Scientific Papers

A writing requirement is a part of this class. To fulfill that requirement the class will write two essays of not more than three pages on two different scientific articles. The articles will be provided to you either as links on the class web page (in .PDF or .DOC format). Talk to me if you have trouble obtaining the article documents.

This exercise will....
- introduce you to mainstream media scientific articles
- give practice in understanding such articles
- provide an exercise in writing

The assignment is to write about the effects of the article phenomena on the human population and/or the effect of human population on the phenomena.

Your paper is NOT a review of the provided article. It is to write about a scientific phenomena or occurrence. Take a portion (topic) out of the provided article that you find interesting. Then write a paper about that small portion. Your report MUST be directed toward a related topic of the assigned article. It is not possible to write about every topic within an assigned article in 3 pages, so choose a sub-portion that you find interesting.

Any facts that you use from the article should be cited within the text like (AUTHOR, YEAR). The citation then MUST be written in full in a bibliography at the end of the paper (see webpage http://www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/wworkshop/MLA/bibliographymla.htm for examples). Facts from outside sources are welcomed (and will bring a higher grade) and should also be cited. This includes facts that you find from the class text. The grade will primarily be based on your understanding of the article that you demonstrate in the essay. Better grades will be the result of greater depth of information, breadth of information, and better argument.

The essay will not be more than three pages. It can be less than one page if you feel it to be sufficient. Length does not determine a good essay; content does. However, I strongly recommend that you do not assume that a one page paper will get the same grade as a three page. The essays should be typed, double spaced, at least 12 font.

On the day the paper is due or the next class period, we as a class will discuss the article for a few minutes after I have collected the papers. I will ask questions of the class. The class can ask questions of me. Ideally the class will be able to provide similar or better answers than I can. Hopefully the input from your fellow classmates will round out your understanding of the article. Note that this discussion will be part of your grade for this assignment.

I will note which are turned in at the time I ask for the assignments. If yours is turned in at another time (implying that you are not there for the discussion) your grade will be lowered by ½.

I will inform the class of the first article assigned at the first class period. The final two articles will be named the due day of the previous article assignment. Please don’t be afraid to ask if you are unsure what the assignment requires. Asking for help after the due date is too late.