Writing Assignment: An Overview

This semester, you'll have two writing assignments which will account for 20% of your course grade. Specifically, you'll find a popular news article about some aspect of robotics which interests you. (The next page contains a list of possible sources for these articles.) You'll then go beyond the popular news media and investigate the technology or original research behind the article. You'll learn how to conduct scholarly research that goes beyond "just Googling" in order to understand different topics in robotics. After you study both the popular news article as well as scholarly research, you'll write up a summary of your findings and new understanding of the topic to share with your classmates in a public venue: namely, a class blog.

A few rules:

- The news article must be relatively recent. By "recent", I mean within the past 3-4 years.
- Your writing must be at least 750 words. This is probably about 2-3 pages double spaced.
- Your writing must be posted on the class blog for your classmates to read and comment about.
- Your writing must contain proper citations. We'll talk about this in class and go over how to do it, if you don't already know. It's very important to do this properly. Otherwise, you're committing plagiarism which is a violation of the Emory Honor Code.
- Your writing should be scholarly in tone and free from mistakes such as punctuation, grammar, and spelling errors.

You'll research and investigate two different articles over the course of the semester. One will be due by November 3rd. The other will be due by December 1st. You can complete these early if you wish.

Blogs revolve around reader interaction, so you'll also be expected to interact with other students in class in relation to their chosen articles and writings. In addition to writing two articles, you're expected to comment on at least 6 other students writing over the semester. By "comment," I mean insightful, articulate, relevant comments. It is not acceptable to simply write "Great summary," or other inane comments. If a student asks you a question when commenting on your writing, you're expected to answer to the best of your ability.

Both your writing about the articles/research and your comments/responses on the blog will factor in to your grade for this portion of the course.
Slashdot:
www.slashdot.org
(search robots or robotics)

Popular Science
www.popsci.com
In particular, any posts tagged with robots:
http://www.popsci.com/category/tags/robots

Any of your major news sources such as:
CNN: www.cnn.com
NBC: www.msnbc.com
ABC: www.abcnews.com
NY Times: www.nytimes.com
Atlanta Journal-Constitution (for local interest): www.ajc.com
etc.