ENGL 1102

Janssen

Position Paper #1: Researching Your Major

For you first paper, you need to develop an argument that is founded on research that highlights a particular debate, dispute, controversy, or problem concerning your major. To do so, you need to focus your research on your major itself. Start in Academic Search Complete and look “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ major,” and see what you can find. Once you’ve compiled a collection of material, look for a particular issue to which you can answer “Yes,” “No,’ or “Okay, but,” as chapter 4 in *They Say / I Say* demonstrates. Your sources don’t necessarily have to have the word *major* in them, but the focus for this first paper does need to be on the formal study of a particular subject in a post-secondary educational setting (college).

You are free to use your advisor as a source for this paper, since he or she is an expert on this very topic. In fact, it might be worth a follow-up appointment to discuss this assignment.

We will work together on Thursday, 10/19, to begin drafting this essay. The first rough draft will be due on Tuesday, 10/24, and we will build it as we go until all position paper requirements are complete. The final draft will be due on 11/14.

Position Papers #2 and #3

For the rest of your portfolio work, you are encouraged to broaden the scope of your paper topics to include…just about anything you wish to discuss, as long as you can connect it to your discipline. I use the word *discipline* deliberately because, unlike your first paper, you are not required to cover your major as a formal subject of study in an institutional setting. I did ask you to focus on “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ major” for the first paper, but for the rest of your portfolio, you are invited and encouraged to expand outward subjects related to the discipline itself, in effect deleting the word *major*. The purpose of focusing that first paper on that word was to develop your knowledge of your major itself in order to boost your authority and expertise on issues related to your program of study. Now, I still want you to write in your discipline without having to couch your subject in terms of a formal academic program. If you’re a biology major, for example, I want you to write about biology. So, any subject dealing with biology is fair game. I want you to write biology arguments.

Position paper rules are in effect for your entire portfolio. One option you may consider, however, is to write one big paper for #2 and #3. In that case, the rules would essentially double. You would still turn in the first part of the big paper as #2 and turn in the entire big one for #3. Of course, you can just write 3 different papers. This option is not really something you should decide now, but I want you to know about the possibility.

Paper #2 will be due on 11/28, and #3 will be due on 12/5.