# BSIS 496 Assignment
# Guidelines for Position Papers

In a position paper, you take a stance on some controversial issue *in one of the information systems, supply chain, logistics, or operations management areas* and present an argument supporting that stance. The paper should not go into technical detail, unless that technical detail is necessary to support the argument. Citations from journals and other sources are mandatory.

Be sure to start your paper by letting the reader know what the issue is and what position you are taking. Also, be sure the paper ends with a conclusion that sums up your position. One common outline is to state your position, justify it, state the opposing position(s), state why they believe it, discuss their strengths and weaknesses, and then restate your position. "Both sides have good arguments; I can't decide," is not a position. The goal of the author should be to persuade the reader to agree with the position taken. Opinions should, wherever possible, be corroborated by factual data. Whether the conclusions are reached by induction or deduction, the argument must be reasonable and logical.

**References are helpful (and mandatory) because they add weight to your argument**. There is a difference between, "I think it will rain tomorrow," "Joe, the local meteorologist, thinks it will rain tomorrow," and "According to the Institute of Chico Weather Prediction, which has a 98% success record in predicting weather, it will rain tomorrow." (Of course, you are not supposed to make up your references like I just did.) Also, "I do not believe Napster should be put out of business because I download lots of free music," (from a prior paper, author to remain anonymous) is not a winning argument.

**Choose a topic that is controversial**. It is virtually impossible to write well on non-controversial topics such as "Companies Should Do Backups" or "Companies should do Training," even though too many companies have poor backup and recovery plans and may not do a good job at training. The point is that even poor companies agree they should have good back-up plans and should do training.

Some examples of the types of issues are:
- The potential impact of a new government regulations in any of these areas on an individual's rights to confidentiality of specific types of personal information
- The potential impact of an advancement (technological or non-technological) in any of these areas on the skills and knowledge required of information workers in the future
- The potential impact of an advancement (technological or non-technological) in any of these areas on a field of vital interest to our society, such as education or medicine
- The potential impact of an advancement (technological or non-technological) in any of these areas on an entire class of workers, e.g., health care, auto repair, travel agent, grade school teacher
- Outsourcing/offshoring vs. insourcing/inshoring
- Mass vs. lean (production/manufacturing/service)
- Privacy vs. Security
- Big Data analytics vs. Free will
- etc.

Do not limit yourselves to the topics above. They are just some examples to give you an idea of the types of topics you can pick.

**Format Information.** Adhere to the following format guidelines in writing your document.

1. The paper is to have a cover sheet that identifies:
   a. the author
   b. the title of the paper
   c. the semester and year during which the paper was submitted
2. The second page of the paper is to contain only the title of the paper.
3. The author is to present and defend a position regarding a controversial issue.
4. The length of papers should range from 1,000 to 1,500 words (excluding references).
5. Use single space, 12-point font size and allow approximately one-inch margins
6. Include a references section
7. Incorporate APA style for references and citations (in the essay)