



# News for Adjuncts

December 1, 2013



## Special Interest Notes:

- Keep it relevant
- Have multiple sources in multiple modes in mind
- Encourage critical thinking at each step

## Meaningful Research

A typical assignment in almost any class is the “research paper,” of whatever length. One way to help make the project as visibly relevant to the student as you know it should be is to carefully choose the topic. Students can be asked to address a very contemporary issue or to compare and contrast two very specific ways of approaching an idea. Don’t make it too easy for the student to find a “pre-written” essay on the internet. Your assignment is taken as seriously as the student has to search for the information.

First, choose a topic that you have made significant throughout the semester (don’t assume anything - - *tell* the students why the topic is important in your field). Make it clear to the students that your grading criteria match your expectations for the research and the final paper. Remind students to begin the writing process early enough to get help - - writing help is available free - - check the tutoring schedule on-line. Writing Center hours are available on all campuses.

Secondly, help students find the kind of material you would find significant in your field. Give them a sense of what a quality resource would be. This whole project can be a way of teaching critical thinking in any field.

It is easier for both the student and the grader if the project (even a brief research paper or annotated bibliography) is divided into meaningful smaller steps. This helps

the students internalize the process of significant reading and writing in your field and helps prevent procrastination. Your grading rubric (it should be shared with the students when the topic parameters are established) should reflect the significant steps of doing even very basic research in your field.

Help your students develop the tools they will need to succeed in any field through assigning a well developed research project, whatever your field might be.

Check the BCTC Library website <http://bluegrass.kctcs.edu/Library.aspx> to find instructional guides for research in your field. Please contact Steve Stone at 246-6387 or [steve.stone@kctcs](mailto:steve.stone@kctcs) for guidance if you need it.

A well designed research project can bring together critical reading, writing, and thinking in specific fields to help students build a firm foundation for lifelong learning.

May your research assignments benefit all. Happy Holidays!

## Individual Highlights:

- Find Relevant Ideas
- List paper criteria
- Publish a grading rubric
- Break project into steps
- Give meaningful feedback

