**ENGL 1008 Formal writing assignments:**

Sequenced writing

*The following assignments constitute a sequenced writing project for which you will write all five assignments on the same subject over the course of the semester. The idea of a series of assignments forming a sequenced writing project grows from the belief that students develop their writing skills best when each writing assignment they do can build quite directly on the experience and knowledge gained from completing the previous writing assignments.*

In the sequenced writing project, you may write on any topic you wish with my approval. However, to do the sequenced writing project, you must select a topic that meets three requirements.  
1. You **must** feel very interested in the topic and want to learn more about it, since you will spend much of the semester writing several assignments on the same subject.   
2. You **must** already have had some personal experience with the topic you will write on.   
3. This **must** be a topic that will allow you to do all parts (the Personal Essay, a research proposal, an annotated bibliography, and a final research paper) of the project.

Here are some examples of topics students have written on and their personal experience with their topics:

* state of research in hepatitis C: the student's brother was infected,
* corruption in India: the student's uncle had to pay huge bribes to have his factory certified after inspections,
* political situation with India and Pakistan (over Kashmir): two of students' family members were serving in the Indian military in Kashmir,
* "food combining" diet program: the student's father made her go on this diet, after she gained 10lbs in her first year in the US,
* AIDS causes/treatments: the student's cousin was infected and ostracized by his friends,
* educational tracking system in Singapore: the student graduated from highest track with friends in lower tracks,
* political struggles in Columbia: the student's family was very involved in politics and his best friend had been kidnapped by one of the factions,
* Nicaraguan history: the student had grown up hearing strong bias toward one side and just wanted to understand the events around the revolution better, so she could participate in political life when she returned,
* Music industry: the student's dream was to get his own recording contract.
* Home schooling: student was home schooled through high school
* Cross racial child adoption: Her roommate and good friend was Chinese adopted by a Caucasian family in the USA
* One child policy in China: student was from china but has three siblings
* Television advertising: student was a business marketing major.

**Essay 1: Personal Essay**:

First, you must choose a topic (see guidelines above) after talking with your classmates and your teacher. Then, in this essay of 700-1000 words you will need to address these areas in SOME logical order:

-Very brief introduction of the topic of your future research (its general context, the history behind it, what you know about it, what you understand, etc.).

-A detailed description/ narration of your personal experience related to this topic and how you became interested in this topic.

-Explanation of why this topic is important to you, what specific audience might also be interested in your research, and why.

GRADING CRITERIA: 100 points maximum:

* Your paper addresses the assignment and follows the above directions; the paper stays close to the topic and to the length as assigned (30 pts.)
* The ideas in your paper are interesting, creative, surprising, pleasing to read, and well developed; enough detail is given ; there is a nice "plot," the setting is well described, and events and characters are well described and meaningful to the whole paper; you are able to "analyze" yourself as a writer from an outsider's perspective and with critical eyes; no important information is incomplete or left out; you don't assume that the reader knows what you know; you do not simply tell the story but you are also able to draw conclusions from it (30 pts.)
* The spelling and grammar are without problems (check: words you don't know, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, correct verb tenses, correct adjective/adverb forms, word order, relative clauses, contractions, etc.); the sentence construction has a nice variety; the vocabulary is excellent (20 pts.)
* The organization of your paper is clear and logical; there is a distinct introduction, development, and conclusion; different parts flow nicely with adequate transitions (10 pts.)
* Your paper follows the rules of mechanics (punctuation) and format: double spaced, Times New Roman font size 12, one inch margin all around the text (10 pts.)

**Due dates**

**First draft**: Monday, January 30th – at least 600 words- typed and double spaced in Times New Roman font 12.

**Final draft**: Monday, February 6th – 700- 900 words

**Assignment 2: Research proposal**

1. Introduce the issue and then present it in question form.
2. Explain briefly why you are interested in the issue (no need for details here since you have already discussed this in your personal experience paper)
3. Describe what you already know about the issue. (its general context, history behind it, etc.)
4. Explain what you need to learn to present an effective argument.
5. Show your plans for conducting research about this topic.

**Due dates**

First draft: Wednesday, February 15th or Friday, February 17th – 1-2 pages typed and double spaced

Final draft: Wednesday, February 22nd – 1-2 pages typed and double spaced

**Assignment 3: Summary**

In this assignment you will look for one article to summarize. The article may be in a journal, magazine, newspaper, or material from a credible web site. The article must be in English and be prepared to defend the credibility of the source. Locate a publication you think will give you information that will be helpful in your final project report. You will have to locate more than one article and select the best one. The publications you can use for this short project should run at least 1200 words. Please hand a copy of the article with its references with your final draft.

Your summary will be exactly 250 words. It will do the following:

* identify the author, the name of the article, and the date and place of publication,
* identify the main idea/argument/position/assumption of the author,
* identify the purpose of the article
* identify key supporting ideas,
* be direct, concise, objective, and neutral,
* discuss the article from an "outsider's" perspective,
* use your OWN words,
* cover all main points of the article
* keep the reader informed through attributive tags (such as according to Jones... or Jones argues that... or The author explains that...) that you are expressing someone else's ideas,
* be a unified, focused, and coherent piece of writing!

Your summary will NOT:

* be over 250 words,
* show your opinion of the article or its arguments,
* contain grammar or spelling mistakes,
* include long quotations,
* leave important facts out,
* give too much importance to some details and not enough to others,
* forget to mention the author and what ideas are his/hers,
* discuss the ideas as if they were yours;
* include some unnecessary details.

**Due dates**

**First draft**: Monday, February 27th– 250 words- typed and double spaced in Times Roman font 12.

**Final draft**: Monday, March 13th – 250 words

GRADING CRITERIA:

* Your summary follows all of the above directions and you have selected an appropriate article (40 pts.)
* Your summary is a clear, fair, and accurate representation of the original article; you have selected an appropriate selection of information (ALL, and ONLY, the important facts) (20 pts.)
* Your text is clear, well organized, with an introduction and a conclusion; you are able to write from an outsider's perspective; different parts are flowing nicely with adequate transitions; the length is as assigned (250 words) (20 pts.)
* You use clear and direct language; the spelling and grammar are without problems; the sentence construction has a nice variety; the vocabulary is powerful and meaningful; your paper follows the discussed rules of mechanics (punctuation) and format (20 pts.)

**Assignment 4: Literature review: an annotated bibliography**

This assignment will give you practice in the research skills locating appropriate, credible, and balanced sources; synthesizing a variety of sources; interpreting the connections between sources; and using proper MLA documentation. You must use up to 10 credible sources in this paper. The primary purpose of this report is to bring together various sources to build a better understanding of a topic related to your final research project. Thus, your main purpose is to inform on the significance of the articles you have selected. That said, you will need to go a bit beyond summary in that you will interpret different sources and may decide to conclude by explaining your interpretation of what these sources together tell you/us about the topic. (See sample annotated bibliography in D2L)

1. Organize your sources alphabetically and provide complete bibliographical data.
2. Write, *in your own words,* a summary of your source. What is the writer's position and how is it supported? You may include a few short quotes, but, for the most part, this should be a summary.
3. Write an evaluation of the validity and appropriateness of the text to your project. Does the text support/contradict/complicate your attitude toward your subject? Relate it to other texts, raise questions. Indicate how you might use it in your paper.

**Due dates**

**First draft**: Friday, March 24th – at least 6 entries – formatted as discussed in class

**Final draft**: Friday, March 31st – completed bibliography as instructed.

**Grading**

* You present an objective view of the topic through your article choices; the articles you chose give interesting perspectives on your topic and give adequate and valuable support of ideas. Your paper presents strong evidence of critical reading and understanding of the sources and the connections between them (how similar or different they are) (30 pts).
* You chose good ideas to compare and contrast and show that you have really thought about those ideas and clearly demonstrate comparison and contrast skills. You are able to understand and present, as well as analyze new ideas and draw conclusions from them, show how those ideas relate to one another, ask questions, and find answers. Plans for future research are clear (30 pts).
* Your paper has an excellent organization of information, and a clear introduction that shows your criteria for the choice of articles. (MLA style) at the end (30 pts).
* The spelling and grammar are without problems; the sentence construction has a nice variety; the vocabulary is excellent; your paper follows the discussed rules of mechanics (punctuation) and format (as explained in class and online). Your annotation includes 8 credible articles -4 pts if you didn’t submit all drafts and outlines in a folder and your article credibility evaluation. (10 pts).

**Assignment 5: Argumentative essay 7-10 pages – 2300 words**

The objective of this assignment is to take a position on a topic based on the research that you have found. That is, you will describe your research question(s) and then try to answer them through your research. Your answer to the question (s) is your position or argument, and it is your job to persuade your audience that you have answered the question in a fair, well-informed, and well-supported way.   
You already have done much of the work in your previous projects. In this paper, you will bring this previous work together and go a step beyond to take a position on your topic. Feel free to use portions of your previous work in this paper. (Though be warned that just cutting and pasting without making any changes may not be the best strategy.)

Guidelines:

* 7-10 pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman size 12, MLA/APA format
* Complete referencing (in-text and references/works cited) using MLA/APA
* Appropriate and informative title

6-10 appropriate sources (limit website sources to less than half of your sources.)

**Due dates**

**First draft**: Friday, April 7th – at least 7-10 pages words- typed and double spaced in Times New Roman font 12.

**Final draft**: Wednesday, April 26th – 7-10 pages

**Grading**

* (15 pts) focused **introduction** that contains an attention catcher, the research questions, a short explanation of the value of the research, and a description of the organization of the paper; strong **conclusion** that summarizes the main points of the paper and shows critical understanding of the research;
* (15 pts) very clear **organization** of the content of the paper
* (40 pts) in-depth, **convincing**, and interesting "answers to the research questions" and presentation of the ideas, including developed arguments, objective **counter arguments** or different views of the ideas, your response to those counter arguments, and personal **opinions** based on critical thinking. Remember to DRAW CONCLUSIONS from the information you present. Always ask yourself the question "so what?"; I also want SUBSTANCE, **new information**, in-depth and objective argumentation, more than just opinions. Remember the different parts of an argument!
* (15 pts) correct **format** (MLA or APA) throughout the text and for the entire paper **8-10 pages,** exciting title, **transitions**, balanced paragraphs, academic discourse, precise language (nothing vague, unexplained, too generalized); varied sentence structures, good spelling and **grammar**, mechanics
* (15 pts) the adequate use of enough **sources** (6-10) of quality (at least 2 from academic journals); good balance between quotations, summaries, and paraphrases; an MLA/APA works cites page at the end.