1. To begin this assignment, read the attached article (“Why the Brain Prefers Paper” by Ferris Jabr; *Scientific American*; Volume 309, Issue 5; November 2013; pages 48-53) to familiarize yourself with the comparative advantages of paper books and electronic books.

2. Write a paper (1000-1200 words in length) describing your own opinions regarding the pros and cons of using e-books. Your paper must discuss the following topics:

   - Specify the types of books that you believe lend themselves to an electronic format and the types that are better suited for traditional paper books. Consider such issues as the prolonged viewing of the pages, the inclusion of illustrations, the need for an index or table of contents, the possible inclusion of multimedia features (e.g., audio, video), and the availability of an annotation capability.
   - University textbook publishers claim that they will stop printing paper textbooks in the near future. Specify what you consider the advantages and disadvantages of converting all textbook usage in school to an electronic format. Include financial issues (e.g., the likely end of textbook rental services and used textbook purchasing, the required purchase of e-readers by all students), logistical issues (e.g., more dynamic updates of textbook contents due to the availability of downloadable content, less burdensome backpack loads), and technical issues (e.g., incompatible e-reader formats, short battery charges).
   - Describe your own personal experience with e-books, including your preferences regarding their use. Address the reservations about them that are expressed in the attached article, suggesting changes that might be made to the technology in order to effectively resolve those problems.

3. Your entire paper must be between 1000 and 1200 words in length, making approximately four double-spaced pages (assuming one-inch margins and a 12-point font). The paper must be word-processed on Microsoft Word and double-spaced.

**Remember:**

- This paper must be entirely in your own words with no direct quotes from any sources.
- In any part of your paper where you are presenting facts (such as the technical details of a particular e-reader), you should avoid the use of the first-person (i.e., “me”, “myself”, “I”, “we”). In any part of your paper where you are presenting your opinions about the issues, you should use the first-person.
- Do not use section headers in this paper. Instead, plan your paper’s presentation so that your prose flows easily from topic to topic. For instance, if you decide to move from your discussion of which types of books are ill suited to an electronic format to a discussion of the replacement of traditional paper textbooks with electronic textbooks, then a smooth transition might involve discussing a specific aspect of general electronic books that does not currently accommodate modern textbook usage. This type of “bridge” topic can facilitate such transitions.
- Your paper will be graded on three criteria of roughly equal weight:
  - Thoroughness (detailed analysis of the types of books that are and are not suited to an electronic format, specific details regarding the application of electronic formats to academic textbooks, creative suggestions of ways to overcome the obstacles to e-book acceptance)
  - Coherence (clearly presented, non-repetitive prose, with good organization and smooth transitions)
  - Professionalism (correct grammar and spelling, with thorough proofreading)
- The most common proofreading errors are:
  - The use of contractions (inappropriate in a formal paper like this).
  - Changing verb tenses in mid-paragraph. (“They do this whenever they had that.”)
  - Using a plural pronoun with a singular noun. (“The user and their computer…”)
  - Failure to double-space the paper.
  - Missing commas.
  - Common typos (“it’s” instead of “its”, “internet” instead of “Internet”, “all the…” instead of “all of the…”).

The due date for this assignment is Tuesday, September 9, 2014, at 10:30 AM. Late papers will not be accepted.

**A complete early draft of your paper may be submitted on your drop-box until Thursday, August 28, 2014, at 10:30 AM. All complete early drafts will be evaluated and returned to students by Tuesday, September 2, 2014, a full week before the final draft is due.**

**Dropbox Instructions:**

Go to http://classes.cs.siue.edu/ and log in. Then follow the links to the IS 376 Topical Paper 1 drop-box with your name on it, and upload a soft copy of your Word document there. Make sure that your upload is successful.

To avoid any chance of being late with the assignment, be sure to log on as soon as possible to ensure that your drop-box has been set up. Remember, this assignment will only be accepted as a soft copy on your drop-box; no e-mail attachments or hard copies will be accepted.

If you have any problems prior to Tuesday, September 9, 2014, please contact Professor White (wwwhite@siue.edu, 618-650-3483) for assistance. If you wait until Tuesday, September 9, 2014, you’re on your own!