Due Dates:

Proposal: Monday, 10/22, by 11:59 pm

Library Day: Friday, 10/26, after break – attendance is required. If you are unable to come that day, you will have to make an appointment with a librarian for instruction on a day no later than 10/31.

Prewriting: Friday, 11/2, before class – Annotated bibliography, and bring a paper copy to class for peer editing

Friday, 11/9, before class – Working thesis statement and draft outline, and bring a paper copy to class for peer editing

First draft: Friday, 11/16, before class, & bring a paper copy to class for peer editing

Final draft: Friday, 12/7, 11:59 pm. This date is firm— I cannot extend this deadline because I need to submit your final grades by a specific date.

Length:

Proposal: 1 page (200-300 words)
Annotated Bibliography: 4 citations
Working Thesis & Outline: 1 page
Final essay: 5-7 pages (750-1000 words), plus list of works cited

Value:

Proposal: 40 points
Annotated Bibliography: 40 points
Working Thesis & Outline: 10 points
Final essay: 160 points – a detailed rubric will be posted to Blackboard

Submission: Upload an MS Word document to Blackboard by the due date and time for each part of the assignment. The main essay assignment is set up in Blackboard to accept multiple attempts, so you should upload your draft by its due date, and then later upload your revised final version. I have set up separate assignments for the other items, including a submission template for the proposal.

Format: Include a header with your name, the course number and name (ENG 111-013, College Composition 1), the instructor (Instructor: K. Vogt), and the assignment (Assignment #3, Researched Argument Essay).

Use 1” margins, include page numbers on pages 2 and following, and double-space your text (the header may be single-spaced).

Background and Purpose: Throughout your academic career, you will be asked to research and analyze different subjects (sometimes of your own choosing, sometimes assigned by the professor), and to compose argument papers about those subjects. You will be expected to locate appropriate sources of information on your own, in the library and online, including both print and electronic resources. These materials may include books, scholarly articles, newspaper and popular magazine articles, blog entries, lectures, presentations, interviews, videos, and so on. Assignments will require you to compose essays in which you summarize, analyze, and synthesize information from different materials, develop an argument, defend your case, and cite several different sources that you have consulted. This research essay assignment is designed to help you develop effective argument writing and research skills and to prepare you to succeed in future college assignments and courses.

General research topic: Your essay will have two main parts: (1) A description of a problem you have perceived in education today, with an argument for why it is indeed a problem society should care about; and (2) a proposal for a solution, making an argument for why this solution is both feasible and beneficial. (This second part is not your proposal to me, which is a separate piece of writing.)

Please note that the problem you select can be as local as something you experienced firsthand here at NOVA or in your high school or another school you attended, or a larger problem you have read about or experienced via discussions with others (i.e. friends, family). The key is to think about issues that have troubled you, places where you see room for improvement, as you will find it much easier to be engaged in the work if you have some investment, some belief in the need to make a CHANGE.

You will research the problem that you select to write about to see what solutions other people may have proposed, or what ideas have been explored.

You should explore a variety of viewpoints, including those of experts and “ordinary people,” and develop a written solution to the problem you have identified. Your final essay must include citations from at least five sources, including quotes from at least two sources you located via our library system.

A requirement of this essay is to respond to at least one counter-argument, so you will need to quote and refute at least one opposing viewpoint in your essay, and include the source in your list of Works Cited.

Source materials: You must use at least five outside sources from a variety of types of materials including newspaper, magazine, and scholarly articles; books; videos, presentations, and television programs; podcasts and radio programs; blogs, etc. As
stated above, you must include at least one source with which you disagree. We will discuss the use of counter-claims during class as you prepare to write your essays.

**Writing process and interim dates:** This assignment has several steps, requiring separate submissions. Due dates are firm because of the need for me to grade and return the separate pieces to you in time for you to incorporate my comments and suggestions into the next steps of your process. I will be physically unable to grade large numbers of late submissions in a timely manner.

- **Proposal due Monday, 10/22, before class.** You will develop a one-page proposal addressed to me which will explain the problem you want to research, your interest in it, how you will locate appropriate sources, and how you will ensure that you have explored multiple viewpoints, including some that you disagree with. We will go over the submission process in class, and I will post a separate proposal assignment sheet with a downloadable template for your use on Blackboard. I will grade and comment on your proposal, either approving it or requesting you to revise it to fill in any gaps in your proposed process. Late submissions will not be accepted without prior approval. Worth 40 points.

- **Annotated Bibliography due Friday, 11/2:** Once your proposal has been approved, you will begin your research. As you read and speak to potential sources, you must build an annotated bibliography of the works you consult. We will discuss how to create an annotated bibliography in class. The annotated bibliography you turn in must contain at least four sources including one with which you disagree. We will workshop in class on the due date. Worth 40 points.

- **Prewriting: Working Thesis & Outline, 11/9:** As you work on your research, you will also develop a working thesis statement and an outline for your essay. These are due at the beginning of class on 11/9 on paper, and will be submitted to Blackboard after the workshop that day. This part of the assignment is required before I will read a first or final draft. Late submissions will not be accepted without prior approval. Worth 10 points.

- **First draft of essay due Friday, 11/16, before class:** Upload the first draft of your essay to Blackboard as an MS Word or .rtf file at the research essay assignment tab, where you will also eventually submit your final essay. Late submissions will not be accepted without prior approval. Bring a paper copy to class the same day to workshop. Required before I will grade your final draft.

- **Final essay submission due by Friday, 12/7, 11:59 pm:** Upload your final essay, including your list of works cited, to Blackboard as an MS Word or .rtf file. Late submissions will not be accepted. I will grade your essays and post grades in the same order they are submitted, and no later than Sunday, 12/17.
Your final essay must include the following:

- An effective introduction that includes a clear and strong thesis statement.
- Unified and coherent paragraphs that develop your thesis.
- Relevant and specific evidence in support of your thesis that you have gathered during your research (properly attributed and cited).
- Citations from at least five outside sources, including at least one source with which you disagree. These five sources must include at least two from our library system.
- A conclusion that synthesizes and shows the significance of your thesis and makes a good final impression.
- Proper MLA formatting and citation of all sources used, and a properly formatted list of works cited.
- Proper grammar, mechanics, academic style and formatting that follows my instructions at the beginning of this assignment sheet.

Things to keep in mind while you are planning and writing this essay:

- **Purpose:** This time, your goal is to argue, which means you are trying to convince people that your claims are valid. You are trying to change minds when you first write to convince your reader that the problem you research is, indeed, a problem worth their time, and later, when you argue for tangible change (i.e. policy, practice, funding, resources) as part of your solution.

- **Audience:** Your audience should be the people with the power to make the changes you discuss. In other words, you will assume that you are writing to academics, researchers and policy-makers who focus on the problem you investigate. However, you cannot assume they have read any of the same articles as you have, and you must also imagine that they may have had VERY different life experiences than you.

- **Evidence and use of sources:** You will need to make decisions about whether to quote, summarize, paraphrase, or otherwise include data, ideas, examples, and other information from your research to support your argument. But your essay must be essentially own composition: you cannot patch together a lot of quotes and paraphrases from your source to build your entire essay. Your evidence should support your thinking, not replace it.

- **Counter arguments:** You must include an opposing viewpoint, and either refute it completely, or decide to make a partial concession to some part of it.

- **Organization and Style:** You will need to develop a logical and coherent way of arranging your material that it is delivered effectively to the readers, so that they can follow your thinking easily and without confusion.