Writing 222—The Research Paper

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Office Hours: R 12-2

Course Objective: Writing 222 explores the critical reading, critical thinking, and writing skills that academic research papers typically require. We will focus on research methods, paper formats, and documentation styles* as well as pre-writing and even pre-research tools, skills, and practices. Other topics we emphasize will depend upon your needs and upon our progress as a class.

Each student will develop a focused research topic or question into a polished 10- to 12-page final research paper. This project may turn into an argument paper, a focused analysis, or a research essay, depending upon your topic and your intended audience. The ultimate goal, though, is to provide each student with skills that reduce writing-related angst and make future research assignments less intimidating.

*You will want to focus on the documentation style standard for your particular area of study, most likely MLA, APA, Chicago, or AP. If you do not have a specific field of study, I suggest you use MLA.

Required Materials:
The Curious Researcher, Fourth Edition, by Bruce Ballenger
A spiral notebook or binder for your research journal
A three-ring binder or other loose-leaf paper-binding system for your Final Project Portfolio.

Grades: Your grade is based on a 100-point scale. Points are distributed as follows:

- 60: Final Project Portfolio [including oral presentation and paper drafts]
- 20: Participation & Engagement [discussion, reading, workshops]

Your daily process work, “Target” assignments, and paper drafts will not receive letter grades. “Target” Assignments that contribute to your final grade will receive evaluation on a check-minus, check, and check-plus system only. Paper drafts will receive comments only. Contact me with questions regarding this departmental policy.

IMPORTANT: If you miss a scheduled workshop day, you MUST make it up by visiting with me during my office hours after attending a one-hour tutoring session at the Writing Center.

Course Requirements:

1. Reading Assignments. Come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. Respond to each reading, using the double-column format we’ll discuss in class, in your
Research Journal. You are not required to perform the “Exercises” included in each reading, but do read through them and record your reflections.

2. Six short “Target” assignments written outside of class. These assignments accomplish preliminary work for your final project and ensure that you keep pace with the schedule. The sixth Target assignment receives only my comments—no check-system grade. The other five Targets receive check-system evaluations and total one-half of your Process Work grade, or 2 points each. This may seem to diminish their worth in your final grade, but you MUST complete ALL of these assignments in order to pass the course—period.

3. The Final Project Portfolio. This portfolio is worth 60 points of your final grade and will consist of: a reflective Cover Letter, the Final Project Paper, a Works Cited page, and an Annotated Bibliography of at least six articles from scholarly journals.

You will also include the following process work: two preliminary drafts and all related inter-draft work, prewriting exercises that contribute to your final project, and any other materials that reflect your work on the project.

The Final Project paper must be at least 10 typed pages long and cite at least twelve sources. These sources MUST include:
- At minimum, six articles from scholarly journals in the field;
- At minimum, three book articles or other print sources;
- At minimum, three additional sources (live sources, surveys, internet resources, etc).

4. Research Journal. Bring your research journal to each class period. This spiral notebook or binder will be worth 10 points, or half of your Process Work grade. It is your responsibility to keep your Research Journal up to date. Keep in mind that this journal is a tool for you, not just an assignment. Your journal must include two sections:

1) Double-entry notes on all assigned readings (see Requirement 1) organized chronologically; and...
2) A separate section of reading notes on all of your sources for your Final Project. You may use the double-column format or any other format of your choice, but I do require you to include notes on every source you cite for your final project. The section on your own sources you may organize as you choose, but please indicate the contents clearly at the top of each page—a full citation would be ideal.

5. Individual Conference to discuss paper topics, research findings, questions, problems, or drafts. DO NOT MISS YOUR SCHEDULED CONFERENCE. Missing a scheduled conference counts as an absence. We will schedule one conference per student during the third, fourth, or fifth week of class.
6. **Project Presentations.** During the last week of the term, you will perform a 5-minute oral presentation that shares your research findings with the class. You will receive no letter grade or formal evaluation of this presentation, but I will consider the positive aspects of your presentation when calculating your final portfolio grade. Come prepared to speak from note cards or from memory, as we will not have time for each student to read his or her entire paper.

7. **Basic Mechanics of written English.** This is not a grammar refresher or a proofreading course. Optimistically, we will dedicate very little class time to this area, but if you do not demonstrate basic competency, I may direct you toward helpful resources such as the Writing Center. Consulting Diana Hacker’s *Writer’s Reference* is an excellent way to answer many questions regarding punctuation, syntax, style, and conventional sentence construction. *Writer’s Reference* is available for your perusal at the Writing Center. I will not base your grade upon your competency in mechanics, but if your assignments do not indicate your best efforts at correctness, your grade may reflect this.

**Course Policies**

**Late Papers:** All work is due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified. Graded assignments handed in late can receive at best a “check,” and your portfolio grade will reflect late drafts. Further, I do not comment on late work.

Final Project Portfolios are the exception to this policy: to pass this course you must hand in your final project portfolio and research journal on the due date, at the scheduled time. I will NOT accept late portfolios.

**Attendance:** You are allowed three absences, excused or otherwise, no questions asked (unless the absence falls on a workshop day). When you miss class, you are required to contact your Study Group members in order to catch up on missed work or assignment handouts. Each absence beyond three without an acceptable written explanation will lower your final grade by one mark (an A becomes an A-; a C+ becomes a C; etc.).

Arriving late is rude and disruptive. Three late appearances (> 5 min) equal one absence.

**Plagiarism:** Consult your Student Handbook for PSU’s plagiarism policy. Policy aside, please do not disappoint and disrespect yourself, your peers, and me by plagiarizing. It may surprise you how easily instructors can detect unoriginal work. Bottom line: do not do it.

**Assignment Format:** All assignments must be typed, in hard copy (on paper), with your name, my name, and the assignment clearly indicated. Pages must be stapled together—no paper clips or folded corners, please. Assignments will be in 12-pt font, on 8 1/2” by 11” paper, with 1” margins. This is the standard MLA format. If you would like your comments integrated into the text of your document and transmitted to you via email, you may additionally send me an electronic copy by email. **Unless you and I**
discuss a particular assignment and make special arrangements, I do not accept assignments submitted ONLY via email.
Daily Schedule and Due Dates

All activities and due dates are tentative. Schedule adjustments may occur at any time during the quarter. Students are responsible for keeping up to date with schedule changes when they miss class.

All readings are in *The Curious Researcher* unless otherwise indicated.

**Week One**

**T 1/10**  
In class: Introduction—Syllabus–Housekeeping

**R 1/12**  
DUE: Read 6-15  
In Class: Invention; Finding a Topic; Handling Information; “To surf or not to surf?”

**Week Two**

**T 1/17**  
In Class: Research Basics & Assessing Sources

**R 1/19**  
DUE: Target One -- Paper Proposal; Read 36-62  
*This means you should have a focused topic by today’s class!*  
In Class: Using Resources Hands-On: Library day

**Week Three**

**T 1/24**  
DUE: Read 63-123  
In Class: Reading for Content--Reading for Writing; Avoiding Plagiarism

**R 1/26**  
DUE: Target Two – Quote, Paraphrase, and Summary  
In Class: TBA

**Week Four**

**T 1/31**  
DUE: Read 125-172  
In Class: TBA

**R 2/2**  
DUE: Target Three – Critical Response  
In Class: Competing or Conflicting Perspectives—Who is the Authority?  
*Your research should be in full swing!*

**Week Five**

**T 2/7**  
DUE: Skim Appendix A OR Appendix B and corresponding documentation manual  
In Class: Reporting, Reflecting, Discussing—a Dialogue
R 2/9  **In Class:** Composition--Structure, Style, and Mechanics

**Week Six**

T 2/14  **DUE:** Target Four – Sample Annotation; Read 173-220  
**In Class:** Composing Your Draft

R 2/16  **DUE:** Target Five – Two Ways In, Two Ways Out  
**In Class:** Annotation and Documentation Styles! Yay!  
*(You should have most of your research materials by the end of this week!)*

**Week Seven**

T 2/21  **In Class:** Practice Peer Review--The Three Levels of Revision

R 2/23  **DUE:** Rough draft of final project.  
(Bring one copy for me, and one copy for each member of your study group)  
**In Class:** Workshop

**Week Eight**

T 2/28  **DUE:** Peer response. Read 221-249  
**In class:** Revision Strategies

R 3/02  **DUE:** Target Six—Precis  
**In Class:** TBA

**Week Nine**

T 3/07  **DUE:** revised draft of final project; (Bring one copy for me, and one copy for each member of your study group)  
**In Class:** TBA & Review of Expectations for Final Project Portfolio and Presentations

R 3/09  **DUE:** Peer response.  
**In class:** Workshop.

**Week Ten**

T 3/14  **DUE:** project presentations  
**In Class:** Presentations and Final Questions

R 3/16  **DUE:** Final project portfolio—research journal, project presentations
**In Class:** Presentations and Wrap-Up

Final project portfolio and research journal are due before or during the final class period.