### **Assignment 2: Background Research & Narrative Planning**

Now that you have selected your case study question and identified key stakeholders, it’s time to research the scientific background of the issue and begin outlining your case study narrative.

**Assignment Summary:** This assignment is designed to help your group build a strong foundation for your case study project. It includes three parts:

1. **Getting Started.** Begin by conducting background research, developing a content map, and identifying key peer-reviewed sources relevant to your topic.
2. **Scientific Background Summary**. Write a clear, concise summary explaining the relevant scientific concepts that underpin your case study issue. This should be grounded in reputable, peer-reviewed literature.
3. **Narrative and Context Planning**. Draft a plan for how you will present your case study, including key context, narrative structure, and how different stakeholder perspectives will be incorporated.

**Course Learning Outcomes Assessed:**

* **Use** peer-reviewed scientific sources to support evidence-based reasoning.
* **Identify** and **distinguish** between positive (descriptive, fact-based) and normative (opinion-based, value-driven) claims.
* **Evaluate** the credibility and relevance of scientific claims related to the universe, evolution, and human health using peer-reviewed evidence.
* **Summarize** well-established scientific facts and theories related to our universe and evolution.
* **Communicate scientific concepts related to** the universe, evolution, and human health **using evidence-based reasoning and accurate data.**
* **Analyze** how values and evidence shape public responses to socioscientific issues.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this assignment is to guide students through the early stages of developing a compelling, evidence-based case study. As a formative assessment, it provides an opportunity for students to build foundational knowledge, receive feedback, and refine their ideas before writing the Case Study Draft (Assignment 3). By conducting focused scientific research, organizing findings, and planning narrative structure, your group will deepen their understanding of the science behind the issue, while also preparing to present it within a real-world context. This assignment emphasizes the use of credible sources, the communication of scientific concepts in accessible language, and the integration of diverse stakeholder perspectives to support informed decision-making in socioscientific issues.

**Part 1: Getting Started**

Now that you’ve selected your case study question in Assignment 1, you will begin conducting independent research to better understand the scientific concepts related to your topic. Using each group member’s initial brainstorming documents and mind maps created during the "[Developing a Research Question](https://webassets.library.tamu.edu/public/files/tutorials/articulate/Developing_a_Research_Question/content/index.html)" library tutorial, generate a list of key terms or concepts based on the material you’ve read. These key terms will serve as the foundation for a content map.

**Part 2: Scientific Background**

Write a summary (300–500 words) of the relevant science related to your topic. This section should:

* Clearly explain the scientific concepts, findings, or debates that are relevant to your question (e.g., the Big Bang Theory, evolution, stem cell research, etc.).
* Focus on **positive claims** that use **evidence-based reasoning**, drawing from **credible scientific sources** (peer-reviewed journals, reputable science communication, etc.).
* Include **at least 3 sources** (one must be peer-reviewed), cited in **MLA format**.
* **Refer to the mind map you created in Part 1** and use it to help guide the organization and selection of scientific concepts you choose to summarize.

**Part 3: Narrative and Context Planning**

Now that you’ve selected your case study question, brainstormed relevant stakeholders, and done some preliminary background research, it’s time to begin planning the **narrative** of your case study. Your goal is to define the **setting**, the **characters**, and the **flow of conversation**. Your story needs to present the problem, include scientific evidence, and build toward a decision. You will be provided several prompts to guide you through this part of Assignment 2.

**Rubric Checklist**

This assignment will be graded based on the following checklist. To receive full credit on the assignment, each group must complete the Assignment 2 Form, which includes:

**Part 1: Getting Started**

o Completed all “Getting Started” prompts/questions in Steps 1 – 3.

o Final list of key terms related to your topic (8 minimum) (Step 4).

o A completed content map that includes all key terms identified above.

**Part 2: Scientific Background Summary**

o Length requirement is met (300–500 words).

o Clearly explains relevant scientific concepts, findings, or debates related to the case study question.

o Focuses on positive (evidence-based) claims.

o Uses at least 3 credible sources (peer-reviewed journals, reputable science communication, etc.), one of which must be a peer-reviewed source.

o MLA citations are included and mostly correct.

o Organization is logical and guided by the mind map.

o Writing is clear and readable (grammar, spelling, sentence structure).

**Part 3: Narrative and Context Planning**

o Final case study question included.

o Made final stakeholder selection (2 minimum).

o Identified where and why the conversation is taking place.

o Clear tone/format for the case study.

o Rough dialogue outline. Within the outline it must be clear:

o Which stakeholder is making the final decision?

o What decision does the stakeholder make?

o Includes one piece of scientific data, graph, or key finding with MLA reference.

o Explains why the data is important and how it will be incorporated into the case study.

**In addition, students need to complete the following individual work:**

o Complete the teamwork evaluation for Group Assignment 2.