contained on the printout, and if it isn’t, then handwrite the information that you will need on the copies that you make. I have noticed at-home printouts often do not contain all the information that you will need to document your sources accurately. Also, if you email a source to your home from the JSRCC library, then you will need to make sure that you write down the MLA documentation information while you are at the library because, when articles are emailed to your home, they often do not contain the information that you will need for MLA documentation.

Make sure that you are present and prepared to work during this time in the library.

Your presence and applying yourself to research while we are in the library will make a positive difference in how your report turns out.

Also, remember that your research report will be time-consuming. Therefore, **do not wait until the last minute to begin working on it.**