**Guidelines for Source Synthesis Essay**

**ENG 2201 – Summer 2014**

**Due: Saturday, July 5, 2015 by 5:00 p.m.**

After reading the posted notes on developing your career research topic and evaluating sources, as well as those on synthesizing sources – you are to develop a **minimum 2-page, double-spaced synthesis essay discussing *at least three – preferably five –* of the sources you think you may use for your final research project.**

In this essay, you will list the sources at the beginning in MLA format, just as you would for a Works Cited page – After the listing of sources, you should drop down two spaces and begin your synthesis essay. Think about the following:

* **Summarize**: Some annotations merely summarize the source. What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? The length of your annotations will determine how detailed your summary is.
* **Assess**: After summarizing a source, it may be helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?
* **Reflect**: Once you've summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into your research. Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?

These are some questions you may ask yourself about a source you are considering. Then, after applying these questions (and more that you may think of) to **each source**, consider how these sources may possess similar themes and/or information. This is where the **synthesis comes in**.

Look for connections and links between your readings in order to create your thesis.

Write and organize your paper in such a way that your readers understand where the

information from the different sources overlap.

Creating a working bibliography and/or synthesizing those sources is excellent preparation for a research project. Just collecting sources for a bibliography is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read each source more carefully. You begin to read more critically instead of just collecting information. At the professional level, a source synthesis can allow you to see what has been done in the literature and where your own research or scholarship can fit. To help you formulate a thesis: Every good research paper is an argument. The purpose of research is to state and support a thesis. So a very important part of research is developing a thesis that is debatable, interesting, and current. Writing a source synthesis can help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic. By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you'll start to see what the issues are, what people are arguing about, and you'll then be able to develop your own point of view.

**FORMAT & MECHANICS:**

Double-spaced throughout 12-point font (Times New Roman)

1-inch margins on *all 4 sides* MLA format uses “hanging indent”

when listing sources

**EXAMPLE: (of beginning of synthesis)**

**Industrious Student**

**ENG 1200/2201**

**D. Shoop**

**July 5, 2015**

**Source Synthesis for Essay on Paying College Athletes**

Edelman, Marc. “The Case for Paying College Athletes,” *US News and World Report*,

14 January 2014. Web. 22 March 2014

Lewis, M. *Moneyball: The art of winning an unfair game.* New York, NY:

Norton. 2003 Print.

The idea of paying college athletes is not a new one, but it is one that is back in the news now and once again debated due to the NCAA Basketball tournament activity in March and April. Are scholarships enough? Should college athletes receive monetary compensation over and above their tuition, meal plan, and the various perks that go with being a student athlete?

Because this is such a hotly contested debate, there is a great deal of information written both in the online and print media. The sources I have chosen to use to support my essay conclusions all discuss this main theme, but they also demonstrate just how ineffective it would be, from a scholarly standpoint, to offer a salary to college students who also happen to be athletes.