***\*\*Adapted from the University of Minnesota\*\****

**List of Essay Types**

**Assignment:** Personal Response Paper

**Description:** Expresses and explains your response to a reading assignment, a provocative quote, or a specific issue; may be very brief (sometimes a page or less) or more in-depth.

**Example:** For an environmental science course, students watch and write about President Obama’s June 15, 2010, speech about the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Assignment:** Summary Paper

**Description:** Restates the main points of a longer passage objectively and in your own words.

**Example:** For a psychology course, students write a one-page summary of an article about a man suffering from short-term memory loss.

**Assignment:** Position Paper

**Description:** States and defends your position on an issue (often a controversial issue).

**Example:** For a medical ethics course, students state and support their position on using stem cell research in medicine.

**Assignment:** Problem-Solution Paper

**Description:** Presents a problem, explains its causes, and proposes and explains a solution.

**Example:** For a business administration course, a student presents a plan for implementing an office recycling program without increasing operating costs.

**Assignment:** Literary Analysis

**Description:** States a thesis about a particular literary work (or works) and develops the thesis with evidence from the work and, sometimes, from additional sources.

**Example:** For a literature course, a student compares two novels by the twentieth-century African American writer Richard Wright.

**Assignment:** Research Review or Survey

**Description:** Sums up available research findings on a particular topic.

**Example:** For a course in media studies, a student reviews the past twenty years of research on whether violence in television and movies is correlated with violent behavior.

**Assignment:** Case Study or Case Analysis

**Description:** Investigates a particular person, group, or event in depth for the purpose of drawing a larger conclusion from the analysis.

**Example:** For an education course, a student writes a case study of a developmentally disabled child whose academic performance improved because of a behavioral-modification program.

**Assignment:** Laboratory Report

**Description:** Presents a laboratory experiment, including the hypothesis, methods of data collection, results, and conclusions.

**Example:** For a psychology course, a group of students presents the results of an experiment in which they explored whether sleep deprivation produced memory deficits in lab rats.

**Assignment:** Research Journal

**Description:** Records a student’s ideas and findings during the course of a long-term research project.

**Example:** For an education course, a student maintains a journal throughout a semester-long research project on effective teaching methods at a local elementary school.

**Assignment:** Research Paper

**Description:** Presents a thesis and supports it with original research and/or other researchers’ findings on the topic; can take several different formats depending on the subject area.

**Example:** A student presented evidence on the effects of plastic pollution on marine ecosystems.