Research Paper Expectations:

Thesis:

Your thesis is proposing an action or change of thought and is in the form of a “should” statement.

Format:

You have a few different options to think through as you continue to write your research paper.

Minimum length requirement 6 paragraphs. No maximum—but remember you’re not writing a book here!

Possibilities for minimum requirement of paragraphs: You MUST have an intro and conclusion. The body paragraphs, however, have a little flexibility. You may make a 2 point thesis and focus on 2 rebuttals, or you may have a 3 point thesis and focus on one rebuttal.

If you chose to have more than 4 total body paragraphs, you may do as you feel necessary for a thoroughly-covered argument. You may find, for example, that you need a subpoint for point #1 (making point #1 a total of two paragraphs). You may decide that you want to cover 3 rebuttals, or that you actually have 4 points. As long as you meet the MINIMUM requirement of 4 body paragraphs (2 points, 2 rebuttals or 3 points, 1 rebuttal), you may add onto your argument as you deem necessary.

AUDIENCE:

Several students have asked me about who the audience of this paper is. You are to assume that your audience is a heterogeneous, undecided audience that you are seeking to convince. IF you have a specific audience in mind, please talk to me about that if you have not already, as I am open to you writing for a very specific group (some are writing to Christians, for example, or specifically to the administration at CAL). Remember that your audience affects your writing.