Group Project Assignment

Students will form groups comprising of 3-5 members. Each group will select a topic from the instructor's list OR the group may choose their own topic but it must be approved by the instructor. The group will research their topic and give a ten to fifteen minutes oral presentation of their findings to the class using Power Point or a similar program. All group members must orally present. In addition, each group must:

    a) Submit a 6-7 page research paper of their topic by the day of the final. Make sure that all group member's name are on the research paper. The guidelines and format of the research paper can be found on the pages below and in your lab manual.

Presentation Guideline

1. Be creative and original. How will your group and your presentation impress the audience?
   Students may use note cards, but do not read directly from the note cards throughout the presentation.

2. Make eye contact and engage the audience.

3. Present only the most important and relevant information and leave the details of the topic in the research paper. Think of your presentation as a Super Bowl commercial. In the 10-15 minutes that you have, what do you want the audience to know and leave home with?

4. Use a lot of visuals during your presentation. It will help to engage your audience.

5. Do a timed mock presentation with all group members. This is helpful in determining whether your group exceeded the time limit and whether your group is prepared.

Research Paper Basic Guidelines

A research paper should have these basic components; Title, Introduction, Literature Review, Conclusion / Discussion, and Literature Citation. The following details what information each of these component should address.

Introduction

What is the problem or topic you wish to investigate? How will you approach this research? Why is this of interest to **you** and why should **we** be interested in this topic? This is your contract with the reader (and professor). Here you say what you will be doing in the remainder of the project so define carefully your interests and the parameters (scope) of your projected work. Also remember to keep the project focused don't wander off! As you collect material and structure an outline keep referring to this section.

Literature Review

First, a **literature review** which basically lays out a narrative of what has been written about this topic. This narrative should be comparative (you compare what different researchers and writers have to say) and analytical (you should make your own comments and assessments of what the existing material reveals and also what is missing from the material you have identified in your view).

Second, contain the major studies that have been done on this subject. When you do a search, say on the web, you need to sort out from the reference you find who is cited or quoted. This may be in a newspaper story where they refer to General So-and-So or Professor Such-and-Such. Or it may be in a footnote where the leading book and author on the topic are listed.

Third, you need to identify and cite other sources that you found particularly interesting and useful for this paper. (Make sure you try to verify the reliability and quality of your sources. The web is full of deceit and phony stuff. I had a student cite an article from The Onion for one paper!)

Conclusions

Summarize your major findings. Make certain that you directly connect this section to the **introduction** you wrote and to what you said you were going to do in this research. Look at the introduction and make sure that you have clearly stated in that section what you intend to do in this work.

Literature Citation / Sources used or cited

List, using the preferred **citation method** suggested by the program of study, the **major sources** you consulted for this project. Footnotes can be put at the bottom of each page [1] or you can cite by putting the source after the reference (Schmidt, 2003, p. 345) and then list the sources alphabetically at the end of the paper. This is an example of a citation - Steffen Schmidt, *How to Write a Good Research Paper*, Iowa State University/Nova Oceanographic Center, **Research Monographs**, 2003, p. 345.

Online Resource:

The following websites contain more information on how to write a research paper. You can follow any of these websites guidelines.

1) http://www.aresearchguide.com/1steps.html#step2
2) http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~bioslabs/tools/report/reportform.html
3) http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/index.shtml

Other Tips:

- **Cover:** Put a clean and informative **cover** on your project with a title, your name, a date of submission, and for what class this project was submitted. You can put a useful graphic on the cover but be careful to keep it tasteful!

- **Number Pages:** You must number all pages since that's how others will cite your work.

- **Font:** use standard size and style font. Use conventional margins left right and at top and bottom. Use one and a half spaces unless otherwise told. It makes it easier to read and write corrections/comments by the instructor.

- **Tables/Charts:** It is always helpful to have appropriate graphics such as maps, tables, charts or other graphic representations in the paper. These should be used sparingly but they can make a paper richer and more professional.

- **Quotations:** I strongly believe that nothing is quite as effective as a few really significant quotations from authorities on whatever you are researching. (Remember that, hard though it may be to accept this fact, you are probably not an authority yet!). A few well-chosen quotes that reinforce the major thesis or conclusions of your project are very useful. You should not, however, use quotes to "pad" the paper.

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- **Remember:** Each group must turn in a research paper with all members name on it. The paper must a) follow the Modern Language Association Format (MLA); b) be type c) have 1.5 spacing, d) be number on bottom center; e) have a cover' f) have at least 3 primary sources.
    ii. Have a cover page and citation page.
    iii. Have at least 3 primary source