**Assignment #3: Synthesize**

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate how well you can capture patterns and trends in your research topic. Specifically, you’ll want to connect (synthesize) what others have already said about this problem so that your readers will have an in-depth understanding of the different perspectives on this topic. For this paper, you will essentially synthesize multiple perspectives on one issue so that you can offer your audience a thorough and nuanced view of well-informed conversation about the topic.  

For your final draft, you won’t be composing a summary assignment (that was Assignment #1) nor will you be doing an analysis of individual sources (that was Assignment #2). However, during the research portion of this assignment, you may wind up summarizing and analyzing your articles – this will help you identify patterns and connections among your sources. 

**To be considered complete, you final draft should include:**

* **Your revised synthesis essay of around 1500-2000 words**
* **Your works cited or references page**
* **Your cover letter, which includes a discussion of your revisions**

**Steps for Assignment #2:**

1. Choose a topic you find interesting and about which people might have different perspectives. This doesn’t mean you have to choose something “controversial.” Rather, you want to select a topic which is narrow enough for you to read about comprehensively in the weeks we’re working on this project. Don’t worry! We’ll spend some time in class talking about how to narrow your topic into something manageable.
2. Using the techniques discussed in class for conducting research, generate a list of sources related to your topic. Evaluate the sources on this list based on the criteria discussed in class and determine if they are relevant to your research. If they are, great!
3. Read, annotate, and briefly summarize the sources. Take notes on any patterns and connections, and group similar bits of information together. Refer to*Norton Field Guide*, Ch. 50, pp. 520-521 for an example of how a writer synthesizes several sources into different categories.Here are some questions to consider:
   1. What is the main argument of each article/text?
   2. Why are these writers believable or credible?
   3. Are these texts reliable sources of evidence on this topic? How do you know?
   4. What categories, patterns, or trends do you observe across the texts?
   5. If you can divide the topic into categories, how would you divide them? Which writers/texts would fall into those categories?
4. Draft your synthesis essay. Here are some questions to consider:
   1. What is your topic, and why might readers find it important/relevant?
   2. What categories did you identify in the previous step? What unites the writers/texts in each category?
   3. What are the strengths of the arguments being made in each category? Are there weaknesses?
5. Share your synthesis essay for feedback.
6. Revise your synthesis essay.
7. Draft your cover letter.
8. Submit your final draft.

**Format & Layout**

[Insert how you want students to organize their writing and format their paper.]

Sample General Outline

* Introduction with Thesis
* Category 1 with sources and evidence
* Category 2 with sources and evidence
* More categories as needed and so on and so forth
* Conclusion

Your paper should reference 3-5 sources and be about 1500-2000 words in length.

Include in-text citations where you paraphrase or quote directly from the article. Include a Works Cited or Reference page at the end of the paper. 

**Due Dates**

Proposal Draft: **[DATE]**

Annotated or Working Bibliography: **[DATE]**

First Draft**: [DATE]**

Peer Review**: [DATE]**

Final Draft: **[DATE]**

**Final Submission Checklist**

* I have not simply summarized each article.
* I have included a thesis statement that captures the focus of my paper.
* I have provided evidence to support my thesis statement.
* I have discussed patterns and connections.
* I have included in-text citations and a Works Cited/Reference list.
* I have formatted my paper [as my instructor has described.]
* I have read the rubric the instructor will use to assess my rhetorical analysis.