Project 2: Literature review

Due: Tuesday, September 28 by class time (send to me as an attachment to an email)
Point value: 50 points

For your second project, you will select an issue, focused area of research, or a research question and survey the recent (within the last 5-7 years) research available on that issue. Your goal is to locate 10-12 sources, specifically scholarly articles in peer reviewed journals, books, and/or book chapters, that represent a range of approaches or perspectives on the issue, area of research, or research question that you select.

After locating your sources, you should read each one carefully and determine where the sources present similar and overlapping perspectives and where they present unique information or contrary points of view. After synthesizing the perspectives of your sources, you will structure a literature review paper that presents your synthesis in 5-7 pages.

The paper must go beyond simply summarizing each article in succession. Instead, it should provide an integrated analysis of the articles’ perspectives on the topic at hand indicating where there are points of overlap and agreement, where there are differences of opinion, and where particular articles address aspects of the issue that are not addressed by the others. Finally, where appropriate, the review should identify any portions of the articles’ arguments or evidence that appear weak or poorly supported.

Invention questions to guide your literature review
1. What aspects of the issue or area of research are addressed by the majority of articles reviewed? What seems to be the dominant perspective?
2. What seems to be the central problem or area of further research related to this issue that is identified by most articles?
3. What research methods and methodologies to scholars use who are addressing this area of research?
4. What are the different perspectives or areas of controversy or even disagreement reflected in the articles that you surveyed?
5. What are some unique approaches, findings, perspectives that are represented in the articles you surveyed?
6. Are there any approaches, arguments, or evidence presented in any articles that appear to be weak or that have received warranted criticism by other scholars?

Student learning outcomes addressed through this assignment
• Develop a successful and effective personal research process
• Advance your ability to understand scholarship and produce scholarly prose appropriate for the area of English studies in which you are interested
• Develop a strategy for entering a new scholarly discourse community and participating in relevant discussions
• Gain a healthy appreciation for and awareness of the vast scholarly landscape surrounding any issue, problem, or text in English studies
Grading criteria

Purpose:
- Does the review summarize the main issues explored in the articles surveyed, focusing on what consensus exists, if any, regarding the research question, issue, or topic being explored?
- Does the review identify the main research methods and methodologies employed by the scholars in the surveyed articles?
- Does the review locate areas of disagreement within the scholarship related to this issue or research question and represent the differences accurately and clearly?
- Does the review identify unique approaches or perspectives in relation to the issue or area of research and demonstrate why they are novel?
- Does the review identify any arguments, assertions, or evidence that is presented in any of the articles that appears weak or has received warranted critique in other articles?
- Does the review provide details and specific examples to support general statements?

Product:
- Does the review reflect that the writer conducted thorough research about the issue or area of research and selected the most significant recent articles, ones that represent the range of scholarly opinion available?
- Does the writer go beyond merely summarizing each article in succession and provide a synthesis of the 10-12 articles, noting where their content overlaps and where it is unique?
- Is the review grammatically correct?
- Is the review proofread and spell-checked?

Process:
- Does the review reflect an attempt to locate the most relevant articles?
- Does the review reflect a process of critical reading and analysis of the content of each article?
- Does the review reflect the writer’s ability to compare content, perspectives, methods/methodologies, and evidence across articles?