English 1B Fall 2015 **Problems/Solutions Research Project** (revised)

**Overview:** In keeping with our course theme of attacking current problems with creativity and looking toward the future with optimism, this assignment will give you a chance to investigate a solution to a *specific problem* and show a *specific audience* how that solution could lead to a better world in the future. The emphasis is on innovation and persuasion.The project will involve several related assignments, detailed below.

**Topics:** Your goal is to pick a topic that piques your interest but that is also fairly new to you. I have posted the list of topics we generated in class, but those are only suggestions.

**First Step: Choose and pitch a topic with a brief topic proposal:** DUE: **T 10/13**

Look over the list of topics and spend some time on the Web finding out more about any that seem intriguing. Spend enough time to find a topic that *genuinely interests you*, as you will have to spend a fair amount of time with it. Then write a *brief* topic proposal (just a few sentences) for me that includes the following:

* Topic and focus: Narrow it down to an issue that can be usefully dealt with in 1200 words (e.g. not just “Solutions to the effects of climate change” but “Kenya’s Greenbelt Movement: implications for other countries.”)
* Thesis question: Phrase your inquiry as a question. (e.g.“Could the methods of Kenya’s Greenbelt Movement achieve similar results in Haiti?”)
* Audience: Decide which particular audience you want to address (besides your instructor), as this will affect everything you do, even which sources you seek.

**Second Step** DUE: **T 11/3:** **Working bibliography** Generate a list of research questions that will help you focus the inquiry. Research your topic and find at least 10 sources for your working bibliography**.** You will annotate one of the sources.

**Third Step**: DUE**: Th 11/19 Research Proposal +** **Annotated bibliography** By this point you can provide a fuller proposal, informed by research and supported by 5 annotated sources—the most relevant you have found so far. There will be a separate handout for details about content and format. Most of the space will be used to summarize and evaluate your sources. (1400 words in all). (peer review outside of class)

**Fourth Step**: DUE**: Th 12/3 Rough draft of Researched Argument** Draft the essay that makes an argument about your topic to your chosen audience. Remember, it isn’t a “data dump” but an *argument*—an effort to persuade a particular audience. It should be **full length** (1400 words) and typed in MLA format to receive credit. You must cite at least 5 sources with at least two opposing viewpoints. Bring 2 copies of the **rough draft** to the peer review workshop and be prepared to give someone else advice on theirs, as well.

**Final Step:** DUE**: Mon 12/14 (final exam day) Final Draft of Researched Argument**

After getting advice on your rough draft and revising, you will submit the **final draft** to Turnitin.com; then print draft, submit hard copy in class (along with the rough draft and peer review sheet.)