Project 2: Annotated Bibliography

Project 2 will immerse you in the process of academic research. You’ll use the wealth of resources available to us as scholars to explore a topic of your choice. This project will require you to become familiar with the basic practices of academic research and to develop your summary and response skills. Your final product will be one of the most common and most effective tools to organize and present your research: the annotated bibliography.

Purpose and Audience

Your purpose is to present your research findings in a format commonly used by other scholars. Your audience for this project is any college student who is researching your topic.

General Instructions:

1. Choose a research topic that interests you. It can be almost anything, and I’m glad to help you decide. I encourage you to choose thoughtfully: ideally, you will use this topic (and your research) for Project 3 (the research paper). See my note on choosing topics below.
2. Attend a library orientation with our class to learn about the resources available and how to access them.
3. Compile a Works Cited list in MLA style.
4. For each source, write an annotation that summarizes the source and explains how it relates to your specific research topic.
5. Compare your annotated bibliography to a sample to ensure you have correctly followed citation and formatting guidelines.

Basic Requirements

- Correct MLA format.
- Minimum 10 credible sources. See note on credible sources.
- Each annotation contains at least 3 sentences.
- Variety of publication types (books, academic articles, newspapers, etc.).

Important Dates

- 1213-01 and 1213-02
  - Friday, October 5th – rough draft due for peer review
  - Monday, October 15th – final draft due
- 1213-03
  - Thursday, October 4th – rough draft due for peer review
  - Tuesday, October 16th – final draft due

Using Credible Sources

For the purposes of this assignment, there are a wide range of sources and publication types that can be considered credible. The biggest trap that new researchers fall into is using websites
that may not be conveying credible information. We will discuss this in class, but I would also encourage you to look at pages 142-46 in your Guide to Composition at ECU. The information in this section can go a long way toward helping you determine whether or not a particular website is worthy of being included in your research.

A Note on Choosing Topics

Although you should choose a topic that interests you, you may also wish to avoid topics that are too controversial. One reason is that you will be asked to work with your classmates on various activities related to this assignment. If you choose to write about abortion, for example, you may have trouble accepting feedback that conflicts with your stance or raises objections. Your peers may also have a hard time giving that feedback, since it is unlikely that everyone in your group shares identical feelings on that particular topic.

The other reason to avoid major controversies is that your ultimate goal is to write an argumentative research paper, and it can be incredibly difficult to develop a fresh approach to a topic like abortion or the death penalty. If you feel strongly about an issue that you think might be questionable, please email me or stop by my office hours. I truly enjoy helping students find topics they care about, and I would be glad to help you think of an interesting angle.

Grading Rubric

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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| A     | • Includes more than the minimum number of sources.  
       | • Annotations show a developing position on the research topic.  
       | • Annotations describe how each source might be used to construct the argumentative research paper (Project 3). |
| B     | • Annotations explain relevance of each source to research topic.  
       | • Annotations evaluate each source based on possible usefulness. |
| C     | • Correct MLA formatting.  
       | • Includes 10 credible sources.  
       | • Sources come from a variety of publication types (books, academic articles, etc.).  
       | • Annotations provide clear and accurate summaries of sources. |
| D     | • Fewer than 10 credible sources.  
       | • Major errors in formatting.  
       | • Sources mostly come from one type of publication. |
| F     | • Insufficient or non-credible sources.  
       | • Incorrect MLA formatting.  
       | • Distracting grammar errors. |

Need Help?

If you haven’t yet worked with me directly (meeting during office hours, asking for feedback on drafts, etc.) I strongly urge you to do so as you work on this project. I’m here to help. There are no stupid questions, and there is no problem too big or too small. Please take advantage of my years of experience with writing papers – let me help you work around the obstacles that come up as you write. Of course, you can also visit the Writing Center – the Writing Consultants there are eager to help you. Don’t suffer in silence – there are lots of ways to get help!