

The Research Paper:

Your research project should be a topic of interest since you will spend the entire semester working on the document. Research always starts with a question. The question should be narrow enough to work with. So, for example, you don't want to research the Death Penalty, you want to narrow that down to the history of the Death Penalty, or the effectiveness of the death penalty or current feelings around the death penalty. SO your question should address a very specific area.

Before you are able to put together your question you must do some preliminary research. On **9/22**, you will spend the class at the LRC on the THAMES campus investigating what literature is available on your topic. At the end of that evening you should have your question sketched out and at least three sources that you might use to address the question. On **10/6**, after the quiz, we will all examine each others questions to make sure you are on target to begin the remaining data collection. By the end of class on 10/6, I am certain you will all have a manageable research question.

This is a collaborative exercise. That means that you will work in groups, delegate portions of the work to each member of the group, commit to the completion of that work and find times to meet to bring your efforts to the table. We will talk about the group process. It is often hard to work in groups but it is a skill you all need to learn. I will always be available to assist in the group process. There will be peer evaluations of how well you work in group and the degree to which you contributed. Those evaluation forms will be distributed on 10/6.

Periodically throughout the semester we will visit the research, check in with each group for a status report. On **11/24** the entire class is dedicated to the research work. We will review the work and fine tune the process and prepare for the oral.

The oral report should be accompanied by three or four power-point slides or some other visual aid for your peers. How long the oral presentations are will depend on the size of the class and the time allotted. Generally, the orals are approximately ½ hour. This is not a great deal of time because by the day the orals take place you will be an expert in your area and the ½ hour will fly by before you know it.

The actual length of the paper can not be predicted at this time. We will discuss this together as the questions evolve. I have done this work with many students and I suggest you trust the process. If you stay on top of the work, it is a very doable, and for most an enjoyable experience.

NEVER hesitate to ask questions or get clarification on that which you find confusing or uncertain. It is my job to assist you in your learning. I would rather many questions during the process than an unsuccessful paper or presentation.

Thank you,

Tricia