

POL 422 - RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

Research Paper and Oral Presentation

For the research paper, students will complete a 10-15 page case study of the quality of democracy in a single country chosen in consultation with the instructor. Students will make a brief oral presentation of their findings to the class. A typed proposal of 2-3 pages, with an annotated bibliography, will be due by **Friday, February 20 at 12pm**. The final paper is due **Tuesday, April 21 at 2pm**. Further instructions regarding the research paper assignment and oral presentation will be distributed later in the semester.

Topic Proposal (2-3 pages)

The purpose of this first assignment is to identify your topic and to provide a brief outline of your paper. **You must include an *alphabetized* (by author's last name) and **annotated* bibliography with at least 5 scholarly sources you have accessed, including both books and articles.** You are *required* to search for sources from both the [Olin General Catalogue](#) (to identify relevant **BOOKS**) and Rollins' [electronic databases](#) ([Project MUSE](#), [JSTOR](#), [ProQuest](#), Lexis-Nexis etc., to identify relevant **ARTICLES**). In terms of articles, the [Journal of Democracy](#) is particularly relevant. The first assignment will be evaluated according to the quality of the sources you have identified in your bibliography. *For an annotated bibliography, you should provide a brief one or two sentence description of the source itself and the information it contains.

Final Paper (10-15 pages)

Your task is to evaluate the quality of democracy in a Latin American country of your choosing. As much as possible, your analysis should focus on the current state of democracy in the country and, as a general rule, should be limited to the period from 1991 to the present. Your paper should address the following three points:

1. Does your country meet the minimum qualifications of being a democracy or is it better described as a semi-democracy? (Consider the MBP dataset, for example)
2. Next, how would you describe the quality of democracy in the country? How robust is political participation? How competitive is the political arena? How free are citizens in terms of basic human rights and civil liberties? Are vertical and horizontal accountability meaningful? Is there a strong rule of law? Is the law applied equally across different social strata? To what extent are citizens politically equal? Are politicians responsive to citizens' demands? Your analysis section should rely on a mix of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include data from various databases we have discussed in class. For a summary, see <http://web.rollins.edu/~dboniface/classes/pol422/research.htm>.
3. What can be done within the society to deepen democracy? Can the international community contribute to improving the quality of democracy in the country?