

Dr. Richardson

COMP 101

Weird Things Assignments

Spring 2011

*The General Guidelines for Composition Assignments apply to these assignments.*

The **letter of proposal** declares the topic of and provides direction for the final research paper. Select a large topic of interest to you within the framework of “weird things.”

Now write a letter that answers the following questions:

- What is your topic and why are you interested in it?
- What are your personal connections with this topic?
- How can you explore this topic? What resources are available?
- What questions will guide your exploratory research?

If you wish to change your topic after you submit your letter, you must do so in writing (an email is fine) and receive my approval to proceed with your new topic.

Use a basic business format for your letter. For more information, see the OWL at Purdue’s materials on Writing the Basic Business Letter at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/653/01/>

For the recipient’s information, use the following:

Dr. Jennifer Richardson  
Assistant Professor  
Department Of English and Communication  
SUNY Potsdam 13676-2294

You need not make an envelope.

Don’t forget to sign your letter after you print it!

Letters cannot be submitted electronically.

The letter of proposal is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

Now, find and read carefully a variety of current, relevant, credible, scholarly and popular sources about the topic you have selected.

Then write an **annotated bibliography** that follows the detailed guidelines provided.

We will peer review this assignment in class on \_\_\_\_\_

The annotated bibliography is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you are familiar with your sources, consider the following questions about your topic:

- *What is it?* Considers the background and history of your topic. Summary and reporting of information.
- *What are the “big deals” involved in your large topic?* Considers the specific issues or questions related to your large topic and the various possible solutions or answers that exist. Examines the major positions that people hold, why they hold them, and whether those positions are good or bad. Uses the methods from earlier in the semester, including logical reasoning, considerations of fallacies, and the SEARCH method.
- *What do you think about it, and why?* Considers what you think about your topic. What are your answers to the questions surrounding your topic? What is your position on your topic?

Now, draft a **research paper** of 9 – 10 typed double-spaced pages that tells your readers what your topic is, describes the major issues that it involves, and argues for what you think, why you think it, and why audiences should agree with you.

This assignment requires a research-based argument that clearly and effectively presents and defends your positions and your reasons for them. You are required to convey information correctly and honestly, but you should include your opinions in this paper. Be sure you properly cite all sources you refer to, quote, or paraphrase in all of your essays using MLA or APA style of citation.

We will peer review this assignment in class on \_\_\_\_\_

We will peer review this assignment again in class on \_\_\_\_\_

The research paper is due during the Final Exam meeting at \_\_\_\_\_

Your **position & progress report** is an informal way to discuss your research paper with the whole class. It should be **3-5 minutes** long and is required to be focused on the following points:

- An introduction of your topic
- A BRIEF summary of what you've learned or discovered about your topic so far
- Your working thesis/position (your take so far, where you think you stand)
- Specific questions for the class about your topic, paper, sources, points, etc....

On the day of your report, you are required to hand in a typed, doubled spaced journal that discusses each of the points listed above. You must have your written response *and* give your report in class on the day you are scheduled to do so in order to receive points for this assignment. If you are missing either one, you will receive a 0.

This assignment is due at the beginning of class on \_\_\_\_\_