

# Archives Research Paper

250 pts

For this writing assignment, you will be researching an issue, a person, a building, or something else that has to do with Purdue. You will be researching the Purdue Library databases for **books, academic journal articles, and other secondary source material**. You will also work with Purdue's **archives**, sifting through **primary source material** that relates to your topic.

## Goals For This Assignment

- To gain experience using the Purdue Libraries and their online databases
- To understand how vast the holdings are in the Purdue Libraries
- To understand the concept of discourse community
- To understand the difference between primary and secondary source material
- To get some familiarity working with archival material
- To write for specific audiences
- To write for a specific purpose
- To practice framing source information
- To practice documenting and citing sources
- To practice using various documentation tools

## Your Topic: an Historical Analysis

Like the Visual Analysis, the Historical Analysis tells a story and offers an interpretation. Instead of looking at a picture/painting to learn the story, you will look at an historical moment. You will use primary/secondary sources to learn that story, and in your paper you will then tell the story. You will also let your audience know that what sources you used to create this interpretation, whether they were credible, accurate, well-rounded, short-sighted, racist, sexist, etc. You will analyze the sources your encounter and decide what kind of story *they* tell, and how that might be different from the story another source tells. Thus, it will be your job to tell the story, while discussing different ways this story has been preserved or remembered over time.

## Process

We will begin this unit with preliminary, exploratory research. This will include a visit to Purdue's archives. You will perform primary and secondary research in order to find a topic that interests you. This topic must have something to do with Purdue University. It could be a person (a president, a sports figure, etc.), a building, an event, or something else related to the university. To ensure that you will be able to find enough information on your topic (especially since you will be utilizing the archives), your topic must be from before the year 2000.

Once you pick your topic, you will collect information about that topic (including topics that are only tangentially related, such as information about what was going on in America/the world at that time, in order to put your topic into an historical context). You will then synthesize your material in order to come up with an interesting *angle* on the subject. Your paper will show its reader how you came to that conclusion using particular sources. Your *angle* can be pointing out an instance of injustice (racism on campus, for example), or it can simply be informative (the process of erecting a new building on campus). The point of this assignment is to get you looking at primary/secondary material, deciding which is credible, and which is useful in forming a coherent thesis and an interesting paper.

You may find that not all of your sources agree on a particular issue. You will need to think about: Which is more *correct*? How do you know? How does *this* person's perspective change/support/undermine my *angle*? I expect you to be able to weave more than one voice (other than your own) into your discussion. You will use differing voices whenever possible to show how your topic can be seen in different ways.

## Research

The research you do for this assignment can come from a number of places, but they must be credible sources. **Scholarly sources** are those that come from the library (either the online database or the catalog). This includes secondary source material (**academic journals, critical books, news articles**) and primary source material (**photographs, journals, letters, works of fiction, official documents.**) You will be looking for material that presents different points of view. You will need to find sources that will help you understand the background of your issue, and sources that will help you see multiple perspectives. Don't expect to find

your paper already written somewhere. Your job in this assignment is to weave material together to build a coherent and interesting discussion of your topic.

Your thesis will tell you reader which topic you researched, and your *angle*. This might be an argumentative statement, or it may be informational.

### Research Plan & Goal

After completing some preliminary research, you will propose to write your research paper on a certain topic. You will bring this document to conferences; there, we will discuss your research plan and goals. You will receive guiding questions to help you compose this document.

### Length and Format

Your report should be *at least* 5 pages long in MLA or APA format (double-spaced, 11- or 12-point Times New Roman, one-inch margins). You are required to document and cite your sources with MLA or APA format. Not citing your sources (whether word-for-word, paraphrases, or summarized text) is plagiarism, and **I will report cases of plagiarism to the Dean of Students.**

### Additional Documentation

You are required to show me your **drafts** at conferences, and participate in **peer review**. Your **annotated bibliography** will contain **5+ sources, 2+ of which must be scholarly sources** (meaning they came from the library, archives, or online databases). Your annotations should be **4-5 sentences** long. Your Research Paper will **also** contain a **Works Cited** page (no annotations) that contains **6+ sources, 4+ of which must be scholarly sources.**

### Grading and Due Dates

- **Planning:** 40 points.  
These will be given based on your participation in the planning and drafting stage. I will pay attention to the work you bring to conferences and peer review days and give you points based on those observations.
- **Research Proposal:** 30 points, due **at conferences, 26/27 February.**  
Bring a physical copy to turn in. Also be prepared to talk me through your plans.
- **Annotated Bibliography:** 20 points, rough draft due in conferences the week of **5/7 March.**  
**Bring a hard copy to look at in conferences.**  
20 points, final draft will be submitted in *Research Portfolio*.
- **Formal Outline:** 20 points. You will hand this in with your Research Portfolio. It would be a good idea to run it by me at some point in the writing process, however.
- **Peer Review Rough Drafts:** 10 points each: **Day #1 – 18 March/Day #2 – 25 March.**  
Bring **one hard copy** to look at in class.
- **Final Research Paper:** 100 points, due **Monday, 1 April.**  
Email me a copy of your paper (only), and hand me your Research Portfolio at the beginning of class.

Research Paper (w/ Portfolio)	Total	250
<i>Planning</i>	40	
<i>Drafts (Paper, Ann. Bib.)</i>	40	
<i>Proposal</i>	30	
<b>Portfolio</b>		<b>140</b>
<i>Annotated Bibliography (final)</i>	20	
<i>Formal Outline</i>	20	
<i>Research Paper (final)</i>	100	

*\*A Note About Peer Review:* For this unit, I will pair you up with another student, and you two will stay together for the entire unit. At times, you will come to conferences together, and you will always peer edit each other's papers. I'm hoping this will let you get familiar enough with your partner's topic and process that you will be able to offer him/her constructive feedback and suggestions.

**Evaluation:** I will evaluate this assignment based on the provided rubric.