RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

Your final project in the class, which we’ve been working toward all semester, is a 6-7 page research paper. At the beginning of the semester, you chose a text and a specific topic to work on. Since then, you’ve conducted research on your topic, you’ve developed your own argumentative claim or thesis about the text, and you’ve situated your own views in an ongoing critical conversation. You’ve also done at least some preliminary thinking about your paper’s organization. You should now be ready to draft the actual paper itself. The body of your paper should be constructed so as to carefully support your thesis—it should provide close, careful analyses of the text in order to persuade readers that your interpretation is plausible, interesting, original, and well-thought-out.

You must cite at least 4 outside sources in the paper (not including the text itself—this is the primary source and should be included on your works cited page, but it's not one of the 4 outside sources). You are welcome to cite more than 4 sources, but remember that the focus of the paper is your own argument, not a summary of critical views. The paper should be double-spaced and free of grammatical errors. Sources should be cited according to MLA guidelines—you should include internal citations in the paper itself and a works cited page at the end.

We’re going to be conducting workshop sessions on the research papers a little differently than we’ve done with assignments in the past. You must bring 3 copies of your research paper draft the day they’re due (1 copy is for me and 2 are for your classmates). You will be responsible for reading 2 of your classmates’ papers and answering a series of questions about these papers. Then, rather than meet as a large class the final week of the semester, we’ll meet in small groups in order to discuss the drafts and plan revisions.

Due Dates:
Draft (bring 3 copies of your draft to class)—Monday, November 17
Final Version—Monday, November 24