

CORE 405 CAPSTONE: The Human Costs of Inequality

Assignment Guidelines for Final Paper

Background

This course was designed to further your understanding of several types of inequality and the toll they take on our bodies, minds, spirits, communities, and common humanity. Throughout the course, we have drawn on knowledge and skills gained from our life experiences, academic majors, and the Core Curriculum. I hope the course has fed your passion for learning about and *acting* for the common good. The Final Paper is meant to be your crowning achievement—a scholarly paper introducing the rest of us to a new form/dimension of social injustice and advocating for change.

Assignment

The Final Paper should identify a specific type/aspect of inequality that we have not previously studied in this course. There are hundreds of good ideas that would be appropriate, so let your personal and professional interests guide your choice and check with me to make sure you're on the right track. Your paper will teach readers about a new aspect of inequality (its scope, complexity, etc.), compare its manifestation in developed and developing countries, address the history/culture/beliefs that gave rise to it, and critique possible approaches. Your paper should make a compelling case for action. Describe the social injustice and why it is intolerable; then, suggest what private citizens, governments, NGOs, etc., can/should do about it. Here are the specific steps you should follow:

- CHOOSE the type/dimension of social injustice that you wish to investigate. Ideally, this is the topic you chose for your presentation during Week 5. Get my approval of your topic.
- GATHER EVIDENCE from at least six authoritative sources. Sources may include:
 - Peer-reviewed journals (not magazines or trade publications)
 - Authoritative books and articles written by scholars in the field
 - U.S. government and international websites such as the Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, United Nations, World Health Organization, etc.
 - Websites written by authoritative scholars (read this for help evaluating sources: <http://library.msj.edu/content.php?pid=173308&sid=1473910>) such as national/international non-profits (e.g., UNICEF, March of Dimes, Children's Defense Fund, etc.). Commercial websites, personal blogs, and the like are not acceptable. If you have questions about a source, ask me.
- CONSIDER MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES or perspectives when examining causes of and solutions for inequality. Discuss the influence of historical period, religious beliefs, socioeconomic conditions, etc. Resist the temptation to oversimplify a problem that is longstanding and deeply-ingrained. Never assume that only one discipline has all the answers or is sufficient for understanding or addressing a complex human problem. And do not presume that our own culture/country's solutions are the only or best ones!
- DISCUSS the actions you think people can/should take to address this form of inequality. Who has an obligation to respond? Why? What should they do? Does this form of inequality call for a multinational response?

- SUPPORT YOUR ARGUMENTS with sound evidence. Do not make claims that are not backed up by facts. Make sure that you consider the appropriate disciplinary standard for evaluating evidence, e.g., the use of the scientific method in evaluating matters of science.
- The AUDIENCE for your essay is fellow students in this class, that is, neither a disciplinary journal nor a naïve audience, but a savvy, liberally-educated one. Tailor your message by using the vocabulary of this course and observing the highest standards of accuracy and proofreading.
- CITE YOUR SOURCES, including page numbers for direct quotes, and INCLUDE A BIBLIOGRAPHY. Document in-text citations and bibliographic references using APA style.
- Check with me if you have questions.

Formatting, Submission Requirements, and Due Date

This essay should be 10-12 typed pages (12-pt. font, standard 1” margins, double-spaced), not including your title page and bibliography. With a topic this comprehensive, it will be difficult to do a good job in just 10-12 pages, but that’s part of the assignment. Start early, revise often, and make your paper the best, most succinct and persuasive argument it can be. You must be willing to outline, write, revise, visit the Writing Center if needed, and revise again. Bring a rough draft (hard copy) of at least 6 pages to class during Week 6 for peer review. This needs to be a full, thoughtful draft, not a bulleted list or outline. Use the feedback you receive from fellow students to improve your paper. Submit the Final Paper through Blackboard by the posted deadline.

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

This paper is designed for you to provide evidence of mastering the following institutional outcomes (see <http://registrar.msj.edu/undergraduate-catalog/academic-information/learning-outcomes-performance-indicators/> for the full list of learning outcomes). Make sure that you accomplish each of these as described in the attached rubric.

- Communication PIs 2, 3, 4:
 - (2) Write using language that is clear, fluent, and consistent with conventions of Standard English,
 - (3) Use and document sources appropriately, and
 - (4) Develop compelling content to fulfill the assignment.
- Critical Thinking PIs 1, 2, 5:
 - (1) Describe the complexities, factors, and scope of a problem,
 - (2) Use appropriate scholarly evidence to support a position, and
 - (5) Formulate an opinion or draw a conclusion based on a questioning of assumptions, an analysis of relevant evidence, and a synthesis of scholarly perspectives.
- Cultural Competence PI 3:
 - (3) Contrast the diversity of history, values, politics, and economic conditions in developing and developed nations.
- Integrative Learning PI 2:
 - (2) Apply knowledge from more than one discipline to address a complex issue.

SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST:

_____ The paper’s central focus is a significant form of human inequality.

- _____ The complexity of the problem is acknowledged and fully explored.
- _____ Examples from both developed and developing countries are included.
- _____ The paper motivates the reader to act for social justice.
- _____ The paper proposes a reasonable, logical, ethical, and well-supported solution for the problem, in terms of what private citizens, government, NGOs, etc., should do about the problem.
- _____ The paper cites at least six appropriate, authoritative sources.
- _____ The paper views inequality and the proposed solution from the perspective of multiple academic disciplines (e.g., history, economics, sociology, religion, etc.)
- _____ The paper is written in standard English that is free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- _____ Sources are documented accurately in APA format in both text and bibliography.
- _____ The paper's message is clear, focused, well-developed, organized, and appropriate for the audience.
- _____ I have faithfully observed the Mount's academic honesty policy.
- _____ The paper is of appropriate length (10-12 typed pages, not including title page and bibliography) and format (12-pt. font, standard 1" margins, double-spaced), and was submitted on time.