

## RESEARCH PAPER ROUGH DRAFT INFORMATION SHEET

ENGL 102.3

### WRITING AND RESEARCH

The rough draft is an important element of the research paper process. Many writers try to bypass this stage and just submit a finished, single draft. **This does not work.**

Writing, as you should have learned in your previous Composition courses, is a process. The better the writer understands and follows the process, the better their writing becomes. And one of the key steps of the writing process is revision.

Writing a research paper also requires the use of the writing process. But because the finished product is longer, research paper writers have an unfortunate tendency to resist revision. By the time the writer has finished the rough draft, they typically don't want to even think about working on the paper anymore.

But they are wrong. They do need to set the paper aside for a while (that's why waiting until the last minute to start writing on your paper is such a bad idea). They need to be able to come back to the paper and read it as a reader, not the writer. Most importantly, the writer needs to be able to see both what works and what needs to be changed. There is always something that can be changed in a paper, and the longer the paper is, the more there usually is to change. That doesn't mean that the writer has to completely re-write the whole paper. That assumption is what causes people to be scared of revision in general. Most writers who have worked through the writing process, done solid research, used credible sources, and organized their paper before they starting writing the initial draft find that they only have to change a small percentage to improve the final draft.

For this class, your rough draft will be evaluated completely. The instructor will evaluate it exactly like they would a final draft, except that they will not put a letter grade on it. This gives you the opportunity to see both what you did right as well as what you need to change. You then get to make the changes before re-submitting the revised draft. Do be aware that questions posed by the instructor are just that: questions. They do not mean that your grade goes up just because you change everything that the instructor comments on. You need to assess each and every comment and determine if you agree that those changes need to be made. If they do, then make them. If they don't (in your opinion), then don't. Ultimately, it's your paper.

The successful research paper rough draft should include:

- Clear thesis/purpose
- Multi-paragraph organization that supports and reinforces the main thesis
- Appropriate use of Logos/Ethos/Pathos
- Fully explained background/history/definitions of key terms
- Evidence of extensive academic/professional research utilizing all available technologies/media
- Properly integrated information from multiple outside sources
- An emphasis on paraphrasing sources, not using direct quotes (remember, they're still cited)
- Synthesis of multiple outside sources to support individual claims/arguments
- Analysis of the main ideas and information, not just repetition of the sources
- Use of credible academic/professional sources
- Proper use of MLA or APA citation form (both in-text and full citations at the end)
- Proper grammar and sentence structure

**But be aware that you will most likely have errors in several of these areas. The instructor will evaluate the draft and allow you to understand where your strengths and weaknesses are so that you can revise accordingly.**