

English 102

End of the Quarter Wrap-up

The prospectuses and preliminary bibliographies submitted on February 22 occasion two observations: first, that most people are very far from being able to produce a rough draft of their research project by next Tuesday; and second, that people are at wildly different stages of the process and at this point in the quarter would benefit from more focused and directed one-on-one instruction. Since my most important goal is that you gain skill and confidence as analysts and as writers, these observations necessitate a “reset” of our schedule for the remainder of the quarter.

Research Paper Conferences

To enable us to meet for individual conferences, the class meetings for March 1 and March 3 are cancelled. Instead sign up to meet with me one-on-one on either of these days. If you are unable to meet with me during any of the times available, see me immediately to arrange for an alternative meeting time.

Preparing for Your Research Paper Conference

Conferences are only fifteen minutes long, so to make the best use of this limited time you should come prepared with questions about the research topic, the process, how to conduct research, or any other aspect of the task. Some people are having trouble getting started on the process, some either don't understand how to conduct research or even what research is. You need to think for yourself what kind of questions and help will most benefit you. Here are some suggestions:

- Consider your understanding of research itself—why do it? what is my goal in researching something?
- Consider your understanding of how to get started on a research project—have I been given questions to start with (you usually are even in professional settings)? do I have other questions that have emerged alongside these initial questions?
- Consider your understanding of the research process—how do I get started? where do I look? how do I look? what am I looking for? how do I tell a good source from a not-so-good one? what if I find my questions (and answers) changing?
- Consider your understanding of working with sources—what do I do with the research I find? Should I take notes? Should I be prepared to summarize, paraphrase, quote from these sources? How do I know which sources to use? How do I use a source?
- Consider your understanding of argument—what is my position? should I discuss opposing points of view? if so, how? should I consider what opponents could say about my ideas and arguments? if so, how should I include ideas that run counter to my claims (i.e. won't that confuse the reader)?

This list of questions is intended to get you started thinking. Only you know the kinds of questions you have and the kind of help you need. I would offer this advice: use our brief individual conference time wisely. Be prepared—I will be.

Schedule Changes

Cancelling the ninth week class meetings obviously will have an effect on our plans for the rest of the quarter. The most significant change relates to *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* and the individual presentations.

Tuesday, March 1: No class meeting (individual conferences)

Thursday, March 3: No class meeting (individual conferences)

Tuesday, March 8: Peer Review (bring two copies of your reasonably complete draft)

Thursday, March 10: Final draft of research paper due

Thursday, March 17 (8:00am-10:30am): Individual presentations on research project OR hand-in take home final exam essay on *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*

As you can see from the above schedule, you will be allowed to choose your final exam project. You can either sign-up to give a five minute presentation on your research project, OR you can choose to write an essay on *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. There is no advantage to choosing one or the other.

You don't have to decide now which final exam "experience" you prefer, but you must commit to one of them on Thursday, March 10, which is when we will put together the presentation schedule for our March 17 meeting. Please note that regardless of which option you choose, you will be required to attend class during the final exam period.

Maybe I'll bring donuts or something if that will help.