

Brainstorming

The project and paper need to be connected in some way. As long as you can explain the connection, it will work. The purpose of this worksheet is to help you come up with a topic for your senior paper and a topic for your senior project. There are two ways to go about this. The first is to let your paper drive the topic of your project, and the second is to let your project drive the topic of your paper. Let's try it from both directions.

1. Starting with Senior Paper Ideas

Remember that the purpose of your senior research paper is to present information to your reader with the intention of persuading them to Do, Think, or Feel Something that relates to the Project you will be completing second semester. Your project and your paper have to relate in some way.

First list 3 controversial issues that you are interested in, and any questions you may have about the issue.

1. Controversial Issue _____

2. Controversial Issue _____

3. Controversial Issue _____

Now try to think of a potential practical project for each issue. Remember that your project could be Information Gathering, Job shadowing, Skills based, or Service based.

Practical Project Ideas

A quality Project will be realistically executable within a few weeks, and also lend itself to a senior paper topic. The Project must fit into one of the following 4 tracks:

- **Skills based**—your project involves gaining a new skill, or producing some sort of tangible product. (write a collection of poems, rebuild an engine, learn to garden and grow food for your family, learn a new language.)
- **Community Service**—project provides a real service to the community. (Fund raiser for [X], Feed the homeless, Organize a relief trip)
- **Career**—project involves potential future employment. (You job shadow someone who works in a field in which you are interested)
- **Information Gathering**—project involves personally gathering more information to further explore the topic of your paper. (Interview several business owners in the area and compare your findings to the conclusion you came to in your essay.)

Write the best pair on the lines below

Issue _____ Practical Project idea _____

Now explain the connection between the two.

2. Starting with Practical Project Ideas

Now let's try coming up with three Projects that you would find interesting. Disregard your ideas that started with a senior paper topic. Open up the possibilities for a project. If it were JUST a project, what would you be interested in? Remember, your project can be Information Gathering, Job shadowing, Skills based, or Service based. Try ideas from more than one track.

1. Project _____

2. Project _____

3. Project _____

Once you have three project ideas, try to come up with a controversial issue that relates to each project.

Write the best pair on the lines below

Project _____ Issue _____

Now explain the connection between the two:

Choosing a Topic

Narrow down your final choice

Look again at the lists of paper topics and project options. Choosing one of pairings from the previous pages, try to answer the questions below. If you can't answer the questions, this may not be the best choice for a topic. Try again with a different topic.

Where could I find a local mentor for this project? _____

Which of 4 tracks does this project satisfy and how?

Now take a look at the available research on your topic. Check out Lili.org, search Google, search Google Scholar.

Find two research sources dealing with this controversial issue and write an MLA citation for each below

1.

2.

3.

Based on the initial sources that you found, what would be a potential thesis for your paper? (You don't need academic language here... "guns are awesome for America" is fine)

Two Potential Subtopics: (evidence-based reasons your thesis is true. Use your research here to come up with ideas.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

One Counter Argument: (find a hater or a piece of research that goes against your position and write what they say about your topic)

1. _____

Great! If you could fill out the above sheet, you probably have a good option for your senior project and senior paper.

Formal Proposal

1. Type your proposal in MLA format using formal standard English. Your proposal should be about 400-500 words. Your proposal should cover the following:

- a. what you intend to do for your paper
- b. your intended thesis
- c. A few articles that you have already found- what they are about and why they might be helpful.
- d. *what you intend to do for your project*
- e. *where you will find a mentor*
- f. *whether or not your mentor has confirmed*
- g. *What the connection is between your paper and your project*

Due Date _____