

## BE TU 110 Essay Assignment

*If I had more time, I would have written less.*

– Attributed to Mark Twain (and others)

The essay assignment is to write an academic style, research based, persuasive essay.

At the end of this assignment you will find a list with your topic for the essay.<sup>1</sup> Each topic has made important contributions to humanity, gifts to mankind if you will. Your assignment is to write a persuasive essay which answers the question, “What was your topic’s most important contribution to mankind?” As this is a humanities class, your answer to this question should be related to the liberal arts.

Before continuing, please read the handout, Essay Focus and Thesis Statements. Your thesis statement will be something like, “<Your topic>’s most important contribution to mankind was . . . .” The contribution you choose might be a work of art, or it might be an innovation. Keep in mind that not all contributions are necessarily beneficial.

As part of the assignment is to try to make the essay interesting, you might not want to argue that your topic’s most obvious achievement is its most important contribution. Wait until after you have done some research to choose a thesis, so that you can select one that might surprise the reader.

Research: It is impossible to write intelligently about a subject with which you are unfamiliar, therefore the majority of your effort should go into properly researching your topic. Begin by reading Wikipedia pages, but once you have a good, basic understanding of your topic, “Google” the relevant terms to cast a wider net for reputable sources. Read everything you can and follow all the links that interest you. Go to the library and search for books and articles on your topic. The librarians are there to help you.

Keep track of your sources! You will need to know where you found your facts when the time comes to add footnotes and citations to your essay.

FYI, you can search the Thammasat libraries on the internet: <http://search.library.tu.ac.th/>

The Art of Persuasion: The best way to convince the reader to share your opinion is to briefly educate the reader about your topic and then to provide a series of factual examples that lead the reader to agree with your thesis statement. If there are obvious counter-arguments to your position, they should also be briefly addressed.

Your essay should flow logically from point to point. When proof-reading each sentence of your essay, ask yourself, “How does this sentence help support my position?” Edit each sentence to remove any material that does not help you make your argument, even if that means deleting the whole sentence.

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<sup>1</sup>

If you are not happy with your assigned topic, do not ask if you may pick a different topic to write about, you may not. However, you may trade topics with other students in the class.

**Sources:** Use a wide variety of reputable sources when researching your essay. Using many different sources will make you more knowledgeable about your subject and also enable you to catch any factual inconsistencies between sources.

- All of the sources cited by your essay must be in English.
- You may use Wikipedia as a source, but do not use it as your only source. Use a wide variety of reputable sources.
- Reputable sources of information are usually large web sites (and books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) that represent organizations which have a strong interest in propagating factual material.
- Bad sources of information are often written by just one person with no editors or peer review. Many websites are written by individuals with strong opinions, but who have no particular expertise and who often base their arguments on biased (or false) information.
- If you are getting your information from a website, ask: “Who wrote this?” “Are they an authority on this subject?” “Is this information biased?”
- Do not use our class lectures or other class materials as sources.
- Never use “free essay” websites as sources for ideas or information.

**Citations:** The purpose of using citations is to allow the reader to verify the facts in your essay. You must provide citations for any facts in your essay that are not common knowledge. MLA Style is commonly used in the humanities,<sup>2</sup> but you may use any citation style with which you are already familiar, so long as it enables the reader to verify the facts in your essay. For this assignment, the following simplified citation style is sufficient:

<b>Web pages:</b>	Author(s). “Article Title.” <i>Name of the Website</i> . Date accessed. <URL>
example	Wikipedia contributors. "Sistine Chapel." <i>Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia</i> . 3 Aug. 2010. < <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistine_chapel">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistine_chapel</a> >
<b>Books:</b>	Author(s). <i>Title of Book</i> . Year of Publication. page number(s).
example	Stephenson, Neal. <i>The Diamond Age</i> . 1995. p.127-130.
<b>Magazines &amp; Newspapers:</b>	Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Periodical</i> Day Month Year: pages.
example	Trip, Gabriel. “Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in Digital Age.” <i>The New York Times</i> 2 Aug. 2010:A1.

**Footnotes:** Place your citations in footnotes at the bottom of the page.<sup>3</sup> Insert the footnotes immediately after the factual information that you are providing citations for. Almost always, you will place the footnote immediately after a period, before the spaces.

Place all of your citations in footnotes, not endnotes. Do not include a bibliography or a list of works cited.

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<sup>2</sup> “Plagiarism Tutorial: Getting to Know Your Citation Guide.” *San Jose State University Library*. 3 Aug. 2010. <<http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/tutorial/16citation.htm>>

<sup>3</sup> This is an example of a footnote. Learn to use Microsoft Word’s “insert footnote” function to create footnotes.

## Format:

- Word count:** Your essay must be 500-1500 words, not including footnotes.
- Spacing:** Your essay must be double-spaced. (Format:Paragraph:Spacing:Double)
- Font:** Times New Roman, 12 point font. Footnote text should be 10 point font.
- Text:** Use only black text with no special formatting in the body of the essay, i.e. do not use bold or underline for emphasis, and do not break up the text with subheadings.
- Margins:** Use 2.54 cm margins at the top and bottom of the page and 3.17 cm margins on the left and right.
- Alignment:** Align the text to the left margin; do not “justify” the text so that it is aligned to both the left and right margins.
- Paragraphs:** Indent one centimeter at the beginnings of paragraphs.
- Page #'s:** Insert page numbers at the lower right corner of the page.
- Heading:** At the top-center of the first page, write your student number, your name, the title of your essay, and your essay’s word count.
- Pictures:** Do not put pictures in your essay. If you absolutely must show the reader a picture, put it in an appendix at the end of the essay.

**Essay Structure:** In the first paragraph, introduce your topic in an engaging manner (catch the reader’s attention), and present your thesis statement. In the body of the essay, use support paragraphs to educate your reader about your topic and to make your argument. You should have at least three support paragraphs and each paragraph should flow logically from one to the next. Finally, you should finish with a conclusion paragraph that restates your thesis in light of the argument that you have made, demonstrates to the reader that you have successfully argued your position, and wraps up the essay as a whole.

Follow these rules to avoid common mistakes:

- Every paragraph must have at least three sentences.
- All of the sentences in a paragraph should be on the same topic.
- Use one space after words and commas, two spaces after periods. Do not put spaces before commas or periods.
- Insert footnotes immediately after periods, but before the spaces.
- After you write and proof-read your essay, set it aside for a day or two and then proof-read it again.
- If you are not confident about your English, have somebody fluent in English proof-read your essay.

**Academic Style:** When writing for an academic environment, follow these rules:

- The subject and tone of your essay should be mature and dignified.
- Do not fawn over your subject.
- Write in proper English, i.e. do not write in the same casual language that you use when speaking with friends.
- Be invisible. Do not use the words “I” or “me” when writing. The reader understands that it is the author’s view that is being expressed.
- Do not use contractions, i.e. do not write “don’t.”

**Intended Readership:** The essay should be written so that anybody who reads it will find it interesting. Pretend that you are writing the essay for a scholarly magazine. Do not try to target your essay for the individual that happens to be grading it.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means presenting somebody else's words or ideas as if they were your own. Use only your own words and ideas when writing the essay. Before beginning your essay, read the plagiarism tutorial.<sup>4</sup> It has excellent information about plagiarism, copying, paraphrasing, and citations. The plagiarism tutorial is required reading.

Copying: Copying is a serious academic offense. Use only your own words and ideas when writing the essay. The best way to avoid copying is to learn the material you are writing about, set your paper aside for a day or two, and then resume writing based on your own knowledge without looking at your source material, just as if you were taking an exam.

Some students think it is acceptable to copy as long as they add a citation to their source. They are wrong. It is not acceptable to copy under any circumstance.

Some students think it is acceptable to copy if they only copy "a little bit." They are wrong. It is not acceptable to copy even a short phrase within a sentence.

Some students think it is acceptable to copy if they change a few words. They are wrong. Changing a few words is not paraphrasing (see the plagiarism tutorial for more about paraphrasing), it is still copying. Furthermore, copying of this sort often renders the text incomprehensible.

A favorite refrain of students that are caught copying is, "There is no other way to write it!" This is utter nonsense. Learn the material well enough so that you can write in your own words.

No Quotes: Quoting is a normal feature of essay writing, but absolutely no quoting is allowed for this assignment. The entire essay must be in your own words.

Grammar: If you are not confident about your English, try to keep your sentences short and simple. Occasional, minor errors in grammar will not affect your grade, but frequent, significant errors will have a detrimental effect. (FYI, Microsoft Word does have a built in grammar-checker.)

Spelling: Use the spell-checker in your word processor before submitting your essay. Including misspelled and nonsensical words in your essay tells the reader that you have so little respect for the assignment, your own work, and the reader that you could not even be bothered to let the spell-checker catch obvious mistakes. (Word also has a spell-checker.)

Grading: Essays will receive letter grades which correspond to point scores as follows:

A: 95            B: 85            C: 75            D: 55            F: 0

Your essay will be graded on how well you followed these instructions, how original and interesting your essay is, how well researched your essay is, and how well developed and persuasive your argument is.

Statement of Understanding: The last page of this handout is a Statement of Understanding. It must be completed and turned in before any credit will be given for the essay. Please hand it in on **February 1**.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/plagiarism/selector.htm>

Essays are due by 11.55 p.m. on [February 14](#)

Essays are to be turned in by Moodle. You must upload two (2) copies of your essay, the original file and a PDF version of the file. Rename both files with your student number only, for example, “5404641234.doc” and “5404641234.pdf”. Make sure to check the PDF version before turning it in.

Penalties: Late papers will be penalized 10 points per day. Failing to follow the relevant instructions regarding topic, sources, citations, academic style, format, quotes, or spelling may each also result in 10-point penalties. Copying or plagiarism will likely result in an F, with no possibility of writing a make-up essay.

NOTES:

- I am happy to discuss your essay with you and to answer any and all questions you may have, but I do not read draft versions of the essay.
- The best way to ask questions about your essay is print a copy of it and to meet with me in person. I am also happy to try to answer your questions by email, just do not attach a draft of your essay to the email (see previous note).
- The only way to prove that you sent your essay on time is to get a reply from me. If you do not get a reply within 24 hours, send your essay again. Do not wait until the last minute to work on your essay.
- Try to turn in your essay only one time. Do not send it to me once, then make some changes and send it to me again (and again, and again). The best way to avoid this problem is to reread the essay assignment and then proof-read each other's essays before turning them in.
- Students that are not satisfied with the grade they receive on the essay may write a new essay on a new topic for a new grade, but the highest grade I will give to second essays is a B. If you wish to do this, email me and ask for a new topic. Make-up essays are due by email at midnight before the last class.

## Essay Topics

Akiko	Nomura	Tenzin Gyatso
Josefin	Sallberg	Gautama Buddha
Marina	Kabatskaya	Confucius
Mrlen Garces	Rivera	Tang Dynasty
Paige	McCann	Chakri Dynasty
Peerada	Pitaksit	Qin Shi Huang
Perada	Dulyapiradis	Martin Luther King, Jr.
Peranut	Plitponkarnpim	The Rolling Stones
Phatra	Sedtanaranon	Peter Paul Rubens
Phattaris	Sittikul	Lorenzo de' Medici
Phichaya	Kammoetsirikun	Vladimir Lenin
Phon	Chulakasyena	The Guggenheim Family
Pichaya	Arunpullop	The Renaissance
Pichaya	Patamatamkul	Edouard Manet
Pichaya	Harnchaiboonyarit	Francis of Assisi
Pimala	Thitadilok	Julius Caesar
Pimnipa	Chunhatakij	I Ching
Pimpichcha	Paiboon	Muhammad
Pitcha	Makapanich	Jesus
Pornpimol	Thanasuwanditee	Elvis Presley
Pramethat	Pongpipatchai	Sigmung Freud
Puchon	Dechapanichkul	Salvador Dali
Rasita	Kriangkrait	Paris (the city)
Sahapoom	Panprom	Cicero
Sakulrat	Bovornsantisuth	Socrates
Salisa	Woraphan	Isaac Newton
Sarinee	Vatanya	Shakespeare
Sippapas	Eksombatchai	Augustus Caesar
Sirachut	Chutchukiatkul	Aristophanes
Sireethorn	Lerkmai	Akhenaten
Sirikorn	Puangjit	The French Revolution
Sirin	Tangpornpaiboon	Dante Alighieri
Siriporn	Panaputtikul	Jules Verne
Siwakorn	Paiboonrattanakorn	Pericles
Sky	Preedanon	Soren Kierkegaard
Slil	Vechmamontien	Catholicism
Song	Srisukantaphruek	Harlem
Soravis	Laopadolki	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Sorawich	Lertworawanich	Andy Warhol
Suchawut	Thamvoraphal	Pablo Picasso
Sunisa	Jirawuttikul	Homer
Supjarus	Luppayanukul	Robert Venturi
Suppavit	Chatkitcharoen	John Stuart Mill
Supphanat	Pongpasuth	World War I
Surachet	Phinyo	Laozi
Surapat	Klovuttisatien	Nicolas Steno
Surasake	Tantimakabut	Ludwig van Beethoven
Tananart	Sakolvittayanon	Judaism
Tanat	Anutrakulchai	George Eastman
Tanthai	Sermsirimanont	Frank Ghery
Tassamon	Vessuwat	Madonna (1958- )
Tatiporn	Hirunlarp	Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Teepakorn	Suppakarnpanich	Michelangelo

Thanakorn  
Thanaphum  
Thitawat  
Thitiporn  
Torbhum  
Vitch  
Vorachart  
Woramet

Thana-Athiporn  
Amatayakul  
Tosborvorn  
Siricururatana  
Prudthirungsi  
Tharawas  
Tangkijngamwong  
Trakulkoosri

Winston Churchill  
Ai Weiwei  
Mao Zedong  
Bill Gates  
Lord Byron  
Orson Welles  
Vincent Van Gogh  
Galileo Galilei

BE 2011/2 TU110 **Statement of Understanding**

I, \_\_\_\_\_,

student ID # \_\_\_\_\_, am currently enrolled in

Russell Jones' TU 110 Integrated Humanities class. I have read and understood the Course Outline, the Essay Assignment, and the Plagiarism Tutorial.

- I understand that no copying or plagiarism is allowed in TU 110 assignments.
- I understand that “no copying” means no copying at all, not even a little bit.
- I understand that I must write using only my own words.
- I understand that no credit will be given for assignments that contain copied material, including the essay assignment and the group project assignment.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_