

Writing as Inquiry I (Sections 04, 014, and 017)

Assignment #3: A Research-based, Argument-driven Essay Length: 1800-2300 Words  
Worth 30% (300 points) of the course grade Submission: Electronic copies

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### **Overview of important dates and deadlines:**

I will walk you through the process of writing the research paper step by step, breaking down its components so you can see how they work and to manipulate them for your own use. The following are important dates and all these mini-assignments are due before 11:00 am:

- Research Proposal: Finalize your research topic, articulate your specific research question, briefly explain why that question is important to pursue, identify to which audience it matters, tentatively specify what you hope to achieve / hypothesize, and mention the full bibliographical information of a minimum of 4 peer-reviewed sources that you have consulted and wish to use in the paper.  
Due: **April 26** and is worth (25 points)
- Annotated bibliography (of 4 peer-reviewed sources plus a minimum of 4 others): You are welcome to use a maximum of 2 relevant assigned readings from the ones I have posted to NYU Classes schedule.  
Due: **May 1<sup>st</sup>** and is worth (75 points)
- First draft of the research-based argumentative essay  
Due: **May 8<sup>th</sup>**
- Second draft of the research-based argumentative essay  
Due: **May 11<sup>th</sup>**
- Final draft of your research-based argumentative essay  
Due: **May 13<sup>th</sup>** and is worth (200 points)

### **Assignment General Overview:**

Research is at the foundation of all work that goes on at a university. It is also a crucial part of the life-long learning educated people undertake when they encounter an important new subject or issue. This research-based argumentative essay and its mini-assignments are designed to help you become an expert on a particular topic we have discussed in class and to develop an effective argument on that topic. In the process, you will learn or build on skills that will be important to advanced work in university classes.

Broad topics to choose from include the following:

- Literacy and China or the United States
- Malcolm X's activism and American Racism
- Slave autobiographical narratives in the United States and themes of justice or leadership
- Martin Luther King Jr's or Malcom X and responsible or radical leadership

- Human genetic enhancement, ethics, and/or politics
- The future of human genetic enhancement
- Human genetic enhancement
- Covid-19 Pandemic and Religion
- Chinese, Korean, and/or American responses to Covid-19
- Covid-19 and racism
- Covid-19 and the economy
- Covid-19 and surveillance technology
- Covid-19 and the environment
- Covid-19 and leadership
- Covid-19 and gender
- Covid-19 and China's status as a global power
- Covid-19, diet, and politics
- The individual versus society in times of Covid-19 pandemic
- Identity, othering, and resistance during Covid-19 crisis
- Staying at home and innovation
- Coping with self-quarantine and humor
- History of epidemics in China
- Globalization and Covid-19
- Online university education and the pandemic

These are very broad topic, but you are welcome to narrow any one of them down to a more focused and even modify it as long as the modification does not result in an outlandish topic that does not relate to the readings, themes, and units we have covered so far. If you have a related topic that is not mentioned above, you are welcome to consult with me before you pursue it.

You will begin the research unit by choosing one topic and narrow it down in a way that points to a practical or research problem. That problem should interest you and matter to a larger audience. How will you narrow down such a topic? I will walk you through that.

What I would like to see at the end of this stage is a preliminary proposal: In this brief proposal, decide on and commit to your research topic, articulate a specific research question, briefly explain why that question is important to pursue, identify to which audience it also matters, and tentatively specify what you hope to achieve / or hypothesize. I will offer more instructions as we go. During this process, you will conduct research to formulate a somewhat clear and focused proposal. Make sure to keep track of the early (general) sources you come across and use. During this stage, you have to build your research question and proposal on a minimum number of sources. I will explain more shortly.

Next you will search further for additional sufficient, specific, and reliable published information to develop a well-informed research essay. Thus, you will conduct more research in the library, find 4 peer-reviewed sources and a minimum of 4 other sources. After that, produce an annotated bibliography to increase your understanding of these sources and synthesize them to figure out how you will engage with them, develop, and support your position on your research question and research topic.

Next, start drafting your research paper. In your essay, remember that you will need an arguable and defensible thesis statement. You must support your argument with evidence and material taken from trustworthy and reliable sources, which you have consulted, to make a convincing and well researched answer to your research question. Building on and utilizing skills you have learned from previous assignments and units, consider and engage opposing views and employ rhetorical strategies to strengthen your sub-claims. As always, you must reference any sources you use in your text and on the works cited/ references page. That final research essay will be the culmination of all the work you have done over the course of the term in Writing as Inquiry I. Thus, you should expect to bring analytical, rhetorical, and stylistic as well as research skills to bear on this project.

During the different stages of the research process, I will offer more specific instructions and create practice opportunities to strengthen your familiarity with source evaluation steps, the elements of argument, rhetorical strategies, audience and their expectations, and effective revision and editing strategies. Also, expect that I will provide clear instructions with regards to the assigned mini-assignments. You will have at least one chance to receive feedback from 2 fellow students during a peer-review session and I will happily discuss your mini-assignments and drafts at any stage of development in one-on-one sessions as I have always done during my official and additional office hours.

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**The following message and items in red numerals are from the NYU Shanghai Library:** Check out the 3 modules and connect with the library at any stage of the research process

**Library Support:**

- 1- The library has developed a [3-part series of modules](#) that will cover the 3 basic components of previous WAI workshops ([source types](#), [starting research with tertiary sources](#), and [Boolean searching](#)). Each module consists of a short video (each is less than 10 minutes) and a short activity to check for understanding.
  
- 2- The library can provide individual research support. Follow this URL: <https://shanghai.nyu.edu/academics/library/services/aal> , where students can link to all of the below options:
  - a. chat with NYU Librarians in real-time
  - b. call librarians with research questions by dialing +86 (21) 20595614
  - c. email the library with research questions at [shanghai.librarian@nyu.edu](mailto:shanghai.librarian@nyu.edu)
  - d. schedule a 1-1 consultation with a librarian (we're happy to meet by zoom!) using our self-scheduler system at <https://nyu-shanghai.libcal.com/appointments>
  
- 3- **Using the HathiTrust collection**
  - a- NYU students, faculty, and staff can search for items in the NYU Libraries catalog; there will be a HathiTrust link if a digitized version is available. They can also search via the [HathiTrust website](#).

- b- Readers may view the digitized materials for one hour, with automatic renewals as long as the item isn't being requested by someone else.
- c- See the [HathiTrust How To Guide](#) for more information.

**4- NYU Libraries' expansive e-resources**

NYU Libraries have almost **3 million electronic resources** (5th largest collection in the world!) including:

- 2.2 million ebooks
- 175,000 audio titles
- 150,000 video titles
- 225,000 e-journals
- 1,300 databases

These items are searchable in [our catalog](#). Try filtering results with options like "full text online" to zero in on what you need.

**Research-based, argument-driven Essay  
Grading Rubric**

**1- The A-range Paper:**

***Adhering to the Assignment:***

The paper meets or exceeds the length requirements for this assignment. It includes a fully developed audience analysis of a hostile or neutral audience. It offers an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic that acknowledges and effectively handles alternate and opposing arguments. The author creates strong exigency for the argument. All of the parts of a full argument are included in this paper. There is a complete or more number of items in the bibliography (a minimum of 8, including at least 4 peer-reviewed articles), and all citations correctly adhere to the requirements of an appropriate, recognizable style guide.

***Content:***

The paper lays out a very persuasive argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic. Alternate and opposing positions are handled in ways that will convince the intended audience to acknowledge or even agree with the author's overall argument. Compelling evidence in the form of quotes, paraphrases and summaries is offered to convince the readers that what the author is arguing is believable. The paper accommodates itself well to the values, interests, and previous knowledge of its intended audience.

***Research:***

There are a variety of sources used, and all are appropriate and authoritative sources of information. The author has analyzed material from sources and used it strategically within his or her paper to prove that his or her position is the best possible one and to overcome alternate or opposing positions.

***Organization:***

The arrangement strategy effectively recognizes the needs and interests of the paper's intended audience. Paragraphs are arranged so that ideas flow logically from one to the next, and this logical order is supplemented by transition words and phrases that signal to the reader logical relations among ideas. It is difficult to imagine how this paper could be organized more effectively for its intended readers.

***Mechanics and style:***

The prose is clear, apt, and occasionally memorable. The paper contains few, if any, errors of grammar, mechanics, word choice, or expression. None of the errors that are present undermine the overall effectiveness of the paper. The style of writing is appropriately formal for the topic and the audience.

**2- The B-range Paper:**

***Adhering to the Assignment:***

The paper meets or exceeds the length requirements for this assignment. It includes a thoughtful audience analysis. The paper makes an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic that acknowledges and handles alternate and opposing arguments. The author creates effective exigency for the argument. All of the parts of a full argument are included in this paper. There is a full number of items in the bibliography (a minimum of 8, including at least 3 peer-reviewed articles), and citations correctly adhere to the requirements of an appropriate style guide.

***Content:***

The paper lays out an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic. Alternate and opposing positions are handled in ways that will convince the intended audience to acknowledge that the author's overall argument is reasonable. Sufficient evidence in the form of quotes, paraphrases and summaries is offered to show the readers that what the author is arguing is believable. The paper recognizes the values, interests, and previous knowledge of its intended audience, but it might occasionally fail to explain a point thoroughly or concisely enough for its readers.

***Research:***

There are a variety of sources used, and almost all are appropriate and authoritative sources of information. The author has analyzed material from sources and used it strategically within his or her paper to prove his or her position is the best possible one and to overcome alternate or opposing positions; however, there may be a few places where additional research is needed to explain or prove a point.

***Organization:***

The arrangement strategy effectively recognizes the needs and interests of the paper's intended audience. Most paragraphs are arranged so that ideas flow logically from one to the next;

sometimes this logical order is supplemented by transition words and phrases that signal to the reader logical relations among ideas, but sometimes transitions are used to link ideas that don't logically work together. While one might offer a few suggestions for how this paper could be organized more effectively for its intended readers, it is easy to understand why ideas are presented using this organizational strategy.

***Mechanics and style:***

The expression is more than competent. Not only is sentence structure correct, but also subordination, emphasis, sentence length, and variety are used effectively. Some sentences could be improved, but it would be surprising to find serious sentence errors, such as comma splices, fragments or fused sentences. Punctuation, grammar, and spelling reveal proficient use of the conventions of edited academic English. The style of writing is almost always appropriately formal for the topic and the audience although there may be the occasional lapse.

**3- The C-range Paper:**

***Adhering to the Assignment:***

The paper meets or exceeds the length requirements for this assignment. It includes an audience analysis, but this analysis could be more fully developed. The paper makes an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic that acknowledges and handles a number of alternate and opposing arguments. The author creates some exigency for the argument. All of the parts of a full argument are included in this paper. There is a sufficient number of items in the bibliography (a minimum of 6, including at least 3 peer-reviewed articles), and citations pretty much adhere to the requirements of an appropriate style guide.

***Content:***

The paper lays out an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic although some points seem to be missing. Alternate and opposing positions are mentioned, but they are not always handled in ways that will convince the intended audience to acknowledge the author's overall argument is reasonable. The author might set up opposing arguments as straw men or otherwise misunderstand them. Evidence in the form of quotes, paraphrases and summaries is offered to show the reader that what the author is arguing is believable; however, most of this evidence is obvious or under-analyzed. There is likely to be an over-reliance on direct quotes. The paper only sometimes recognizes the values, interests, and previous knowledge of its intended audience.

***Research:***

There are some different types of sources used, but not as great a variety as might have been consulted. The overwhelming majority of all sources are appropriate and authoritative sources of information, but a few may be questionable. The author sometimes analyzes material from sources and uses it strategically within his or her paper to prove his or her position is the best possible one and to overcome alternate or opposing positions; at other times, the author seems to be simply reporting on his or her research without offering sufficient analysis. There may be several places where additional research is needed to explain or prove a point.

***Organization:***

The arrangement strategy does not seem to take into account the needs or interests of the paper's intended audience. There is an implicit sense of organization, but several paragraphs and/or sentences within paragraphs are misplaced to the extent that the organizational structure is recognizable but disjointed.

***Mechanics and style:***

Sentence structure is generally correct although the writer may show limited competence with sentence effectiveness, failing to use such elements as subordination, sentence variety, and modifiers to achieve emphasis. Comma splices, unintentional fragments, and fused sentences – errors that betray inadequate understanding of sentence structure – may occasionally crop up. Vocabulary is fairly limited. The paper may contain errors in spelling, mechanics, and grammar that reveal unfamiliarity with conventions of edited academic English. The style is not inappropriate to the reader or topic, but it is wooden and uninteresting.

**4- The D-range Paper:*****Adhering to the Assignment:***

The paper falls slightly below or over-exceeds the page length requirement for this assignment. It includes an audience analysis, but this analysis needs to be much more fully developed; the audience described might be friendly to the author's position (instead of hostile or neutral). The paper might make an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic but fail to acknowledge and handle alternate and opposing arguments. Alternately, the paper might only refute alternate and opposing positions, never really offering a positive argument in support of the author's position. The author barely implies exigency for the argument. Most of the parts of a full argument are included in this paper, but some are underdeveloped or missing altogether. There are fewer than 8 items in the bibliography (and/or fewer than 3 peer-reviewed articles), and this number seems inadequate. Citations are incorrect in that they do not consistently adhere to the requirements of an appropriate, recognizable style guide.

***Content:***

The paper does not lay out a positive argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic, or it fails to handle any alternate and opposing positions. Sufficient evidence to support points is usually not provided, and, when it is, it is always under-analyzed. The paper does not often recognize the values, interests, and previous knowledge of its intended audience.

***Research:***

There is only one type of source used, or the types of sources being consulted are inappropriate in some significant way. They may argue in favor of one side of the debate, present inaccurate information, or be written by authors with poor ethos. The author spends a great deal of the paper reporting on his or her research without offering sufficient analysis. Additional research is often needed to explain or prove a point.

***Organization:***

The arrangement strategy ignores the needs and interests of the paper's intended audience. The organizational strategy is difficult to discern. Material is not arranged in a logical order, and transitions to help guide the reader are usually missing.

***Mechanics and style:***

There are numerous errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The diction and/or syntax may be so weak that sentences are sometimes incomprehensible for the intended audience, although experienced readers can make sense of what is written. Lack of proofreading may turn an otherwise adequate paper into a D paper. The style is inappropriate to the readers or topic in that it is much too informal or too stiff and convoluted to make reading an easy and accessible task.

**5- The F-range Paper:**

***Adhering to the Assignment:***

The paper falls significantly below the length requirement for this assignment. There is no audience analysis. The paper does not offer an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic, nor does it handle positions the author probably opposes. There is no exigency for this argument. There are fewer than 6 items in the bibliography, and sufficient peer-reviewed research is clearly lacking. If citations are present at all, they are incorrect.

and/or

***Content:***

The paper does not offer an argument in support of the author's position on a controversial topic, nor does it handle any positions with which the author probably disagrees. Little or no evidence is offered to support the argument being presented. The paper is actively hostile to or inadvertently insults the intended audience.

and/or

***Research:***

If sources are used in this paper at all, at least half are inappropriate, unauthoritative, or inaccurate. The author sometimes profoundly misunderstands or misrepresents material from sources.

and/or

***Organization:***



The organization seems to a significant degree haphazard or arbitrary.

and/or

***Mechanics and style:***

Numerous and consistent errors of grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, or syntax hinder clarity or even basic communication. Some sentences are incomprehensible. The paper cannot really be said to have a style because language usage seems out of the writer's control.