English 102: Inquiry into the South

If you sit in the back consider moving to the front.
What does a survey of scholarship do?
In addition

It is very important to note that your review should not be simply a description of what others have published in the form of a set of summaries, but should take the form of a critical discussion, showing insight and an awareness of differing arguments, theories and approaches. It should be a synthesis and analysis of the relevant published work, linked at all times to your own purpose and rationale.
How does a survey of scholarship achieve its goal?
Based on your conception of what a SOS is and what it does, what do you think a SOS thesis needs?
Inappropriate thesis

Bear in mind that a thesis statement for a literature review is not argumentative; nor does it focus on the topic itself.

For example, the following thesis would be inappropriate for a literature review because it states a position on the topic and does not discuss research: Parents should limit their children to one hour of television a day to help combat the childhood obesity epidemic.

While this sample thesis statement would work for a researched argument assignment, it will not work for a literature review because it does not focus on the ideas discussed by scholars in the literature. Don’t make that mistake. Remember, a literature review shows your readers that you have read and now understand what scholars already know about a topic so that you can then ask an even better, more informed question, and add to the body of knowledge in that field.
Here’s an example of an effective thesis statement for a literature review: **Current research on childhood obesity and television focuses on the time children spend watching television, the content of the television shows and commercials, and the food children typically consume while watching television. Though previous research has suggested that limiting television was the key to helping children maintain a healthy weight, new research shows that changing the content of children’s television shows and commercials to reflect a healthy lifestyle is also key.**

Notice that the new thesis is focused on what is happening within the research on the topic. Also, the topic has been considerably narrowed (an important step in the writing process!) The second sample thesis demonstrates an understanding of areas of focus as well as interesting developments. You may notice that the second thesis probably took more effort to formulate because the writer had to read quite a bit more of the research before writing the thesis.
Current research on childhood obesity and television focuses on the time children spend watching television, the content of the television shows and commercials, and the food children typically consume while watching television. Though previous research has suggested that limiting television was the key to helping children maintain a healthy weight, new research shows that changing the content of children’s television shows and commercials to reflect a healthy lifestyle is also key.

This thesis introduces the topic, subtopic, and the findings and suggestions of more recent research. This introduction also needs to answer the “so what” question—that is, why a reader should care about your writing and keep reading.
While past research has shown that medicine, surgery, and alternative treatments improve chronic pain, current research (1996-2009) indicates that physical, social, and psychological methods are more noticeably effective factors in improving chronic pain, suggesting that the effectiveness of coping behaviors may lessen the side effects of chronic pain.

Though some researchers would argue that body image dissatisfaction comes from an internal struggle, other research indicates that peers, family and friends, and a multitude of other external factors such as materialistic values and media influence young women in their body dissatisfaction.
So we mainly base our synthesis off of main points and keywords?

- One of the purposes of the synthesis matrix is to help you identify trends in the research you have read. You should be able to look at the matrix and identity issues that current scholarship really seems to be interested in.

- You may need to look at your matrix and think about how the scholars seem to be talking about the same issue, even if they are not using the exact same words or phrases to describe it.

- You also may be able to identify these trends by looking at the subsections of your articles.
I have found many possible subtopics and I don’t want to leave any of them out of my SOS. Can I write over all of them?

Since the sections of your SOS should be fully developed, I would not try to have more than 4. You can always note in the introduction or conclusion about lesser trends in the research.

However, don’t forget about what you’ve found because it could be helpful in your discussion section of the qualitative paper.
Draft your survey of scholarship thesis.
While past research has shown that medicine, surgery, and alternative treatments improve chronic pain, current research (1996-2009) indicates that physical, social, and psychological methods are more noticeably effective factors in improving chronic pain, suggesting that the effectiveness of coping behaviors may lessen the side effects of chronic pain.

Current research regarding physical coping methods focuses on exercise, goal setting, and relaxation as a significant means of managing chronic pain.

Current research also indicates social coping methods are advantageous to patients when trying to continue on with life in a normal way.

Research agrees that, in addition to physical coping methods, psychological methods are beneficial in managing chronic pain.
Draft your topic sentences.
What’s the simplest definition of synthesis.

- Synthesis is the process of making something new from many parts in which the product of the process is greater than the sum of its parts.

- Applied to a SOS, you will synthesize an argument about the state of research on your topic out of your readings from 5+ articles.
Body Paragraphs

- Here, you’ll make a claim about a central aspect of the current state of scholarship on your issue.

- In order to convince your audience of your claim you will examine the articles you’ve read, help readers make connections between them (the synthesis), and often assist readers in understanding why you’ve ordered your discussion in the way that you have and why you’ve grouped articles together.

- Your goal in these paragraphs is to show how these texts relate to each other and how they help you and your readers learn more about the topic.
Integrating sources, chapter 5 *RI* pp.123-131

- In the process of arguing about the current state of research on your topic you will support your claims by referring to the sources you have read via quotes, summary, and paraphrasing.

- As you write your SOS, you will want to make good decisions about how your use sources so that your readers will agree with your assessment about the current state of scholarship.

- Questions about chapter 5?
More answers to your questions …

- Mardi Gras was awesome. Of course!

- You can change sources from your annotated bibliography to your SOS, but I would run those new sources by me first.

- You should contact me via email to request an extension. We’ll work out the new due date together based on the troubles you’re having with the project.
More answers to your questions …

- There is not a limit to the number of sources your SOS can have, but I, personally, would not use more than 7.

- I think some scholars would consider race and southern-ness forms of identity, but for the SOS, you don’t need to worry about making that claim. Instead, give an explanation of what current scholars think about this idea.
Homework

- Revise your thesis and your topic sentences. Draft one complete body paragraph in which you argue about the significance of one trend in the state of research for your topic. Be ready to share these with the class on Monday.

- Finish and submit your synthesis matrix to Bb by February 15th, 3:34:59pm.