

TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT FOR TEXAS GOVERNMENT - FALL 2019

The term paper assignment requires each student to select one (1) peer-reviewed journal article from the list below. Students can find digital copies of each journal article in Canvas under the “Term Paper Assignment” module. In order to do well on the term paper assignment, students must follow the established guidelines described below (as well as the example posted to Canvas). Failure to follow the established guidelines will result in point deductions and possibly a failing grade for the course term paper. No late papers will be accepted. All term papers are due no later than **Monday, November 25, by 11:59p.m.**

WRITING GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS:

- The completed journal summary must be at least **two (2) FULL single-spaced pages and NO LONGER THAN three (3) single-spaced pages**. The journal summary must be typed, using 12-point, **Times New Roman font (ONLY)** and standard one-inch page margins. Do not include items such as graphics, charts, pictures, or other attachments within your article summary. **Students MAY NOT use any quotes or direct material from the journal article in their journal summary (i.e. NO QUOTED MATERIAL). ALL MATERIAL MUST BE PROPERLY PARAPHRASED, and students cannot use personal and/or opinionated material in their journal summations.**
- Where necessary, students are to use in-text citations using APA or MLA citations. Your paper should have internal parenthetical citations (e.g. Smith, 2016) for all facts, ideas, or information that are not original to you (see journal summary example posted to Canvas). The “Library” tab in your cougarweb account can assist in the proper usage citation style. In addition, Collin College’s Writing Center is another helpful resource.
- ***APPROVED JOURNALS (Students are required to select one journal article from the list below.):***
 - *Journal 1: The Effect of State Redistricting Methods on Electoral Competition in United States House of Representative Races* by Jamie L. Carson and Michael H. Crespin (2004)
 - *Journal 2: The Gerrymanderers Are Coming! Legislative Redistricting Won’t Affect Competition or Polarization Much, No Matter Who Does It* by Seth E. Masket, Jonathan Winburn and Gerald C. Wright (2012)
 - *Journal 3: Strategic Voting and Legislative Redistricting Reform: District and Statewide Representational Winners and Losers* by Caroline J. Tolbert, Daniel A. Smith and John C. Green (2009)

PAPER OUTLINE:

The journal summary **MUST** have the following paper sections and information included within each

section. Section headings listed below must be used for the layout of your journal summary **(do not include the numbers)**.

Students must clearly section off their papers and substantively respond to each question listed below. Each section must be typed in using single-spacing and only one double-space between sections. The term paper is worth a total 100-points (see point allocations below).

1. Author(s)– List the author(s) of the journal article (1-point)
2. Title of journal & Complete title of article – Include the journal name & journal article title (2-points)
3. Journal citation in APA or MLA format – Cite the journal article using APA or MLA format (5-points).
4. Paper subject – State and discuss the course subject area surrounding your journal article (2-points).
5. How does the journal article relate to the Texas Government Course and Redistricting? - Explain how your selected article relates to this Texas government course and the subject matter of redistricting. Feel free to utilize information discussed in class and in the textbook to respond to this question (remember to paraphrase all material). This response must include a minimum of 10 sentences (12-points).
6. Article's question(s) – Discuss the question(s) the author(s) is seeking to answer in the journal article (12-points).
7. Article's thesis – Explain what the author(s) believes to be the answer(s) to the question(s) he/she is studying (12-points).
8. Why is the author writing the article? - Explain what the author(s) intends to add to the larger body of work/literature as a result of writing the article (12-points).
9. Discuss the scholarly debate within your article – Discuss the various arguments, positions, proponent and opponent debates, etc. surrounding the subject matter of the journal article. Summarizing the article is not sufficient. Students must provide a clear and concise understanding of the scholarly discussions surrounding the issue. Make sure to list the author(s) who supports each argument (20-points).
10. What did the author find in the article? – Summarize the findings of the article. Make sure to refer back to the research question or purpose when summarizing the findings, then give a wrap up of the journal article itself (20-points)

** (Cover page is worth 2-points. The cover page must contain the following: name [first and last], course name, section number, and date.)**

Students must respond to all questions properly. Failure to do so will result in significant point deductions (note the point allocations above). If you select an article that you feel you cannot

substantively answer each question, select another article from the approved list.

SUBMITTING THE TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT:

Each student must submit their journal summary (including a cover page) to the term paper link located in Canvas. **Upload your term paper (including cover page) as one complete document. Do not cut and paste your paper. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in significant grade/point deductions.** Verifying proper submission of the journal summary is the student's responsibility. *This includes submitting your assignment prior to the due date (no late papers accepted) and submitting the correct document or correct version of your paper.*

WRITING ASSESSMENT:

In this class, you are expected to write at a college-level. Your paper will be evaluated in each of the following areas: substance/quality of analysis and argument, proper grammar and usage, following the established term paper guidelines, and proper usage of the APA and MLA citation format. A quality paper should have few spelling, grammar, punctuation, or typographical mistakes. While this is not a paper for English class, the quality of your writing affects the substance of your writing. Frequent spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other language-usage mistakes will negatively impact your grade.

(FYI – Do not wait until the last minute to upload your paper. Turnitin.com is a world-wide plagiarism prevention website. Keep this in mind if you decide to wait until the deadline to upload your paper. Failure to meet any of the deadlines will result in your paper not being accepted for a grade. Consider this your warning.)

FAILURE OF YOUR PAPER TO COMPLY WITH THESE REQUIREMENTS IN ANY MATERIAL WAY WILL LOWER THE GRADE ON YOUR PAPER BY UP TO A FULL LETTER GRADE (OR MORE) IN ADDITION TO ANY POINTS LOST BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIVE DEFECTS.