**POLS 4133 International Political Economy**

**Research Paper Thesis and Annotated Bibliography Assignment**

**Spring 2017**

Now that you have decided on a topic for your research paper, the next step is to determine what question you will answer in your paper and what evidence you will use to support your answer.

Your research paper will be in the style of academic persuasion. This means that you will try to convince others of your answer to a debatable (1) **research question**. So, your research question should be one that could be answered from multiple perspectives but that has an objective, fact-based answer. Take, for instance, the question: Does membership in the WTO increase the trade volume of its members? This question can be answered yes or no based on observable evidence. Note that the question did not ask whether states *should* join the WTO, which is a question that would be answered by opinion as much as fact. Therefore, your task will be to write an objective but debatable research question.

Your (2) **thesis statement** is your answer to the research question and your argument for the paper. It should make a claim that can be supported or disputed based on factual evidence. It should also be a guide for your analysis. Therefore, the thesis statement must include both a cause and the effect. For instance: WTO membership does increase the trade volume for members who undergo rigorous accession; the cause (undergo rigorous accession) has an effect (increase trade volume).

Next, you will need to determine what other scholars already think about your question and also what evidence exists to support (or disprove) your answer. This is where you will need to conduct research to construct your (3) **annotated bibliography** **of five peer-reviewed sources from approved journals.** The list of approved journals is on Folio; students will not receive credit from sources outside this list.

In your annotated bibliography, you must include the (3A) **full citation** **of each source** in MLA, APA, or Chicago style. In most cases, you need to include: the author, the title of the article, the title of the journal, the year of publication, and page numbers. Information on citation format is available on Folio through the Purdue OWL website. Students must be consistent in their use of one style; hyperlinks are not an acceptable citation format.

Then, you need to include a brief (3B) **summary of each source**. Your summaries of each article should include: the research question, the main argument, the data or empirical evidence used, and the conclusions. You must read the articles carefully to be able to write these summaries! Examples of annotated bibliographies can be found on Folio through the Purdue OWL website.

Late papers will not be accepted; it is your responsibility to make sure that your assignment is uploaded properly before the dropbox closes. You will receive up to 30 points for completing this assignment – 5 points for the research question and thesis statement and 5 points per entry in your bibliography.

Note: your research topic must indicated in your brainstorm assignment.