Your writing grade in ECO 230 will be based on a series of short writing assignments. These assignments are increasingly economic in nature. For example, the first paper simply gives you a feel for writing a short paper and lets you see how my expectations apply to your efforts. By the time you get to the later papers, your knowledge of economics will have increased and you will be expected to bring more economic analysis to the task. In addition, the assignments will help you to better develop your English writing skills as we focus on writing from an outline, citing and sourcing correctly, and correctness in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The papers will be scored as a +/- letter grade, converted to a ten-point scale. Any “A” (A+, A, or A-) is 10 points, a “B+” is nine, a “B” is eight, and so on. English writing skills and general format items will constitute one or two letter grades on each assignment. The rest will be content. One class period late is a two point discount. Two periods late is a four point discount. You may turn papers in any time up to the final class period and receive a maximum of six points. I will offer five writing assignments, but only three will count in your final grade. You MUST turn in the first assignment (A below), then choose two of the remaining four. You may turn in four assignments, but only three will count in your final writing assignments grade. That is, if you turn in four, I will drop the lowest score in your final grade calculation.

Due dates for each paper are noted on the last page of the class syllabus.

Don’t just answer the questions. Write well developed, cohesive, insightful paragraphs. Standard expectations include:

1. Two to three pages, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font (Times Roman preferred), one-inch margins
2. Reasoned ideas reflected in well developed paragraphs
3. Spelling, grammar, punctuation
4. References, where appropriate, should be cited internally and included as a “Sources” item at the end of the paper.
5. The following words should not appear in formal writing: I, me, my, and derivatives (except for the first paper); you, your, and derivatives.

I have noticed some recurring grammatical mistakes in previous semesters. Please watch for the following mistakes in your papers. You will be discounted for these errors:

1. Sentence fragments -- typically a phrase without a subject or predicate (verb)
2. Run-ons -- two complete sentences run together or with only a comma separating
3. Homonyms, esp. "there and their" (and even "they’re") and “to, too and two”
4. Paragraph construction and organization, especially too many short paragraphs
5. Use of first person (I, me, and derivatives) or second person (you and derivatives), except for personal opinion statements
6. United States, United Nations: Don’t abbreviate; spell it out when used as a noun.
7. Numbers 1-20 and multiples of ten up to ninety are written out. Also, the percent sign should appear only in a table.
8. Too many conjunctions!! Reduce your use of compound sentences (“and”conjunction). Also, don’t make your complex sentences too complex. Two simpler sentences will often work better than one complicated sentence.
A. Write a paper entitled “My Endowment”. What did you have that was “yours” when you arrived on this planet? For example, you had your family, including your parents, grandparents, and extended family. Most of you had a community, state, country in which you were raised. Some of you were raised with spiritual, academic, intellectual or philosophical roots. For some of you there may have been an “all-consuming” item, like boating or fishing or UK basketball. The central issue is this: What is it that you were born with that substantially contributes to who you are today?

The English language focus will be writing from an outline. You must provide an outline with at least three main headings and at least two sub-headings under each main heading. (NOTE: The Introduction and Conclusion do not count as main headings.) Although the headings and sub-headings do not appear in your final writing product, your paper must reflect that outline in “top-down” fashion.

Be careful that you DO NOT write an autobiography. I consider your “endowment” to have ended when you were born, and certainly so by age five or six when you began thinking on your own. The word “remember” (and its derivatives) should not appear in this paper.

NOTE: All the remaining papers must also have an outline included, and must include at least three national or big-city newspaper or magazine references. Although you may include Internet web pages among your sources, NONE OF THE REQUIRED THREE CAN BE AN INTERNET WEB PAGE (that is, you must have at least three national or big-city newspaper or magazine references).

B. Choose (1) or (2)

(1) The United States and the World: Is the United States behaving in a responsible manner with respect to its global neighbors? More specifically, are you sympathetic to or hostile to protesters who criticize the United States’ role in world affairs? Protestors repeatedly malign the United States for its support of Israel, its environmental record, its “unilateralism”, its war and continuing presence in Iraq, and its failure to contribute adequately in its assistance toward fighting disease and starvation in other countries. You do not have to write about every issue for which the United States is “under indictment”. Stay with only one, and defend or contest (challenge) the United States’ position.

(2) Discuss the concept of “globalization”. What is it? What’s all the fuss about? Who is for it? Who is against it? Why all the major protests against globalization? Are you for or against globalization? More specifically, are you sympathetic to or hostile to the globalization protesters? You might try imagining that you are introducing your mother or your high school social studies teacher to the topic.

This paper will be an opinion paper, but your opinion needs to be supported by reasonably reputable external sources. Hence, the writing focus here is sourcing and citations. This assignment will require that you do some library research. Some of the better sources for this sort of paper would include national magazines (such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, or *US News and World Report*) and national / big city newspapers (such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, or *USA Today*). Your paper must include at least three
references, none of which can be an Internet citation. The Internet is a “search engine” and can be used as such. But your sources need to be magazines or newspapers. You must list the sources at the end of the paper in a bibliography or references section, and you must cite those references internally (in the paper). At least one of your internal sources must be a quote from someone reasonably connected to the issue.

I am not concerned as to the correct format for referencing your sources, but I need to be able to find the source if I should choose to do so. The following is a reasonable citation for a magazine or newspaper article:


REMINDER: All the remaining papers must have an outline and at least three references, as noted above.

C. Labor Unions and Labor Issues -- Pick your topic! The material in Chapter 10 (and later in chapter 14) focuses mostly on labor as a factor of production, with a small discussion on labor issues. Chapter 6 online details some pertinent labor issues. For this assignment, you will be writing on labor as a topic, either a particular labor union or minimum wage / “living wage” issues. So, you might want to read some encyclopedia materials on labor unions, or pick a particular labor union and do some encyclopedia, magazine and Internet research. Or for the minimum wage / living wage issue, there is some material in the text (pp. 98-100, 325) and a bunch of stuff in magazines and newspapers. The living wage topic is a really exciting new area. Check it out!

D. Pick an industry that is national, international, or multi-state in scope, and describe the market structure of that industry. How is it organized? Who are the major players -- the leading producers, the leading consumers...? How is market share allocated among the leading producers? Potential industries include: Air travel; Automobile manufacturing (or auto sales to U.S. consumers); Communications: Internet service providers, Cellular service providers; Computer manufacturing; Entertainment: Movie-making, Network television, Cable TV, Satellite TV; Fast food (by type!); Insurance (Auto, Life, etc.); National restaurant chains; Real Estate; Pharmaceuticals; Sports equipment; and many, many others. You may want to check with your instructor before you pick your industry.

E. Pick a multinational company (MNC), and describe that company. Where are they located and headquartered? How are they organized? What do they produce? How large are they in terms of sales / production / number of employees? Who provides their major competition? Your perspective is that of an employee with a company that is considering expansion to another country where this MNC is a dominant power. Your supervisor asks you to provide him/her with preliminary information about that company (later analysis would require a much more in-depth study). You may want to check with your instructor before you pick your company.