ENG 23: College Composition
Fall 2017
Professor Patrick Walters
The Annotated Bibliography Assignment

Overview:

In his article “Dehumanized” in Harper’s magazine, Mark Slouka makes the case that the primary purpose of a four-year college education is to provide students with a broad education in the humanities – reading, writing, foreign language, the classics, history etc. – and to give them a broad education rather than to train them to be workers in specific careers. You may have agreed or disagreed with his argument. This is your chance to answer the question yourself. The next two assignments in this class – this annotated bibliography and then the research essay – are your chance to do it better than Slouka did. In this assignment, you will be conducting the research first and compiling the information you will use when you write the essay in the next assignment. Both will involve you picking a side and answering this question:

What should the primary role of a four-year college or university be in teaching its students? Should a school’s main focus be training students for specific careers in the workforce – through practical classes like business, marketing, architecture, science and math? Or, should a university’s main role be to provide a wide-ranging education that emphasizes humanities like English, foreign languages, art, world cultures, history and government?

Requirements:

As noted on the syllabus, this is the first of two assignments revolving this question. This assignment, the annotated bibliography, is worth 10 percent of your grade for the course. Then, the research essay which you write next based on these sources, is worth 20 percent of your grade for the course. I will grade them separately; combined, they are worth 30 percent of your grade. You will get the guidelines for the actual essay after you have completed the annotated bibliography. This is meant to get you in the habit of doing your research first.

In this assignment, you will be required to conduct research on this question and compile a list of at least eight sources to help support the argument you plan to make. We are doing the research first, before you go and actually write the essay for the next assignment. You should look for reliable sources from books, magazines, web publications, journals, newspapers, TV or radio programs, personal interviews etc. Of those eight, you must meet these requirements:

- Cite at least one personal interview you conduct yourself
- Cite at least one book
- Cite at least one magazine or journal article
Beyond those requirements, I want you looking for concrete evidence that could really make your case to someone who might disagree with you. Look for specific evidence in journals, magazines, newspapers, radio/TV interviews, books and any other reliable source you can find. All of the sources must be cited using MLA Style, which we will be discussing.

Under each entry in your annotated bibliography, you will be including a two- or three-sentence paragraph explaining 1) what that particular source shows and 2) how you plan to use it in your argument. That is the “annotated” part of the bibliography – it’s where you are showing how you plan to use that source as part of your argument in the essay.

**Format:**

We will be discussing MLA Style in class and in our library session Wednesday, where we will help to get you started and answer questions about formatting. In terms of this, your annotated bibliography must be typed in Times New Roman, 12-point font, and single spaced. Your short paragraph about what the source shows and how you plan to use it in your argument should come immediately after the citation, starting on the next line like this:


In this article, the author makes an argument on the importance of teaching the humanities in higher education because of how they help teach values and critical thinking skills. I am planning to cite examples and evidence from his argument on how the humanities help college students to make ethical decisions and to critically evaluate information they consume.

**Due dates:**

**Monday, Oct. 30:** Notes, working draft of annotated bibliography due as hard copy in class  
**Wednesday, Nov. 1:** Complete rough draft of annotated bibliography due to D2L and as a hard copy in class for peer review  
**Monday, Nov. 6:** Final draft of annotated bibliography due to D2L dropbox to be graded