First Semester Research Paper

This first semester research paper is basically a technical/informative research paper. Check the list of topics at the end of this handout to start brainstorming.

Requirements:
- ➢ Minimum 3 **full**-page paper – double-spaced with normal, Times New Roman 12-point font
- ➢ Formal cover
- ➢ Parenthetical notation
- ➢ Works Cited page
- ➢ Works Consulted page

SDSL Databases
Username: 21583000067561
Password: MITCHELL
http://hslibrary.mitchell.k12.sd.us/

MHS databases
Username: Mitchellhs
Password: digital

Sources:
- ➢ Minimum of five (5) sourced listed as Works Cited and documented with parenthetical notation
- ➢ Minimum of five (5) additional sources skimmed for ideas, offered as Work Consulted for further information

Sources may located at:
- ➢ SIRS, Wilson Disc or CD Newsbank and the Internet. Check SDLN and MHS catalog for current book. You may also use the vertical file.
- ➢ One article in Britannica, Americana or an online encyclopedia may be used as background material.
- ➢ Sources older than 1994 are not permitted unless the research refers to an older source for historical background.

You cannot possibly accomplish all this work during the class hour, so it is critical to use every minute of class time wisely. If you want individualized help, you'll need to allow me to give that help to others as well. This means you-MUST work independently most of the time!

Grades
Rough Works Consulted with all 10 sources: /20
30 Note cards from 5 sources: /35
Working outline: /10
Rough Works Cited/Consulted: / 20
First draft including topic outline, parenthetical notation, Works Cited: /50
Final draft including title page, outline, attributions, final Works Cited and final
   Work Consulted: /100 (see attached rubric)

Locating Sources

1. Skim the list of suggested topics.
2. Enter several broad topics in CD Newsbank, electronic Library, an Internet search engine; browse related subject headings in Wilson Disc, Infotrac, etc.
3. Choose a topic for which you can locate information and focus it into a narrower, more specific subject for research.

Some topics have been overworked in speeches, etc. so the following topics are banned unless the student can offer an unusually creative angle: abortion, child abuse, alcohol and related topics, drug abuse, e.g. steroids, etc., teen pregnancy, gangs, "mysticism" topics such as witchcraft, Satanism, etc. Make sure I have approved your topic before you begin taking notes. Only one person per class may research a topic.

4. Using the data bases available, find at least 10 citations about your topic and make a bibliography or source card for each one. Use MLA Stylesheet or the Citation Maker site to make your source cards.

      Citation Maker Site - https://secondary.oslis.org/cite-sources/mla-secondary-citation

Taking Preliminary Notes

1. Locate a short article providing background information about your topic.
2. Fill out the bibliography card for this article and every other article you use and check the bibliographic information with the actual article.
3. Take notes on your first article, making sure you know how to use efficient, effective note-taking procedures.

      Caution: Every note card must contain the source number or author's name and the page number plus a relevant subject slug.

      No!!!!! You may not simply highlight articles and call that note-taking. It works for some processes, but it won't work for this one.

Taking Extensive Notes

1. If you are satisfied with your topic, develop a **working** outline which will suggest subject slugs for your note cards. Sometimes a series of questions which your paper will attempt to answer makes a good working outline.
2. Chose a longer article from your list of sources to provide background information and more depth about your topic.
3. Take extensive notes on this article, being sure to record statistics, incidents, examples, striking quotations.
4. As you continue to locate and take notes on additional articles, use **only** those which offer new information or differing viewpoints. **Do not** simply copy information you already have.

      Note: Think efficiency! Copy only what you need.
      Change or add to your working outline as you learn more.

5. If you find an article that duplicates your information or that contains information you do not choose to use, make a bibliography card for it and include it as one of your five supplemental resources listed as Works Cited.

Developing and Using the Topic Outline

1. When you've taken notes on five articles, flip through your note cards and arrange them in piles by slugs. This will suggest tentative divisions for your topic outline.
2. Prepare a two or three level topic outline. The complexity of your outline will depend on your topic.
3. Do more research if you find you have "holes" in the information you need to make sense of your report.

Writing Your Paper
Format: Typical in-house report in research or business setting

1. The opening paragraph should introduce the topic and outline what the paper will discuss.

2. The body of the paper might answer questions like these?
- What is the problem or situation your paper describes?
- How is information obtained about your problem or situation, e.g. experiences, government studies, research, news reports, etc.? Who has studied it?
- Who is affected by the problem or situation and how?
- How long has the problem or situation existed?
- How do persons affected by the situations feel about it?
- What other factors (e.g. money, environment, government, etc.) affect the situation or problem?
- Include illustrations, charts or graphs if appropriate.

3. Use parenthetical documentation (see handout) for **each** fact, statistic, quote, opinion of expert sources, etc. If an expert holds the opinion, be sure to mention the expert's name, position, organization, etc. in the body of the paper.

4. If your paper has technical terms, the easiest way to handle them is to provide an informal definition when the term first appears.

5. Summarize conclusions about your research in a paragraph or two.

6. If appropriate for your topic, make recommendations or suggestions for future action.
- What changes could be made?
- How?
- Who should do it?
- What are some additional possibilities for research on this topic?

Editing Your Paper for Publication

1. Check your paper for over-used words, mechanical errors, spellings.
2. Check each paragraph to make sure that only one topic is discussed in each paragraph. Each paragraph should have a clear, interesting topic sentence.
3. Edit your paper, eliminating unnecessary words. Good technical writing is crisp and brief. Sentences should be interesting but clear. USE ACTIVE VERBS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.
4. Type your paper double-spaced, including quotes.
5. Make separate pages for Works Cited and Works Consulted, listing the entries (citations) in alphabetical order by the first word of the source. Double space but indent second line of the entry one tab setting. Every entry or citation ends in a period.

Preparing an Abstract and Title Page

1. An abstract or summary of 100-125 words (single-spaced) should appear on second page of your report. An abstract is NOT your opening paragraph. An abstract is a condensed version, the "meat" of your paper.
2. Be sure you have nothing in the summary that does not appear in the body of **your** paper.
3. Follow standard technical paper format for the title page

Researchers prepare technical papers on all kinds of topics.
- Choose a subject area that interests you but about which you know little.
- Choose a subject area you don't like. Maybe you'll learn something to make you change your mind.
- Choose some area related to a future career possibility.
- Don't fuss. Just choose a topic, jump in, get going. You're not making a life-long commitment.
- Narrow your topic.

Research on historical event: e.g.

Ghost Dance in SD
CCC or WPA during Roosevelt administration
School desegregation of 50s
Steve Biko, other early Apartheid opponents in S Africa
Holocaust effects on non-Jews
European ghettos of pre-WWII
Genealogical research
Changes in U.S. religious demographics

Research on topic of popular culture: e.g.

Films of George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Oliver Stone, Quentin Tarentino, Disney Dreamworks
Computer animation
Free agents in professional sports
Road racing like LeMans, Grand Prix,etc.
Sports trends e.g. Tiger Woods in golf
Influences of fashion designers like Calvin Klein, Versace, etc.
Marketing or news media on the internet

Research on political/ social/educational problem: e.g.

Tobacco company lawsuits
Prenuptial agreements
Adult illiteracy
Open enrollment or charter schools
School vouchers
National content standards
What are Health Maintenance Organizations
What's going on in Palestine, Bosnia, Korea, Zaire-Congo etc.?
Extending retirement age
Campaign financing laws
Developing new prescription drugs
Financing federal parks and monuments
Immigration issues, quotas
Investigating the IRS

Research on scientific/environmental/technology/health development or application: e.g.

      Regulations on waste disposal, corporate farming
      Attention deficit disorders in children
      Comeback of endangered species, bald eagle, etc.
      Exotic hunting, game preserves
      INTERNET marketing
      Internet/ information networks privacy issues
      Politics of medical research
      Ethical issues of fetal tissue or animal tissue transplants
      Seasonal affective disorder
      Developments at Microsoft, Gateway, Yahoo, Apple, etc.

Research on artistic/literary topic: e.g.

      An American Nobel Prize winners in literature Harlem Renaissance, popular
      Western Writers, etc.
      An artist or architect e.g. like Frank Lloyd Wright, Frieda Kaldo, Georgia O'Keefe etc.
      Designing memorials like new FDR memorial; women's Vietnam memorial, modernization
      at Mt. Rushmore, development at Crazy Horse, etc.

Here are examples of topics you could research:

How sitcoms have changed since the fifties
Long lasting daytime soaps
Changing country music
Pro soccer in the US
Political cartoonists
Hillary Clinton's influence
Effect of TV on early childhood development
Money spent on special ed
Gambling-revenue source or social addiction?
Holistic or alternative medicines like chiropractic, herbalists,
Strip mining's effect on Western mountains
Carpal tunnel syndrome and the computer keyboard
Greenhouse effect on coastlines

Research Paper - Rubric
First Semester   Name: _____

- ❖ Original title   _____ (2)
- ❖ Correct MLA heading format   _____ (3)

Content:
- ❖ Paper presents clear, thesis – shows purpose of paper   _____ (5)
- ❖ Each paragraph contains specific attributed facts, quotes, statistics,
  reasons, examples, and illustrations which develop the main idea of the   _____ (10)
  paragraph
- ❖ Supporting sentences indicate main supporting ideas of the paper
  presented in outline   _____ (10)
- ❖ Thesis is adequately supported with facts, examples, reasons   _____ (5)
- ❖ Effective opening and closing paragraphs   _____ (3)
- ❖ Clear framework with thesis and summary paragraphs   _____ (2)

Documentation and Voice:
- ❖ Writing is precise, economical, lively. and clear   _____ (2)
- ❖ Word choice and fluent expression contribute to lively content   _____ (3)
- ❖ Paper is free from "speechy" phrases, unnecessary words, vague or
  unsupported explanation, no plagiarism   _____ (5)
- ❖ Ideas or events written about are supported with actual documentation
  on note cards from articles   _____ (5)
- ❖ Correctly handled MLA parenthetical attribution where needed   _____ (5)
- ❖ Works Cited/Consulted MLA format represents 5-10+ articles cited   _____ (5)

Organization: _____ (10)
- ❖ Paper follows outline and pattern outlined in thesis paragraph
- ❖ Paragraphing whenever main idea shifts
- ❖ Logical development from main idea to main idea
- ❖ Use of transitions to lead reader logically form paragraph to paragraph

Appearance: _____ (10)
- ❖ Specific title plus required info on title page
- ❖ Body with standard margins and spacing
- ❖ Works cited, consulted in correct form
- ❖ Note cards, source cards, outline, draft, etc handed in/checked earlier

Conventions: _____ (15)
- ❖ Use of Spell check apparent, appropriate forms used
- ❖ Clear pronoun reference, no "you" or "I"
- ❖ Correct agreement of subject and verb/grammar
- ❖ Use of active voice preferable, literary present tense   _____ "to be" count
- ❖ No sentence fragments or run-ons, evidence of careful editing
- ❖ Capitalization, punctuation follow style book

                                                  TOTAL: _____ (100)

Comments: