

## **Paper #2** *Identifying a Social Problem*

**Purpose:** To compose a short essay and annotated bibliography identifying and explaining the significance of an American or Californian social problem. This essay and the research completed for its annotated bibliography will provide both the topic and the foundational research for the “speculating about causes” and “proposing a solution” essays (papers #3 and #4) that you will complete in the second half of the course.

**Length:** 1500 words minimum (750 word essay and 750 word bibliography). Please note that this is a bare minimum length for this assignment and applies to both the complete first draft and the final draft. I will not accept a submission that does not meet this bare minimum requirement. I strongly encourage you to compose a first draft that substantially exceeds this minimum. The best final essays emerge from a process that involves some paring down of a complete first draft.

**Due Dates:** three annotated bibliography entries for scholarly journal articles (1/28), three annotated bibliography entries for books (1/30) three annotated bibliography entries for web sites (2/2) , full-length draft (2/4); peer critique (2/6); final draft (2/9)

**Required Format:** MLA (I will not accept incorrectly formatted papers). Please see the sample MLA formatted paper available on the web at the following address:  
<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/modeldocs/humanities.htm>

**Portfolio:** You will submit all invention, research, planning, peer critique, and drafting activities in your portfolio on the final due date. You will also email a final draft to me during the class period on the due date (so bring the paper to class on a disk).

**Research Documentation:** You must complete a “Works Cited” list for all sources used and correctly cite and quote, summarize, or paraphrase those sources in your essay. In your portfolio binder, you must include printouts or copies of all specific pages, passages, quotes, statistics, etc. used from your sources. You must also highlight the sections or paragraphs that you used from these source pages.

### **Grading Criteria**

- 1) a clear, concise identification of an American or Californian social problem related to your major
- 2) an explanation of why that problem is a significant issue that requires immediate attention
- 3) detailed research that also provides an adequate foundation for future study of the causes of and possible solutions for this social problem: this must include books (minimum 3), scholarly journal articles (minimum 3), web sites, and popular periodicals. A bibliography of less than ten items is not passing level work, but students seeking a grade above passing for the assignment should have considerably more than ten items in their bibliographies.
- 4) annotated bibliography entries that briefly summarize and evaluate each research source presented (see course notes for details)
- 5) essay and paragraph organization,
- 6) sentence style and word choice,
- 7) grammar, punctuation, spelling

**Conferences:** Each student is required to have a conference with me during the fourth week of the course to review your first paper and your plans (topic and research) for your second essay.

**Penalties:** I apply a 10% penalty for each class day that a final draft is late. I will deduct 10% for each writing process activity that is not completed and submitted in your portfolio. I will not accept for credit any draft that does not reach the minimum word count.