

MOVING ON, FINDING MORE SOURCES

RESEARCH CONSULTATION: Everyone must make an appointment to see Martin Aurand. Do so TODAY! Don't procrastinate. He has advice and materials, much more than is accessible through the database.

- **RESEARCH, NOT REPORT:** Remember, you are trying to write a college-level RESEARCH paper, one that involves original insights... much like a scientist or inventor. You are trying to AVOID just writing a high-school style "REPORT" that merely summarizes other people's existing knowledge. Imagine if scientists were allowed to use the same sources over and over to state obvious facts over and over.

- **GOOD EVIDENCE:** This involves creative searching for evidence. Try to imagine what kinds of sources you would love to find, what kind of evidence would help prove your case? This involves creativity and "thinking outside the box," but also lots of time and effort, many failed attempts. Know in advance: all good research, like detective work, involves many dead-ends.

- **NEW SOURCES:** Good research should also seek to uncover NEW or SELDOM USED evidence/sources that others have NOT used before, OR to interpret it in new light. Read the main books on your topic, and work hard to find sources NOT listed in the bibliography or footnotes...

- **PRIMARY SOURCES:** All good research involves finding GOOD PRIMARY sources, original sources from the time period. For history papers, these are often NOT available on the web. Go to the library to dig up old stuff. Do not just rely on "secondary sources" (more recent books or articles "about" a topic).

- **NEWSPAPERS:** Check local newspapers through newspaper search databases, including Google, Lexis, etc.!! See http://news.google.com/archivesearch/advanced_search: the results can be organized by year, if too many come back, to see early construction history, public reception, controversy, etc.

- **VERY INDEX:** Every architecture research project MUST consult the Avery Index database. Find articles in the professional press from the time period. Look up similar building types and other buildings by the same architect for comparison sake. Then go to the 3rd floor of Hunt Library to look at the bound journals.

- **POPULAR PRESS:** Check out the "Readers Guide to Periodical Literature" to find sources in more popular sources as well as other databases.

- **THEME BOOKS:** Check out books on your building TYPE (church, stadium, office, etc.), on the ARCHITECT (Lescaze, Noyes, SOM, etc.) on the MATERIAL and STYLE if it is distinctive (brutalism, aluminum, etc.).

- **PITT:** CMU has a small library, and the web is inadequate with respect to postwar architecture sources. Be sure you look for, and work hard to get sources you can't find here. The Pitt Art & Architecture library (just behind the Carnegie Museum, on Schenley Plaza) is MUCH BIGGER than CMU (even though they don't have an architecture department, they spend far more money than CMU does). Pitt's Hillman library is an amazing source of books on all topics outside of architecture, especially from the postwar period.

- **WORLDCAT & INTER-LIBRARY LOAN:** Look outside of Pgh too. Use Worldcat database to find books in cities all across the USA and the world, then get them through Inter-Library Loan!

- **SHARE RESOURCES:** Be sure to share resources with others in the class if you find anything. This is especially the case for monographs on architects that are being studied by several students (Harrison & Abramovitz, Schweiker, Katselas, Ritchey, etc.)

- **WIKIPEDIA:** look for the building name, the architect, the address, other names, etc. Check the "links" and cross-references, and follow the trails. This takes time, diligence, and patience.

- **ARCHIVES VISIT:** All of you should start to identify archives or source collections that might have material on your buildings, like old brochures, or original blueprints, or construction reports, etc. Go visit the archive or library or company IN PERSON. This project can NOT be done on through web research alone.

- **CALL/WRITE:** Try calling and writing to the archives or current owners of the building to see if they could share resources with you! If the architect's office still exist, write them! If the building has been altered by another architect, write to those architects!

- **CARNEGIE LIBRARY:** Several students report finding an AMAZING amount of material through the research librarians at the CLP "Pennsylvania Room." Go!

- **VISIT:** Go to the building with camera, ask around, ask the doorman, ask the receptionist, ask if there is someone you could contact by letter or email. This is like "in the field" detective work!

WRITING GUIDE

ASSIGNMENT

Re-read the syllabus and other handouts for instructions. The assignment is not just about writing a paper, it is also about learning the multiple skills required to write a good research paper. Your project should reflect your ability to formulate a research question, recast it into a thesis, initiate research to answer that question, find information and sift out what is relevant to your research specifically, draft and polish a paper that presents what you have found while also making a point. Explanation, not description, is the goal.

GOALS

* **Argue & Research:** Your paper should present your OWN innovative argument, idea or thesis, and be backed up by good research. The paper should be MORE than a mere *report* of already known facts or ideas.

* **Existing Scholarship:** Every paper should communicate how it relates to existing scholarship—this is the purpose of doing research. After the introduction you should be sure to discuss briefly the existing literature on your subject, including books and articles, and then specify how your paper (which includes both researched facts AND your own ideas) will add to or differ from this existing research.

* **Instructive Comparisons:** When comparing or showing the influence of one thing on another be sure to do so in DETAIL. Do not describe one, then the other; rather weave your comparison into one flowing paper. Compare buildings in plan, elevation, materials, structure, etc. Provide side-by-side illustrations for easy comparisons. Showing DIFFERENCES between two buildings, architects, or traditions can often be just as illuminating as SIMILARITIES. Do not just show how things are similar, be critical and point out how they are different, how the model or comparison does not work.

ORGANIZATION --Research papers have three basic components:

(1) the INTRO to the paper where you state your subject and point; this includes the THESIS statement, your “big idea”, “main point” or point you hope to prove.

(2) your DISCUSSION of the evidence and ANALYSIS or ARGUMENT leading to the PROOF of the thesis

(3) a CONCLUSION that sums up what you have found and argued, and raises some future issues. Paragraphs are like miniature papers, and should follow the same tripartite strategy (thus there is usually a 3-sentence minimum per paragraph). Use topic sentences to introduce the point of each paragraph. Then present evidence or analysis that relates to that topic--and only that topic. Then come to a mini-conclusion.

Then start again on the next paragraph. Avoid run-on paragraphs and topic-less paragraphs that are simply sentences following sentences without any internal organization to the paragraph. It can be helpful to think of your topic sentences as the headers in an outline of your paper.

DRAFTS -- Write multiple drafts. Much like design, the writing process often includes at least three drafts:

(1) **Rough Draft.** The rough draft is your chance to push your ideas out, writing as quickly as possible, not looking back, not worrying about grammar or spelling or repeating yourself. This gives you a document to refine both your research and your writing.

(2) **Second draft for general organization and completeness.** The second draft builds on the first by reorganizing, adding, and removing sections of the rough draft. At the end of this stage, the paper should be conceptually complete in its argument and substantively solid in its evidence.

(3) **Final draft for polished prose.** Finally, when most parts of the paper are roughly in shape, the writer can focus on style and presentation. This is your chance to sharpen your choice of words, to add more vigorous verbs, to catch spelling errors, to correct grammatical mistakes and awkward passages. This is the stage that often separates the conscientious writer from the sloppy one.

GRADING: -- You will be graded on the following:

- * A clear THESIS to the paper
- * How well the thesis is supported by ARGUMENT and properly footnoted research EVIDENCE
- * The QUALITY of research EVIDENCE (recent works are usually better than older ones, at least one scholarly journal article, at least one primary source, visual evidence)
- * The CLARITY of writing (includes paper and paragraph organization, use of topic sentences, grammar)
- * Correct FORMAT -- such as correct footnotes and annotated bibliographies, proofreading, grammar