

A3: Researching your Major/Career

The third assignment for COMP 1500 will be a feature article that presents research that you have done regarding your chosen (or intended) major/field of study or career. This project incorporates many of the same strategies and components of a “traditional” research assignment (using sources, supporting arguments with evidence, communicating a message to an audience, etc.), but it asks you to present your findings in the form of a feature article, common to magazines and newspapers that are written for a general, non-academic audience.

Phase 1: You do Research (Weeks 9, 10 & 11)

1. Decide on Research Question(s)

Before you do anything at all, it is important that you have a clear focus from your research. This focus is often referred to as a research question and this question will help you find your research method, e.g. primary and secondary research. For example, in order to answer “What types of training is required in nursing?,” you will probably use multiple methods. You could interview/observe nurses in practice (primary research); you could find primary sources of actual testing questions or find information from books, articles, and websites (secondary research).

2. Conduct research about your major/career

Your initial research will be through sources you and your colleagues gather and share via Forum 7. You may, however, need to continue conducting research beyond these sources as you write your proposal and begin drafting your article. Dr. Scanlon will post a few sources to get students started.

Phase 2: You Write a Feature Article (Weeks 12 & 13)

1. Audience

Your feature article should target a real audience that is reached by an existing publication. For example, you could choose a more popular periodical like *TIME* Magazine, or a scientific periodical like *Cosmos*. Both appeal to a general audience, but *Cosmos* is trying to target those interested in science more than the general human-interest focus of stories in *TIME*.

2. Feature Article Proposal (due Friday, November 14)

After you have considered your publication/audience, you will be asked to write a proposal for what you will write as the final product of your research. The proposal is in Blackboard under Course Content, A3 folder and is worth 50 points. You will then have an entire week in class to work on the feature article with me, your peers, and our COMP Fellow. You are required to schedule an individual appointment with a COMP Fellow before the proposal is due.

3. Final Product (due Monday, November 24)

The final product will be a polished, well-designed feature article between 1,500 and 2,000 words. The product’s specific visual design and textual style will depend upon the publication you chose to write for and the audience you are targeting. Overall, however, your feature article must cite credible sources to create the strongest argument possible

and include at least 1 visuals of your choice. You are required to schedule an individual appointment with a COMP Fellow before the final product is due.

Polishing Your Final Product

As you can tell from this assignment sheet, this is not a traditional "research paper." This project requires you to use research in order to help readers/viewers understand the major/career path you've been studying. As noted above, you have a lot of choices about how to do that. Your final product should be polished. In order to credit the sources you have learned from, you will use the citation style most appropriate to your major (APA, MLA, IEEE, CSE, Chicago, etc.). Although this may not be entirely appropriate for the genre (a magazine feature doesn't often include a bibliography), you must include a bibliography/works cited/references list when you submit your final draft. This allows me to evaluate your ability to conduct college-level research and cite your sources appropriately.

Due Dates

Research on Major/Career: Research Logs ask you to keep track of the sources you find (journals 11, 12, and 13).

Feature Article Proposal/Design Plan: Friday, November 14 by class time (bring to class electronically).

Rough Draft of Feature Article: Friday, November 21 (bring to class electronically).

Final Draft of A3: Monday, November 24 by class time. Final products should be printed, in color, to show the highest quality result.