Writing 109HP: Research Paper

Introduction

The research paper is the "capstone" project for Writing 109HP and will be supported with an oral presentation delivered sometime during the last three weeks of class. Because most medical topics are complex, you will need to restrict your coverage to key points. Your final paper should be no longer than 15–20 pages (for individual submissions) or 30–35 pages (for partnered submissions), including graphics and a bibliography. Oral presentations are limited to 15 minutes (individual) or 20 minutes (partnered).

IMPORTANT! Please clear your paper topic with me *before* you begin working on it.

Focus of Paper— Medical Disease, Disorder, Condition or Related Topic

Select a disease, disorder or medical condition to write about, or write about a related topic (e.g., history of surgical instruments, pets and physical-psychological well-being, etc.). If you need help picking a topic, the website of the Centers for Disease Control is an excellent place to get ideas (see the "Diseases and Conditions" link on their home page). Do not pick a disease that has already been selected by another student in Writing 109HP; to see which topics have already been selected, see the "Schedule" page for our class website. Your paper should include the following elements:

- Background history of the disease/condition, including first identification and early research
- Symptoms of disease/condition
- Disease mechanism, including vectors and etiology
- Demographics of affected population, including risk factors (gender, age, race, etc.)
- Treatments and therapies
- Preventative strategies
- Current research
- Future research

Format

Select between one of four types of formats for your paper: 1) primary research paper; 2) secondary research paper; 3) review of literature; and, 4) lay audience article. I will explain each of these in class during the quarter; however, here is a cursory look at each:

Primary research— A scientific journal paper on actual research that you are conducting yourself, or are assisting with as part of an established (funded and published) research team. Research may consist of laboratory and/or field work; however, you *must* have the approval of your research team's principal investigator (PI) before undertaking.

Secondary research— What you typically write at UCSB: a research paper built from the work of others (i.e., secondary research) as found online, in the library and/or via interviews.

Review of literature— Interview several experts in your targeted field of study and identify 4–5 "classic" papers that define the field. Read and summarize each, then explain in your review of the literature how each are related to the field, intellectually, historically and technically. Identify "camps of thought" within the field and explain divisions in theory and/or experimental approaches.

Lay audience article— An article such as one might encounter in *Scientific American* or *Popular Science* that explains an otherwise highly technical medical topic to a lay reader. Heavy use of graphics and crafting of language are designed to make the highly technical material understandable to a 10th grade-level educated reader.

As a start on your bibliography, I recommend the Council of Science Editors (CSE—formerly the Council of Biology Editors--CBE) website. See especially the link to the National Library of Medicine Recommended Formats for Bibliographic Citation for specific examples of how to do your bibliography. Use this as your bibliographic format *unless you have a compelling reason to select a different bibliographic format*.

DUE DATE: See schedule on course website.