**11 Am. Stud**

**Mr. Bedar The Junior Research Paper**

**(2014-2015)**

**Background**:

As part of our U.S. History course at Newton North, every student is required to write a research paper on a topic in U.S. History; the ACP requirement is 2,500-3,500 words (~10-12 pages). The “junior thesis” A) is a graduation requirement, B) requires consistent hard work, C) involves significant original thought, research, writing, and revision over a ten-week period of time, D) is preparation for the kind of work many of you will be doing in college and for the rest of your lives (gathering, thinking about, revising and presenting information) and E) is totally doable and not what past students will necessarily tell you! If they’re being honest, students who have completed the project will attest that it is entirely possible to complete it without unnecessary stress, earn a solid grade and learn a lot along the way. In fact, this is an opportunity to delve into something you’re interested in and become an expert, so it can be an extremely rewarding experience. You have been well-prepared, and if you put in the necessary work and get support when you need it, you’ll produce a successful paper and take great pride in your achievement.

**Project Milestones & The Process:**

Because of the size of the project and the length of time involved, we will be breaking the process down into a series of milestones. In order to help you pace yourself and spare you the inevitable pain that procrastination would surely produce, the following schedule of deadlines has been established:

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| **Assgt. #** | **Description** | **Due Date** |
| JT #1 | **Topic Proposal:** Typed, 3 topics. For each topic, write 1 detailed paragraph describing: 1) what the topic is, 2) what you already know about the topic, 3) why the topic interests you, 4) five (5) questions you have about the topic. | **October 27, 2014 (Mon.)** |
| JT #2 | **Final Topic/20 NC/Working Bibliography:** 1 page summary w/ 3 research questions; at least *3* sources on typed working bib, to be handed in; 20 total note cards | **November 7, 2014 (Fri.)** |
| JT # 3 | **50 NC/Working Bibliography:** At least 6 sources on working bib, 40 note cards total. | **November 17, 2014 (Mon.)** |
| JT #4 | **Preliminary Outline/75 NC/Working Bibliography:** 1-2 pgs; structural only, minimal content; prelim. thesis statement. *8* sources on working bib.; 60 total NC. | **December 3, 2014 (Wed.)** |
| JT #5 | **100 NC/Working Bibliography:** Finish the notecard phase**!** At least *10* sources on working bib.; 100 total notecards.  | **December 10, 2014 (Wed.)** |
| JT #6 | **Final Detailed Outline:** Contains full thesis statement & ALL sources cited | **December 22, 2014 (Mon.)** |
| JT #7 | **Rough Draft:** Complete bibliography & internal citations; double spaced | **January 21, 2015 (Wed.)** |
| JT #8 | **Final Draft Due!!**  Be sure to see checklist before submission; includes working bibliography & internal citations, word count, & 1-2 pg. double-spaced “bibliographic essay” | **February 2, 2015 (Mon.)** |

**Mr. Bedar’s Junior Thesis Requirements:**

-Everything (with the exception of note cards) ***must*** be typed

- Any cuts (unexcused absences) on any of the due dates will result in an automatic zero for that assignment, but you still have to make up the assignment before continuing on.

- Final paper: 10-14 pages; word count on last page before the bibliography (The word count must work out to **2,500- 3,500** words)

-Double-spaced, size 12 font, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins. Black ink, white paper, pages numbered, centered at bottom of each page. No pictures or diagrams unless directly relevant and referred to directly in the text.

- Title page that includes a meaningful, relevant (not cutesy) title centered in the middle of the page. In the lower right-hand corner, write your full name, due date, class name, and block.

- At least 10 total sources on final bibliography:

* At least 8 total sources *cited* in the paper
* At least 2 primary sources (both must be *cited* in the paper)
* At least 3 book sources
* No more than 1 encyclopedia reference
* Other possible sources (journal articles, websites, etc.)
* Proper bibliography format for all sources.
* Parenthetical citations in the main body of the text

**In-Class Work:**

To avoid overwhelming you with material at this early stage, I’ll be introducing the process and requirements in pieces, and we’ll spend time in class discussing:

* How do I know when I’ve got a good topic?
* How do learn more about my topic?
* How do I take notes, and keep track of them?
* How do I turn my research into a paper?
* How do I write an outline?
* How do I “do” parenthetical citations and a bibliography?

**Other Notes/Helpful Hints:**

* Plagiarizing = disastrous. Again, this is a graduation requirement…
* Stick to your thesis!!! Use it as the guiding force throughout your paper.
* Read, read, read!!! Take the time to actually read through the sources you compile and become a mini-expert; you’ll do better.
* Use primary sources whenever possible; show that you know how and when to incorporate quotes/paraphrases from primary sources.
* If you bring up opposing arguments, make sure to refute them in your paper.
* A research paper is not a report; your job is to *analyze* history, not just research it and describe it.