Essay #3
Discovery and Persuasion

The Basics

This essay **8-10** page essay is about discovery and learning. Through research using credible sources, you will find answers and look at issues from new perspectives. **You must have a minimum of <u>FIVE</u> outside sources to support your argument. You must use correct APA format.** Submit to *Assignments* in Canvas.

Remember that formatting is a major aspect of the essay grade; if your essay does not meet the minimum page requirements and/or is not formatted properly in APA style (including in-text citations and Reference page, you will NOT receive full credit for the essay).

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The Topics

Option 1: Research a question that has direct impact on your life. For example, you might be in the process of choosing your major or you might be searching for the perfect place in the country (or the world) to live. Are you thinking about adopting a child? Through research, try to reach an answer. Start with your personal interests, and then write the essay for an audience who has asked the same question. In other words, the final essay will not be about you, although you may include relevant personal experience.

Option 2: Choose a controversial or baffling question that has not yet been answered. Make sure you have not yet made up your mind; your goal is to explore both (or more) sides to help yourself and your readers take a stance. Examples: --Would America benefit from universal healthcare? --Is there intelligent life on other planets? --What is the connection (if any) between physical health and mental attitude?

Option 3: Challenge yourself. Research a belief that you hold, and find out what the other side has to say. You will evaluate new information, reevaluate your own stance, and then synthesize it all into an essay that will help readers take a stance. You must reach a new understanding of the issues, and, in the process, you may develop a new opinion or belief. Warning: If choosing this option does not challenge (even threaten) your beliefs, you probably have not done sufficient research and opened your mind. *Abortion is not an acceptable topic for this class. Essays that include abortion as a topic will not be accepted and will earn a score of zero.*

Grading Standards

A = Excellent. The essay provides information and perspectives that will get and hold readers' attention and respect. The targeted audience will be persuaded to engage in a specific activity or will seriously consider adopting the opinion presented by the writer. Counterarguments are successfully refuted or dealt with. The essay is organized. The language may be notable for its distinctive (but appropriate) style, and there is interesting sentence variation. Distracting mechanical errors are at a minimum. The paper meets or exceeds the page requirement, follows APA style exactly, and includes at least five credible outside sources.

B = Above average. The essay will cause the reader to consider engaging in a specific activity or about adopting the writer's opinion. Counterarguments are discussed and dealt with. The organization is logical and the language is clear. Or the essay is excellent, but there are distracting mechanical errors.

C = Average. The essay provides reasons for doing or believing as the writer advises, although the content may not be strongly persuasive. Counterarguments may not be discussed. The organization is logical (although there may be one or two weak transitions) and the language is clear. Errors do not distract or interfere with comprehension.

D = Below average. The essay does not provide enough convincing material to influence readers. The organization may be weak, and/or transitions are missing. There may be too many mechanical errors.

F = The essay does not make a serious attempt to persuade, and/or violates the major principles of composition. There may be too many mechanical errors. The essay does not meet minimum page requirements (8-10 pages) and/or does not follow correct APA formatting. The minimum of five credible sources may not be met. There may be issues of plagiarism.