**RESEARCH PROJECT**

For this assignment, we will be working on researching and writing a 5-6 page research paper about a topic of your choice. A research project is a complex work, made up of many smaller stages, and we will be spending time in class working on the various skills necessary to complete this task successfully. It will be impossible to do this project successfully in the final weekend. You must break it down into smaller steps and work on it little by little over the course of the time allotted, and your grade will depend on your meeting deadlines and turning in steps along the way

The basic requirements for your research project are as follows:

**1. Topics**

This research paper may be about any topic you choose, however it must relate to the culture of Los Angeles in the past, present, or future in a significant way. This connection to Los Angeles will require you to take the information you have learned about your general topic and think critically about how it impacts your community. Make sure you think carefully about what you want to research. The point of this paper is to serve as some background research for a longer project you will complete in the Spring Semester. It should help you formulate that project by providing you with general background information (i.e., the general topic you choose) on your project.

**2. Driving Questions**

Once you have an idea about what your research is going to be about, you need to think about a “driving question” to focus your research. You may be interested in the issue of homelessness, for example, but then you need to settle on what you are interested in learning about homelessness, such as “What are the causes of homelessness?” or “What are the trends in homelessness in California”? Once you have settled on your central question, you should commit to writing a list of questions which are things you would need to find out about your subject to be able to answer your driving or central question. Ultimately, the answers to all of these questions may not all find their way into your final paper, but it will be incredibly useful to organize your research and your final paper.

**3. Citations**

You must cite from at least five different sources and include a bibliography. As mentioned above, you must find **at least** five different sources for the information that you are including in your Research Paper (and Wikipedia does not count as one of the sources.) You, of course, may cite from more than five, and you should consult more than five. Those sources can be books, encyclopedias, personal interviews, internet articles, etc. You must cite at least one source from an academic journal (for example, JSTOR). We will spend some time in class learning (or reviewing) how to find appropriate sources, how to create an annotated bibliography to help guide your research, what information you need for a bibliography and how to write one. In addition, any quotations or ideas taken from other works and included in your Research Paper must be cited using MLA format citations. We will review how and when to create proper citations in class as well.

**4. Formatting**

Your final Research Paper MUST have a cover page, MUST be typed and MUST be at least 5 double-spaced typed pages long (not including cover page and bibliography). I will give you examples of the cover page, so you will know what it needs to include and look like. The final version of your Research Paper (but not the rough draft) MUST be typed in Times New Roman 12 point type, double spaced, with 1 inch margins. Your final bibliography should also be attached to the back of your Research Paper (and does not count as one of the five pages.)

If you work on this project in stages, as laid out in class, you should have no problem completing this assignment successfully and learning something new about a topic you’re interested in.