**Major Assignment 3: Composing a researched argument**

We often encounter “researched” or “source-based” articles or opinion pieces in our local newspapers, on local television newscasts, in professional newsletters or journals, on internet blogs, etc. In every case, these texts engage their subjects as the next contribution to an ongoing conversation. Some texts will join the conversation by contesting the previous statements; others will acknowledge and affirm previous statements; others may call for abandoning the conversation altogether while still others will seek to “turn” the conversation toward new considerations or understanding. This is the sort of powerful, persuasive writing to which we next turn our attention – Major Assignment 3: Composing a researched argument.

For this assignment, we ask you to compose a text (a researched (or source-based) argument) in which you engage an issue that you find worthwhile. The text you produce must set in conversation others’ texts about the issue and should seek to influence your audience for the intended purpose (to persuade or inform). Your composition should contain round about 800-1000 words. It is of paramount importance that you compose a piece of significant **critical depth** and **intellectual engagement.**

To create a successful researched text that meets its rhetorical purpose, you’ll need to do some research. Certainly, if you are actively involved in the conversation that you now seek to enter in this assignment, you already have a great deal of information and knowledge. But that existing information and knowledge will need to be complemented by research as you construct your text for an audience. In other words, as you did with your Major Assignment 1: Critical Review, you’ll need to look more deeply into your subject; gather useful information such as quotations, statistics, and evidence from reliable sources, and so on.

As an example, we are providing you with Frank Donoghue’s work in The Chronicle of Higher Education, “Can the humanity survive the 21st century?” (linked in the Resources section of our course web-site – [www.ielte-caw.weebly.com](http://www.ielte-caw.weebly.com)). Read this sample actively to gain insights into “researched” or “source-based” arguments.

Strive as much as possible to create meaningful, “real” texts – one that you could conceivably publish yourself or submit for publication to the venue you have selected.