Tips for CISC 497 Paper Success

- **DO** write as if this was going to be printed in a textbook.
    - The tone should not have any informalities (slang, idioms, jargon).
    - This includes hyperbolic (overly exaggerated) language.
    - This should not look like an "article" you read off of upworthy, reddit, or HuffPo.
- **DO** present and state a cold, calculated breakdown of your thesis position/stance.
    - This should be free of emotion and based on fact and/or presented evidence.
- **DO** reference scholarly journals.
    - Ideally, they should be international and peer-reviewed.
- **DO** keep your verbosity down – 700 words isn't much (2.5 pages double-spaced)!
    - ROUGH Word Counts: ~50 intro, ~200 thesis/antithesis/synthesis (each), ~50 conclusion
        - Present the strongest case for each thesis and antithesis, then present a reasonable synthesis with evidence
    - Having trouble removing words? If you have a sentence that's "fluffy" (doesn't add to your point, doesn't have support or evidence, or you can say "*cool story, bro*") lose it. Think about *why* you're telling the reader this, and write about that reasoning. What are you *really* trying to convey?
- **DO** follow the APA guidelines strictly.
    - <u>It is immediately apparent if you haven't</u> – that's the point of using it as our standard.

- **DON'T** use strongly assertive language!
    - If the reader agrees with you, then you're cheerleading.
    - If the reader disagrees with you, they do not sway them from their opinion.
- **DON'T** introduce new ideas in the conclusion!
    - The conclusion should be a recap for the reader of the points you made previously. New information is confusing (and could have likely been introduced earlier to strengthen your previous point).
- **DON'T** assume the reader can read your thoughts or make the right inferences!
    - The less the reader has to think about what you mean by your writing the better.
        - Your argument should be logically presented so they can read and follow your writing without confusion or misunderstanding.
        - How do you know if you've done this? Have a peer read it! Even better, someone not in the class. Better still? Someone who isn't in CS or that tech-savvy given these topics. If they followed your argument and can repeat back to you how you argued and defended the views in your paper, that's a good sign.