So what are the scholarly disciplines?

The **social sciences** study human behavior & relationships, the way people act, react, and interact. They include:

- sociology
- psychology
- education
- business
- economics
- history
- political science

The **humanities** study the way humans express themselves. They include:

- art
- architecture
- music
- dance
- religion
- philosophy
- film
- language/literature

The **natural & applied sciences** study how humans understand the natural world and how things work. They include:

- biology
- climatology
- ecology
- engineering
- geology
- agriculture
- medicine/health
What region are we exploring?

Your paper topic should be based in this region of the United States or have some significant connection to it.

Image source: http://stemmidwest.org
Explore the suggested topics on the following slides as much or as little as you want to find a topic for your paper.

Some topics will be linked to online encyclopedia articles about the topic.

Online library resources will require you to log in using your username and password if you are off-campus.
Art
- Study of visual expression including paintings, sculpture, photography, etc.

Architecture
- Art of designing structures

Music
- Vocal & instrumental music, including composers, musicals

- Grant Wood
- American Gothic
- Great Plains Architecture
- Midwestern Vernacular Architecture
- Frank Lloyd Wright
- Simon Estes
- Meredith Willson ("Music Man")
Literature

- Study of novels, poetry, essays, or plays. You can also look at authors or movements.

- Laura Ingalls Wilder
  - Native American portrayals

- Novel *Shoeless Joe* (basis for movie *Field of Dreams* )

- Robert James Waller
  - *Bridges of Madison County*

- True Iowa crime:
  - Susan Keating Glaspell’s short story “A Jury of her Peers” & play “Trifles”

- *Midnight Assassin* by Patricia Bryan & Tom Wolf
Business

- the study of how humans deal with money and commerce

Economics

- the study of how humans produce, distribute and consume products

- Gaming and casinos
- Mississippi River transportation
- Economics of family farming vs. corporate farms
- River towns and economics
- Economic impact of Wal-Mart, especially in small towns
- Economic impact/recovery from floods:
  - 1993 (Des Moines)
  - 2008 floods (Cedar Rapids, University of Iowa)
Education

- the study of how people learn or are taught by others

- School vouchers in Milwaukee
- Rural schools
- Land grant universities
- Urban education (Chicago, Milwaukee)
  - Restructuring/busing
  - Charter schools
  - Impact of No Child Left Behind
- Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA)
Ecology
- the study of how people interact with the natural environment

Biology
- the study of living organisms

- Impact of agriculture on groundwater
- Impact of dredging on river ecosystems
- Non-native species:
  - Zebra mussels
  - Asian carp
- Other species:
  - Fish flies (aka Mayflies)
  - Bald eagle, once endangered
- City sustainability efforts
  - Norman Borlaug
  - George Washington Carver
History

- the study of humanity’s past
- Transcontinental railroad building
- Louisiana Purchase
- Race Riots of the early 20th Century (Red Summer of 1919) Chicago
- Lewis and Clark Expedition
- Great Chicago Fire
- Native American burial mounds
- First lady Mamie Doud Eisenhower
Political Science

- the study of how humans govern themselves

- Machine politics/ boss system
- History of labor unions
- Red Scare and McCarthyism
- Iowa caucus system
  - Importance in primaries
- Political riots and demonstrations
  - Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968
- Vice President Henry Wallace
- President Herbert Hoover
Psychology

- the study of the mind and how we think

- Seasonal Affective Disorder

- Psychology of immigrants and acculturation/assimilation

- Coping with disaster (floods)
  - Post traumatic stress disorder

- Rural social isolation

- Propaganda films of the Cold War
  - Red (communism) scare
Sociology
  ◦ the study of how humans interact in society
  ◦ Welfare/public assistance reform in WI
  ◦ Seasonal agricultural workers
    - Postville raid
  ◦ Amish communities
  ◦ Methamphetamine traffic and abuse
  ◦ Population shift from rural to urban areas
  ◦ Urban renewal/Gentrification
  ◦ Race Riots
  ◦ Gangs (Chicago)
  ◦ Mississippian culture
  ◦ Sioux (Lakota/Dakota)
  ◦ Importance of radio to rural areas