Research Paper Assignment
Compose an essay that thoroughly addresses your proposed topic. Refer back to your prospectus. Clearly identify your topic in a well-developed thesis, and then support that thesis by presenting your research in an orderly, cohesive manner that ends in a well-formatted conclusion. The thesis is the road map for your essay and the conclusion needs to bring it to a logical end that clearly addresses the thesis.

Field and library research are required for this paper. Think about whom to interview as you narrow your focus. Prepare your interview questions carefully and, if you decide to conduct a survey, prepare a draft of that at the same time. Refer to your text for reminders about interviews and surveys as well as other types of field research. This essay assignment includes research components to help you better understand what will be required of you later in your academic career.

Each component of this paper will receive a grade. It is extremely important that you complete each section according to instructions and submit each section when it is due. Make it your very best effort insofar as grammar, punctuation, and composition skills are concerned. The components of this assignment are listed below along with their value towards the 200 point project total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospectus</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>1 page</td>
<td>April 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Logs</td>
<td>25 points</td>
<td>as many as it takes</td>
<td>April 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>25 points</td>
<td>as many as it takes</td>
<td>April 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay includes Works Cited</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>4 pages + Works Cited</td>
<td>May 6*</td>
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*May 6 is our final exam night. You may opt to complete your paper in time for our last class on April 29. That is fine with me as that will give you time to study for your other final exams.

The million dollar question: How many sources do I have to have? The answer is a minimum of five scholarly sources. **Types of resources required for this paper:**

- Book: One book other than your textbook; use the Lane Library
- Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles: One scholarly article
- Web Site: One Internet Resource approved by me
- Field Research: One interview, one close observation, or one survey**
- Other: One additional resource from the list above

**These types of research are fun and rewarding. You gain more than just knowledge about your topic from this type of research.
1. This Ain’t Your Grandma’s Television Program
When we talk about the ways that technology influences our lives today, the first things that come to mind are cell phones and the Internet. But if you talk to someone from “The Greatest Generation” or those who hail from “The Baby Boomers,” they will tell you that television changed their lives as largely as the Internet has done recently.

**Topic:** Research and discuss in a compare and contrast essay television viewing habits from television’s early years (fifties or sixties) and your own. This essay will require library research as well as some first-hand testimony in the form of interviews and/or a survey.

*Some sample questions to consider as you narrow your thesis:* How have television viewing habits changed from the way (let’s say) your grandmother watched television as a 19 year-old to the way you watch it? How have her viewing habits changed? What other questions does this raise for you?

2. Community-Minded Spirit
There are many ways to give back to one’s community. In our area there are hundreds of groups whose purpose it is to help those in need. There are many other groups and organizations that rely on donations and public support to provide other things that are beneficial in other ways like education, the arts, or something other than supplying basic food & shelter-type needs. There are, quite honestly, innumerable ways to spend one million dollars to in the spirit of community service.

**Topic:** If you were handed one million dollars to help our community in one way, what would you do and why?

**Details:** This topic will require details about your recipient’s need or cause and must include research to support how the money will be spent. For example, let’s say I wanted to spend one million dollars to build a playground for children and youth with special needs. Think about all the research questions to explore. Where? Price/Availability of land? What types of special needs? What kinds of equipment? Budget for upkeep and who is responsible for that? Other similar playgrounds in the area? *Many more questions come to mind.*

3. Gluten-Free or Not ~ That is the Question
Make Healthy Diet Choices! We must fight the obesity epidemic in the U.S. Lower your caloric intake. Omit processed foods. Organic is best. Don’t use artificial sweeteners. Use artificial sweeteners. All these recommendations are valuable. Another piece of advice that has grown popular over the past few years involves eating foods that are gluten-free.

**Topic:** Explore gluten-free eating. Is this a craze or real science? What does gluten-free mean anyway?

**Details:** Initial research will be required to become familiar with exactly what this type of diet means to the individual and who may or may not benefit from it. Explore the pros and cons. Who might you interview for a paper like this? Could a survey be helpful?

4. One of Two Ideas
You may propose a thoroughly thought-out topic based on one of these two ideas. Look at the detail in the topics above and make a reasonable proposal.

a. Relate the essay “The Cancer Cluster Myth” to a particular cancer with which you have personal experience.

b. Super-Couponers – Who *are* these people and are they changing the way we shop for groceries? Is there an alternative? Pros? Cons?
Prospectus Due April 8
The purpose of the prospectus is to decide what you want to write about. A “prospectus” is a statement outlining the main features of the paper that you intend to write. Your prospectus offers me an opportunity to provide feedback on your planned paper early in the process of writing it. Here's how you should proceed:

1. Decide on a topic that interests you.
2. Compose a “Working Thesis.” This is your first stab at a thesis statement to guide your essay. Exactly what is your essay about? That is answered in your thesis statement.
3. In your prospectus, you will identify your topic and several questions you would like to answer in your paper. What interests you about this particular topic? Perform initial research to help guide you. The more specific you can be the better.
4. Indicate what you already know, especially if your previous background helped you define a topic of particular interest.
5. Do you know where to look for references? What sources do you think will be the most promising to start with? Do you have someone in mind as an expert to interview? At this point, the research you perform is intended to show you where you are going to need to look for information. Your prospectus should include specific information about the initial research you have completed.

Remember “Google Smoogle.” Googling is not appropriate initial research.

Your prospectus must answer the above questions. It should be one double-spaced, typed page long (no more than two pages). The prospectus counts 50 points toward the 200 points for the entire assignment. 50 points is a lot, so take this part of the assignment seriously.

Research Logs Due April 22
The purpose of the research log is to reveal the various techniques you employ during the research process. This will be a detailed log of your research techniques. I am providing forms for you to use. You must complete these forms for each one of the sources you consider for your paper.

Your research should continue as your paper progresses, but you have to start somewhere and I want you to start in the library. As much as I am a proponent of electronic access, I am also a believer in the physical process of searching the library for resources. You are, therefore, required to visit the library and perform at least some of your research there.

Logs are required for any research you perform after the initial logs and analysis are completed that you utilize in your essay.

Annotated Bibliography Due April 22
What is an Annotated Bibliography? It is an alphabetized list of sources on a specific subject in which each citation is followed by a brief paragraph that summarizes, describes, and/or critically evaluates the source and includes a statement that speaks to the value of the piece to your project. You are expected to do more than merely summarize each source; some critical analysis is required.

Do NOT copy and paste the abstract for your resource or another annotation that you find for your resource. You need to review the source and write your own annotation.
Annotated Bibliography (continued)

Each entry should include the following elements:
1. The MLA citation
2. Brief description/summary of the work cited
3. Comments about the work’s usefulness related to your thesis, including attention to one or more of the following features:
   - Scope or relevance of the work
   - Audience
   - Author’s credibility or expertise
   - Work’s relationship to other works in the area of study
4. Comments about any special features of the work, if necessary or relevant, like graphs, charts, graphics, or other references
5. Compose in complete sentences, paying attention to grammar and punctuation.
6. Each entry should be no longer than between 50-150 words

Refer to my examples

Use your Little Penguin Handbook

Seek assistance from the writing center

Use the websites that I gave you to help format Works Cited, In-Text, and Annotated Bibliography entries.

AASU University Writing Center
http://www.armstrong.edu/Departments/writing_center/writing_center_welcome/

OWL at Purdue University
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

Research and Documentation Online 5th Edition, Diana Hacker & Barbara Fister
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

Samples Follow . . .
Annotated Bibliography

Darling, a professor of education at Bard College, writes that adolescents are most often influenced not by what their friends do or say, but how they think their friends will react to a situation. Darling asserts that by providing positive information, involving all students, and grouping students differently, schools can provide opportunities to reinforce positive values. The idea of preconceived notions of peer reaction is better addressed here than in other sources that I found. This idea of adolescent positive peer influence is a timely theory and strongly supports the theme of my paper.

The article, “Losing Your Voice on the Internet,” written by James DiGiovanna discusses how the things we text, email, and blog about are permanent and viral. Social networking websites, such as MySpace™ and Facebook™, are used to communicate with others. Because of the digital footprint that typed text leaves behind, participating in these types of website communities is potentially harmful. This article supports key points in my thesis, specifically those regarding privacy issues that users of social networking sites either are not aware of or blatantly ignore.
May 6 is our final exam night. You may opt to complete your paper in time for our last class on April 29. That is fine with me as that will give you time to study for your other final exams.

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Your essay should be one of these types:

An **ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY** is one that attempts to persuade the reader to the writer's point of view. The writer can either be serious or funny, but always tries to convince the reader of the validity of his or her opinion. The essay may argue openly, but it is not intended to be a barroom brawl type of discussion. This is all about persuasion. Employ your best rhetorical skills – Think ethos, pathos, and logos.

A **COMPARE AND CONTRAST** essay examines the similarities and differences between people, opinions, items, actions, and beliefs. You will address what is similar, what is different, and why does all of that matter? There are two ways to format your discussion.

*Block:* In this style, you complexly discuss one side of the issue at hand and then transition into a thorough discussion of the other issue. The conclusion draws it all together.

*Point by Point:* Arrange your discussion by points. Thoroughly discuss point one about issues A & B, then transition into a discussion of point two about issues A & B, and so on.

**Formatting**
Your essay must be formatted according to MLA guidelines. It should be typed, double-spaced, and a minimum of 4 full pages. *Note: 10 point deduction for <4 full pages.*

After the last page of your essay, create a new page and begin your Works Cited. The Works Cited does not count in your minimum page requirement for your essay and must be formatted using MLA guidelines. I prefer page numbers in the footer of the document.

**Assemble your final document in the following order and place it in a folder (not a three ring binder); you may use tab dividers. You may create a cover page for this essay, especially if you want to use creative graphics to make a point about your essay.**

Cover Page (your option)
Prospectus
Research Logs
Annotated Bibliography
Final Essay

This is the heading for page one of the Prospectus and Essay:

Name

ENGL1101, Assignment (Prospectus, Research Paper)

Date Turned In
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
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**Search topic** *(This may be a question, a short statement, or just a concept)*

**Keywords to search** *(synonyms for the concepts above; think of both broad & narrow terms)*

**Information Source used** *(Library Catalogue, Journal Index or Database, Internet)*

*please be specific*

**Title and Author of Resource Located:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Location</th>
<th>Call Number (Book)</th>
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**Status**

When you went to the shelf, what other resources did you find useful?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Citation for item / MLA format exactly as required for your Works Cited Page**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Evaluation of material** *(how/what will it contribute to your paper or support your argument? Make a note of page numbers)*

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________
**Internet Search Tree**

Create a flow chart of your Internet search terms. Use arrows to indicate your path as you search for information. What leads to where that leads you to someplace else, and so on. The purpose is to understand how to search more efficiently and systematically search.

For each search, you need to know what engine you used, the number of results from that search, and where that took you. Did you access one of the results? If so, to where? If not, what did you do? Make entries to show what happened next. Did you click on a link? Were you in the Lane Library’s databases? Highlight the hits that proved useful. *The point is to log what you do – every click – and become aware of what you do, why you do it, and how you are learning to search more efficiently each time you engage an assignment.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search Engine</th>
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*This one is left blank on purpose. You may opt to create a diagram that illustrates your search flow.*