

In many classes here at the University, you will be asked to complete an end of the quarter research project where you will be expected to do independent and substantial research on a topic related to your class. After completing this information, you will be asked to write a research paper where you both explain the data you collect and analyze what you have learned about your specific topic. Your analysis will be directly based on the research you have done.

Because we do not have enough time to actually write a research paper in this course, we will instead explore the process of preparing to write such a paper by writing a research proposal. This week we will be exploring all the various resources that the University has for helping you to search, find, and compile information for a research project. We will be discussing different strategies for analyzing this information, and for organizing your thoughts into a complex and interesting research paper. For this paper, you will incorporate research you do into a proposal whose main goals are to state what the claim for this paper will be and how you arrived at this claim. In other words, **you will be doing the prep work to write your hypothetical research paper without actually writing it.**

Before You Begin Writing

First you'll read. All week long we will be teaching you different methods for researching your topic. For the paper, pick a topic that can be developed into a research paper. You have read a number of texts, engaged in class discussion about many different topics, and visited different parts of the campus and the city—using these experiences as a jumping off point, develop a topic inspired by the class. Try to choose something that interests you, because the more you are interested the less that researching will seem like work—it might even be fun. What ideas, histories, biographies do the literacy narratives inspire? How might Freire generate topics about education, universities, student life, and learning? What did the poetry, short stories, or the Fridays on Foot make you think hard about? In the past, students have written about various aspects of the International District, Japanese internment camps, World War II, famous Seattle people, different cultures and cultural lifeways, and literacy.

Then you'll search. You will use the resources and strategies covered in class, in your library day, and in your handouts for finding material for your paper. Once you have found sources for your topic, be sure to use the skills from last week to read them closely. Annotate your texts and be sure to ask questions of the texts. Try to find connections among the texts, and also be aware of how each text is distinct from the others. Think about what the main argument of a research paper that used these sources to discuss your topic might be.

Goals and Outcomes

For the Read-Search Project, you will be required to be self-aware, self-reflective about your research process and how you work to find, read, and organize your research materials. This metacognitive approach will help you identify and assess how you choose a topic, how you use close reading to generate potential questions and inquiries, how you use different resources for research, how you evaluate your sources, and how you put everything together to propose a larger project. In other words, you will explain what your topic is, how you came by this topic, how you searched for information, and what your main claim would be if you did have to write a research project for this topic. You may also include what surprised you about this assignment, any difficulties you had, and how you overcame these difficulties. Because this paper is intended to help you **practice** the writing process that will help you write research papers later on, your paper will be split into three parts (you can use section headings in your paper):

1. **Research Narrative.** The first part of your paper (2 pages) will be a critical self-reflection on your research process and experience and will include:

- a) A discussion of how you generated your topic
- b) A discussion of how you found the credible sources you propose to use for your topic
- c) An explanation of the new insights you gained about your topic.
- d) Any difficulties you had with the assignment, how you dealt with them, and anything else that surprised you about the assignment

2. **Research Proposal.** The second part of your paper (2 pages at least) will argue that your topic and claim are doable and interesting and will include:

a) Introduce the paper topic and describe what the main focus of the paper would be. Give a prospective description of what your claim would be if you did complete a research paper.

b) Then, refer to the sources you would use for this project, explaining why each of these sources supports your main point and why they are authoritative sources for the project. You can draw on the work that you have done for your annotated bibliography.

c) Consider why your project might be important? What are its stakes? Who are you writing for?

3. **Annotated Works Cited.** The final part of your project will be an annotated bibliography. You will be required to have 3 sources for your Read-Search Project—at least 2 articles and 1 book. As part of the week’s exercises, you will complete a short (2 pages) MLA annotated bibliography, which requires you to briefly abstract and evaluate one of your sources. You will include a finalized version of the annotated bibliography with your Read-Search Project.

As you can see, the first half of this paper asks you to reflect on how you came to your topic, researched it, and decided it was worthwhile to pursue, and the second half is an actual proposal that you might give to an instructor or professor for a class. Many times, a class will require a brief proposal before you start a research project or long paper so the teacher can see and approve your working claim, direction, and resources. Remember that because this paper is about research and sources, just like any research paper or project, the works cited is a **requirement**; failure to include a bibliography means the paper automatically fails.

Guidelines and Due Dates

Format: 5-6 pages, typed in three sections, double-spaced, 1” margins, title, proper heading, 12-point Times Roman font, MLA format, three sections including an annotated works cited, proofread and edited, stapled

Due: Monday, August 3 at 9:00 AM