

Research Project

Mr. Cooper's Research Project

QSI Virtual School

2022

Instructor Information

Instructor: Geoff Cooper

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Preferred Method of Communication: Email

Course Description

This course is one of the graduation requirements for QSI secondary students planning to earn a "QSI Academic Diploma" or a "QSI Academic Diploma with Honors." Students normally engage in this course during their final secondary year (Sec. IV). It is designed to prepare students for research and writing that they may undertake in their studies at the university level. The emphasis of the course is to guide students through the steps of selecting a topic, locating published materials, developing a research question, engaging in independent research and further developing the skills needed for writing and presenting a formal report. Independent thinking and initiative are necessary, since the development of the project is largely self-guided and self-motivated. The Research Project course is divided into ten essential unit outcomes and two selective units. The normal pace for this course leads to mastery of ten unit outcomes in one school year.

Course Credit Equivalency: 10 QSI credits are equal to 1 Carnegie credit.

Course Prerequisites

Grade 10 English or equivalent. Students also should have previously written a research paper in MLA format (or another style agreed upon with teacher) or they need to show the capacity for writing such a paper.

Technology Information and Requirements

Computer with internet access

Microphone and webcam

Course Grading

QVS is a mastery learning school where students must demonstrate that they meet certain criteria ("The Student Will", or TSWs) before closing a unit and receiving credit for it. The assignments for each unit are designed to give students a chance to meet the TSW criteria for either B Level Mastery or A Level Mastery (see below). On the course Moodle page, each unit features the TSW criteria in an attached unit description PDF document.

Assignments may be graded as follows:

Attempted /NOT Completed - the student has attempted the assignment but it is not done correctly or completely.

Completed – the assignment in question is not being used to evaluate mastery and is marked as complete.

Mastery “B” - the student has met the TSW criteria covered by the assignment for Mastery. This is sometimes also referred to as “B Level Mastery”.

Above Mastery “A” - the student has exceeded the TSW criteria covered by the assignment for Mastery and meets the criteria for Above Mastery. This is sometimes referred to as “A Level Mastery” and is awarded for work that showcases a consistently sophisticated, nuanced and thorough understanding and application of the TSW criteria being evaluated.

Units may be graded as follows:

Mastery “B” - the student has met all of the required criteria (TSWs) for B Level Mastery as demonstrated in the assignments.

Above Mastery “A”- the student has met all of the required criteria for A Level Mastery described in the unit document. This typically means that a student has completed most or all assignments at “A” level.

D “Deficient”- a D may be assigned to the unit if the student has not submitted one or more assignments on time and has fallen behind (typically 10 or more days late) OR if the student has plagiarized material. In the event of late work, a D may be entered into the QVS gradebook and QMS until the work is done. In the case of plagiarism, a D will be entered until the matter has been resolved.

It is important to note that a “D” is not in itself a grade or a punitive measure but rather an indication that the student is not performing as required.

On Hold “H” – for whatever reason, the student is unable to complete a unit and it is put on hold until such a time as work can resume.

Teacher feedback and revision of work:

- The instructor will endeavor to return work within 24 hours, excepting weekends and holidays.
- If a student does not receive feedback within 48 hours, the student should contact the instructor.
- The student will endeavor to revise any assignment that requires it within 48 hours.

Progression through course units:

- Students must close a unit with at least a B before beginning the next (unless a unit is intended to remain open for the duration of a term or the entire year or an “H” was

assigned to the unit). The teacher will work closely with students to ensure they attain B level mastery on a unit, regardless of the time it takes.

- The instructor may allow students to ‘upgrade’ their results on an assignment or on a unit from B to A level mastery. Since this is an English course, major assignments are typically essays that require drafting and there will be an opportunity to work towards an A during this process. **However, outside of this, the ability to upgrade from B to A hinges upon the ability of the student to keep up with progression through units and therefore, upgrades to A for units and assignments may not be possible if a student is behind in the course.**
- Students may only complete two (2) units in June. That is to say that if a student has fallen behind during the school year it is not possible to close more than two units between June 1st and the last day of school (typically, mid-June).

Course Content

E01: Researcher and Readers—Getting Started ~ 3 weeks

The student will explore his/her interests to find a subject related to a passion in his/her life, finally choosing three topics for deeper exploration. This unit also reviews the research process that was learned in Writing II.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will classify primary and secondary research.
2. TSW list the steps in the research process.
3. TSW complete a personal interest inventory and share with the class.
4. TSW discuss areas of interest.
5. TSW describe feasible subject areas for research.
6. TSW identify possible topics within the subject area of greatest interest.
7. TSW analyze the feasibility of pursuing topics selected.
8. TSW summarize three possible topics for research.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

Quiz: Writing Process and Research Terminology

E01 Assignment #1: Interest Web

Forum: You must post assignment #1 to your forum group and comment on another member’s work.

E01 Assignment #2: Three Topic Trees

Forum: You must post assignment #2 to your forum group and comment on another member’s work.

E01 Assignment #3: Topic Evaluation and Selection Report

E02: Questions and Answers—Exploring a Topic ~3 weeks

The student will raise questions about his/her topic of interest and address possible problems within the topic, planning preliminary arguments. This unit also examines different types of sources used for research and also reviews the process for recording bibliographical data for sources.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will identify examples of interest in broad subjects and more specific topics.

2. TSW identify practical questions and research questions.
3. TSW classify research problems.
4. TSW define three kinds of sources.
5. TSW identify sources to be engaged as primary sources.
6. TSW engage with sources to plan an argument.
7. TSW record complete bibliographical data for chosen sources.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E02 Assignment #1: Preliminary Annotated Bibliographies

E02 Assignment #2: Developing Research Questions

E02 Assignment #3: Discussion via Skype

FALL BREAK MID-OCTOBER

E03: Problems and Sources—Looking for a Focus ~3 weeks

The student will discover and evaluate sources, comparing different kinds of sources and choosing appropriate ones for his/her research problems.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will compare three kinds of sources: primary, secondary, & tertiary.
2. TSW locate, evaluate, and review sources in a library and on the Internet.
3. TSW discuss and evaluate sources for relevance and reliability.
4. TSW locate experts who can help with their research problem.
5. TSW engage sources actively and compare with others.
6. TSW record complete bibliographical data.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E03 Quiz on Research Problems and Solutions: Sources

E03 Assignment #1 Annotated Bibliography II

E03 Assignment #2 Plan for Primary Research

E04: Claims and Warrants—Doing Research ~3 weeks

The student will begin to assemble a research argument, creating a claim and supporting it with evidence.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will create a claim and support it with evidence.
2. TSW respond to questions and objections.
3. TSW identify examples of warrants in an argument.
4. TSW develop a complex argument out of a simple one.
5. TSW determine the kind of claim to make for his/her argument.
6. TSW evaluate his/her claim and discuss with others.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E04 Assignment #1 Parts of an Argument

E04 Assignment #2 Writing a well-structured paragraph about a ridiculous topic
Forum: You must post assignment #2 to your forum group and comment on another member's work.

E04 Assignment #3 Identifying parts of an argument in a complex academic book

E04 Assignment #4 Research Proposal

E05: Reasons and Evidence—Gathering Information ~ 3 weeks

The student will assemble reasons and evidence to support his/her arguments, evaluating evidence for reliability and authority. The unit also requires that the student identify alternative arguments that challenge their own arguments. The student will also need to describe warrants in the process of reasoning and developing arguments.

Essential Outcomes: *(must be assessed for mastery)*

1. The Student Will plan an argument, with supporting reasons.
2. TSW distinguish evidence from reasons and from reports of evidence.
3. TSW evaluate evidence for reliability and authority.
4. TSW debate her/his argument and the arguments of others.
5. TSW identify alternatives to her/his argument and decide what to acknowledge.
6. TSW compose framed responses as subordinate arguments.
7. TSW describe warrants in reasoning and arguments.
8. TSW assess whether a warrant is reliable.

Assignments: *(evaluate TSWs)*

E05 Assignment #1: Primary Research

E05 Assignment #2: Research Paper Outline

E05 Assignment #3: Skype Call

WINTER BREAK LATE DEC - EARLY JAN

E06: Plans and Drafts—Writing a Report ~ 6 weeks

The student will begin to plan and draft his/her reports. This unit reviews how to quote, paraphrase, and summarize information. The student will also need to discuss the risk of plagiarism and compare different citation styles.

Note: students may close E07, E08 and E09 concurrently while drafting during E06.

Essential Outcomes: *(must be assessed for mastery)*

1. The Student Will plan his/her report.
2. TSW draft his/her report.
3. TSW quote, paraphrase, and summarize correctly.
4. TSW show how evidence is relevant.
5. TSW discuss the risk of plagiarism.
6. TSW compare different citation styles.

Assignments: *(evaluate TSWs)*

E06 Assignment #1: Quotation and Paraphrasing Methods

E06 Assignment #2: First Draft--Body and Citations

E07: Organization and Argument—Revising a Report ~1 week

The student will revise his/her report for organization and argument, and communicate evidence visually. This unit focuses on organization, introductions, conclusions, key terms, and use of effective tables, charts, and graphs.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will identify the frame of report.
2. TSW revise the argument and organization of report.
3. TSW evaluate and discuss paragraphs.
4. TSW describe different visual and verbal representations.
5. TSW choose and design effective tables, charts, and graphs.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E07 Assignment #1: Second Draft--Tables and Figures

SPRING BREAK MID-MARCH**E08: Introductions and Conclusions—Revising Again ~1 week**

The student will specifically examine the introduction and conclusion of report and discuss how these components of research effect revision of the whole report. This unit also examines the common ground of a report.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will discuss the common structure of introductions.
2. TSW describe the common ground for his/her report.
3. TSW state the problem and a response to the problem.
4. TSW discuss how to pace an introduction.
5. TSW discuss the composition of a report conclusion.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E08 Assignment #1: Third Draft--Intro and Conclusion

E09: Style and Clarity—Finishing a Draft ~ 1 week

The student will identify style and principles of clear writing (“first two principles” are discussed in Craft of Research, pp. 251-255), while composing a final draft of report. This unit also reviews the difference between active and passive writing.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will describe the first two principles of clear writing.
2. TSW distinguish between active and passive writing.
3. TSW identify final necessary revisions for report.
4. TSW evaluate other reports.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E09 Assignment #1: Final Draft-Style and Clarity

E10: Preparation and Presentation—Sharing a Report ~ 4 weeks

The student will present her/his research to an audience. This unit requires a visual and textual component, with performing aspects of presentation.

Essential Outcomes: (must be assessed for mastery)

1. The Student Will produce a visual and textual presentation of research.
2. TSW practice presentation for purposes of self-evaluation.
3. TSW present research to an audience, responding to questions from audience.
4. TSW maintain body posture with eye contact, hand gestures and voice modulation, using visual aids for presentation purposes.
5. TSW evaluate final presentation in discussion with others.

Assignments: (evaluate TSWs)

E10 Assignment #1: Research Paper Presentation

Attendance Policy

5 periods of 'class time' per week (equivalent of 225 minutes) to read materials and interact with instructor as needed plus about 120 minutes for completion of assignments.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

For synchronous (video) communication:

- School appropriate attire and location
- Camera on at all times
- Microphone muted on login

For asynchronous (email, etc.) communication:

- Be polite and respectful in responses to forum posts of other students. Bullying and inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Upload only appropriate material.
- Write formally in email communication with instructor.

Submit work on time and inform the instructor if you need an extension. Extensions will only be granted on occasion for exceptional circumstances.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is not accepted in this or any other QVS course. Prior to taking a QVS course, students must complete the **plagiarism contract** which specifies the QVS policy on plagiarism.

Regardless of whether a student has intentionally or unintentionally borrowed someone else's work without acknowledging it correctly, plagiarism will be dealt with as follows:

First offence: The student must redo the assignment(s) in question. The instructor will make sure the student understands how the plagiarism came about and will give strategies to avoid it going forward. If it appears the plagiarism was intentional, parents and the director will be informed. A “D” may be assigned for the unit in question depending on how the matter is resolved.

Second offence: The QVS director and the parent/guardian will be informed. A “D” will be assigned until the student has redone the assignment(s) in question.

Third offence: The instructor will refer the matter to the QVS director for further action.