

Paper #2: Research Paper

For your first essay, you selected an area within the theme of this class in which you intend to become an expert. This paper is the beginning of that process. Although a research paper is not the most aesthetically appealing genre, it is nevertheless a useful writing exercise, since it can be generalized into most reporting formats. Additionally, this particular assignment comes with one freedom not often afforded those of this type: I want you to make an argument, not just relate information.

Your research should be guided by a specific question you have about your topic. You will need at least eight sources for this paper, though you are encouraged to use significantly more.

- Two must be scholarly: Ground your understanding of the situation in the theories surrounding it. It is unlikely that a topic within the scope of this class would not have related scholarly research, but if you have trouble, feel free to consult with the professor.
- Two must be news sources: We are discussing things that are happening now, so we should look at things that are happening now. You are free to focus on a single event, or use sources from separate happenings to discuss the concept as a whole.
- One must be a counterargument: No idea is universal. There will be people in the world who disagree with the argument you are making. Find one, and address their argument.
- The final three may take any form as long as they support your argument.

Papers must be at least 1,000 words, in MLA-formatted documents of the file types listed on the syllabus, and cited (if necessary) using current MLA convention. All papers must be accompanied by a reflective memo of at least 500 words.

Reflective Memo

Along with the final draft of your essay, I will also ask you to craft a reflective writer's memo. In your memo, you will tell a story about your process of writing the essay. Some questions you might explore include:

- What strategies did you use to get ideas for writing this essay? Which were most effective? Why?
- What kinds of research (if any) did you conduct for this essay? How did the constraints placed on the type of sources affect your process?
- How did your research inquiry evolve as the project took form? How did it help, how did it hurt?
- What strategies did you use to revise this essay? Which were most effective? Why?
- What do you think is your most beautiful sentence in this essay? Why?

- What feedback from peers (or from the instructor) did you incorporate into your revisions? What feedback did you not incorporate? Why? (Hint: It's perfectly fine not to use all our feedback if you have a clear reason)
- What did you learn from the process of composing this essay?

Please don't answer these questions in order. Instead tell more of a narrative of your process. If your narrative is detailed enough, you'll end up implicitly addressing most of the questions above.