

Reflective Research Essay

In this essay, you will begin to explore your interests and career goals from a sustainability perspective. For this **1200-1400 word essay**, you will bring in research from course readings and peer-reviewed literature for evidence to support your thesis.

Prompt

Prepare a paper that discusses how sustainability can be incorporated into your career goals. Select a specific career in your major area of study, and research historical, current, and possible future sustainability practices that have been or may be implemented. Include a minimum of three sustainability practices or initiatives within your selected field. Are there examples of the successful integration of sustainability in your chosen career? In what ways have sustainable practices improved or worsened the environmental, social, and economic impacts of your chosen career? How have these practices changed the career you are interested in pursuing?

Essay Content

- Develop a strong thesis that clearly and concisely demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the sustainability issues, solutions, and changes that have occurred within the career you are interested in pursuing.
- Use examples from your career-specific course work and your own experiences to support your thesis as you reflect on the topic.

Essay Format

- Your essay should be **1200-1400 words**; include total word count at the end of your paper.
- Use a **minimum of 4 credible sources** (from course texts and/or peer reviewed research. More than the minimum number of sources is acceptable.
- Make sure to cite each source in the body of your essay and include a Works Cited page at the end of your essay, formatted appropriately.
- Use **MLA/APA** style for your citations and Works Cited.
- You must submit your paper electronically on Canvas by the deadline outlined in the syllabus and in Canvas. Your paper will automatically be submitted to www.turnitin.com through Canvas.

Grading Rubric

Your essay will be graded based on the rubric posted on Canvas. It includes the following elements: thesis development and essay organization, critical thinking, providing supporting evidence and meeting course objectives, inclusion of personal connection and sense of place, creativity and originality, and writing mechanics.

Tips to consider as you write...

- **Be sure you have a clear thesis/claim** that you can defend with specific examples and supporting evidence from your own experiences and examples from research.
- The articulation of the thesis is the most important dimension of the essay because it sets the stage for the assignment and organizes your supporting evidence and ideas. **It is more than a summary**; it is the central claim you are presenting and supporting with evidence.
- Think of the thesis as the spine of your essay. Every paragraph should be designed to support, extend, or illustrate the thesis in some way.
- Sometimes your thesis will not be clear until the end of your paper, after you have revised and narrowed your topic. It's OK to write your thesis last!
- Be detailed and descriptive of your sense of place and the personal experiences that help support your thesis.
- Be detailed and descriptive of your research examples from readings and peer-reviewed research.