

**THE TERM PAPER** (See also the class website [www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-340](http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-340) for resources)

A major skill developed in college is the ability to carry out a research project. A research project is a multi-level process that involves formulating a question, finding information, sifting out the irrelevant information, formulating an argument, drafting it up, and polishing it into a final piece of clear, persuasive communication that is reinforced by keyed illustrations, properly formatted notes, and an annotated bibliography.

Students will have the choice EITHER of writing a standard 10-12 page **research paper**, OR of writing a similar-length proposal for a small **one-room exhibition** about your topic, complete with all texts, captions, visual objects, reference books, bibliography, etc.

The semester-long work for the research project will be divided into discrete, **REQUIRED**, phased subsections in order to help you produce a first rate project as follows:

**I) Pick a Comparative Topic:** Pick a SMALL COMPARATIVE TOPIC on any aspect of **non-American modern architecture (not primarily urbanism), 1900-1945**, and do a preliminary search of sources about your idea. Ask yourself a good, thought-provoking question, and develop it into an interesting, original thesis idea (or main point) about your subject. You may want to do research on a topic related to your book or article reports! Remember, you are doing a *research paper* and not a *report*. There is no way you can research everything there is to know about any topic in 10-12 pages or a small exhibit; you can, however, write perceptively about or exhibit one aspect of a subject. When framing your topic, think about what *specifically* you want to learn.

Some (Non-Comparative) Topics researched by CMU students in the past years:

\* Women at the Bauhaus \* German Expressionism: Mies vs. Höger \* Nietzsche & Modern Arch. \* Evolution of Cubist Space in Architecture \* Expressionism vs. De Stijl Space \* Painting into Architecture in De Stijl and Le Corbusier \* Mass Production Housing: Törten vs. Pessac \* Nazi Architecture: Munich vs. Nuremberg \* Giuseppe Terragni: Genius or Copyist? \* Stilts in Le Corbusier \* Housing Individualism in Pessac and Kiefhoek \* Futurism, Mendelsohn and Rietveld: Concepts into Architecture \* Aalto's Humanism in the Villa Mairea \* Theory vs. Experience in Mies' Houses \* What makes the Rietveld House 'Dutch'? \* Austrian Modernism: Wagner vs. Loos \* Le Corbusier vs. Sant Elia's Ideas of Space \* Craftsmanship in Morris vs. Gropius \* P. Behrens and the Villa Savoye \* Idea of the Mask in Le Corbusier and Loos \* Aalto vs. Chareau \* Fascist Ideal Forms \*

If you're stuck, try flipping through the Curtis textbook and starting with a favorite building, or architect, or housing project... Then think about which ideas or aspects of the work interest you the most (materials, space, color, siting, landscape, economy, etc.)... And then find some other some other building, architect, or housing project to *compare* to your main topic. Avoid papers addressing only one well researched topic such as Bauhaus, Gaudi, etc. Try instead comparing these to other, very different things. You should consider using the required book by Sylvan Barnett, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, for help on formulating a comparative topic and a thesis, formatting the bibliography, and how to go about writing a college level research paper.

Make an appointment to discuss and OK your topic with me (during office hours or by appointment) in order to insure a viable topic as soon as possible. Fill out the "Paper Topic" form, **due Aug. 31**. Revise your ideas and write a ½-page typed summary of your topic with beginning bibliography, **due Sept. 9**.

**II) Research Bibliography:** Do extensive RESEARCH to find *sources* from which to write your project. Try to find *good, reputable, current* sources. Avoid coffee-table or out of date books or overly general magazine articles. In looking for sources, try to find them with many different finding aides. Start with CAMEO to find some appropriate books. Then look in the bibliography and footnotes in those books for more specific and on-target sources. Try to find those sources as well as more sources in CAMEO, or AVERY INDEX, or WORLDCAT or RILA or READER'S GUIDE or NEW YORK TIMES INDEX... Don't just look in recent magazine indexes, consider looking through old ones from the time period you are studying.

Prepare a thorough bibliography of AT LEAST 10 GOOD sources for your that includes at least one "primary source" (i.e a source from the time period) and two journal articles (at least one must be from the last 10 years). The properly formatted bibliography, along with e 3<sup>rd</sup> revision of the topic statement, will be **due Sept. 28**. There will be an in-class help session on finding materials.

**III) Write the First Three Pages and Annotated Bibliography:** Write the first three pages of your project, including an introduction and *summary* of the topic, some of the *questions* you hope to answer as well as the *argument* you will make, along with a PAPER TITLE, and an ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY. These fully formatted first pages will be **due Oct. 19**, and give me further opportunity to help direct your research effort.

**IV) Final Project Due:** Do more research as needed, then write an 10-12 page term paper on your topic, OR propose an small exhibit. There will be an in-class help session on paper formatting and writing in class. The paper will be **due Fri. Nov. 13**. It must be neatly presented, formatted correctly, and contain a fully developed thesis argument. I will be grading the paper and offer substantive feedback on your thesis, the evidence, the conclusion, and your writing skills. If you are satisfied with your first grade, you're DONE!

**V) Rewrite and Revise:** If not, you will have a chance to revise and write the paper or exhibit based on my comments. The final rewrites will be **due Fri. Dec. 4**, the last day of classes.