**Research Paper for ENG 103**

The research paper is a persuasive-based research project based on a topic related to a contemporary social, political, or cultural issue of your choice. You are free to choose an issue at long as it has at least two sides to it. In short, your topic must be one that can be argued about. For example, “Bullying is Bad” is not a viable topic because people wouldn’t argue that bullying is good. However, the topic “Effective Ways to Combat Bullying in Schools” is a strong topic because people differ on ways to stop bullying, so there is more than one approach that could be argued. The project will incorporate research of scholarly/academic quality and will combine both objective historical information on the topic as well as arguments for at least two different positions on the issue.

We will be completing a series of steps prior to the final draft: choice of essay topic, annotated bibliography for the references, an outline for the essay, and a rough draft. You can find descriptions of those items in the course Week tabs.

**Structure of the Essay:**

There is no minimum page requirement for the essay because the length will vary by topic choice. However, the average page length ranges from 7-11 pages. The goal is to COMPLETELY present the information for whatever topic you choose. The paper is to be written in double-spaced Times New Roman 12pt. font.

The paper is required to follow a set format of sections. Because this is a longer research project, it must include both an abstract prior to the introduction and headings for each of the separate sections of the essay.

**The essay MUST incorporate the following sections. These are the ONLY sections the essay may include, so all of your information must fit within the following structure**:

***Abstract*** – this section gives a brief overview of the process used to create the essay and a short overview of the positions in the essay

***Introduction of Topic*** *–* this is the traditional introduction of 1-2 paragraphs that has a hook and thesis to set up the body paragraph topics

***History of Topic*** – an overview of how your topic came into existence and/or definitions of terms used in the paper if it is not a historically-based topic. How did it develop in history. For example, what is the history of abortions in the US? How did the Affordable Care Act get developed and become law? What are different types of alternative therapies used to treat cancer?

***Arguments for the Topic* –** at least TWO arguments in support of your position on the topic must be presented

***Counterclaims/Opposing Positions and Rebuttals*** -- at least TWO counterarguments opposed to your position must be presented. Each of the counterarguments must be rebutted by your position.

***Conclusion*** – this is the traditional conclusion of 1-2 paragraphs to summarize the body paragraph topics.

***References*** – this is the APA-formatted reference page with all the cited references from the essay

**Research for the Essay:**

The essay will include research of scholarly/academic quality. The only sources that are acceptable for this essay are from the Peirce library databases and/or primary sources, such as government or non-profit organizations that are associated with your chosen topic. Interviews with experts or multimedia sources, such as songs or movies, can also count as primary sources.

**Each of the three body sections – history, arguments, and counterclaims/rebuttals – must have a MINIMUM of three cited sources. This means three DIFFERENT cited sources in each section**. One source that is cited three times in the same section will simply count as one source. You are free to use more sources than the minimum and sources in the sections other than the body sections.

Remember that a properly cited topic not only have at least one in-text parenthetical citation attributed to it, but that source also has a properly formatted entry on the reference page with the required information based on the type of source used.

**Grading:**

This essay is graded differently than the previous ones in this course. This paper will be graded by section and each section will be judged independently from the rest of the essay. The final draft is worth 40 points. The grading rubric is as follows:

Abstract (3 points possible)

Abstract should give a brief and concise overview of the process used to create the paper and your position on the topic. APA guidelines state that an abstract should be between 150-250 words in length. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed.

Introduction (3 points possible)

Introduction must have a hook. The introduction should be 1-2 paragraphs that are DIFFERENT than the abstract. The introduction should give a broader sense of the topic and history of it. Your position PLUS your rationale for your opinion must be briefly stated. Also, the counterclaims should be given as well as a brief explanation of your rebuttal for them. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed.

History of the Topic (8 points possible)

The history section should cover all pertinent points on the background of your topic in a way that is easy for the reader to understand. A clear narrative of the history should be provided. All required sources must be included and cited properly, whether using summary from a source or direct quotations. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed. A minimum of THREE sources must be used in this section.

Your Position on the Topic (8 points possible)

The personal position section should cover a minimum of two arguments for your position. The arguments must be made using persuasive techniques. Your rationale must make sense and be an in-depth and thorough explanation of your position. All required sources must be included and cited properly, whether using summary from a source or direct quotations. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed. A minimum of THREE sources must be used in this section.

Counterclaims (8 points possible)

The counterclaim section must contain a minimum of two counterclaims. These claims must be logically and thoroughly explained – why would people take these opposing positions? Each counterclaim must be paired with a convincing rebuttal from you. The rebuttal must be a logical, thorough explanation that discounts the opposing argument. All required sources must be included and cited properly, whether using summary from a source or direct quotations. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed. A minimum of THREE sources must be used in this section.

Conclusion (3 points)

The conclusion must be a 1-2 paragraph summary of the history, your position, and the counterclaims. You must include a concluding technique at the end of the conclusion. Formal grammar and style conventions should be followed.

Sources (2 points)

Sources are of an academic/scholarly quality.

Reference Page (5 points)

The reference page is cited in correct APA format. The citations on the reference page match the sources used in the in-text citations in the essay.