

## FINAL RESEARCH ESSAY

### Focus

*Strong thesis, sentence structure, paragraph cohesion & conceptual flow, integration of relevant & authoritative sources, focused intro & conclusion.*

Write an essay that addresses the following question:

***How has social media impacted our ability to effectively understand, evaluate, and critique the relevant public arguments of the times?***

You may take this essay in a number of directions:

- You may write a ***cause/effect*** essay examining the effects of social media use on how certain communities respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; tracing its origins, contributing causes, and possible solutions.
- You may write a ***comparison/contrast*** essay between two different kinds of social media communities and how they understand the protests and riots centering on racial tensions and community policing in America.
- You may write a ***narrative/descriptive*** essay about a personal or other story you've encountered that clearly illustrates and relates to the larger topic under discussion.
- You may write an ***exemplification*** essay looking at various examples of social media use regarding a current social issue and comment on what overall patterns or connections arise from looking at the examples all together.
- You may select any issue you like as long as it is relevant to the topic, the modern world, and our collective human experience as mediated through social media technologies.

Your essay should do the following:

- Clearly define what you are claiming about the topic in a thesis statement and how you intend to develop that claim.
- Use examples from relevant sources (in the form of quotation, summary, and paraphrase) and your own discussion to create this thesis-driven essay. Try to move beyond just retelling your experience or opinion. You need to look at the underlying claims ABOUT the topic as well as what the most reliable and authoritative sources you can find have to say about it.
- Explore counterarguments and rebuttals to your position.

## Goals

- Be able to analyze a larger cultural issue and respond to it.
- Present your argument or position in a clear thesis statement in the introduction.
- Support your claim or focus with evidence and examples from relevant, reliable and representative sources. Be able to use summary, paraphrase, and quotation of relevant sources in your analysis.
- Be able to clearly present your interpretation of an issue without personal bias or with clear, relevant & authoritative support for the bias.
- Be able to create a coherent, graceful introduction, conclusion and transitions to tie together the various parts of your essay.

## Research

- Take advantage of the [WR 122 Library Guide](#) for help with finding relevant sources, getting your essay into MLA format and all other aspects of the essay writing process.
- Consult the MHCC [databases](#) for articles relevant to your topic.
- Make sure you are using the elements of argument construction and analysis we have learned this term to strengthen the presentation of your ideas. For instance, make sure you have established proper authority with your sources, have sufficient and reliable data, make appropriate appeals to pathos, and have a proper warrant that connects your evidence to your thesis. Make sure to also consider and include substantive responses to the major arguments on both (or all) sides of the argument in question. Especially those in opposition to your thesis.
- You may also use popular search engines, interviews, and other reliable, authoritative means of support to develop your thesis.

## Format & Due Dates

- 4-6 pages, double-spaced, 12.pt font. (Times New Roman, Arial, or Helvetica)
- MLA format. (Please consult [The Writing Process](#) digital handbook and our Library page for help with MLA. I have also provided an [essay template](#) (for you. Newer versions of Microsoft Word come with an MLA template as well. You have access to Microsoft Office as a student.
- A minimum of 4 reliable, relevant external sources cited in the essay and on a properly formatted Works Cited page.
- Submit a draft of your essay to the [Writing Center](#) (link also on our Black-Board Page) for feedback & extra credit. Include a verification of some kind in your submission.
- Your essay is due the last week of class. See calendar and course schedule for more details.