

US History Term 1 Paper

Description

For this particular assignment, students will be writing on a topic that is broad enough socially, economically, and/or politically that it can lend itself to various interpretations by different historical authors. The topic should relate to one of our pre-discussed themes (see below) and in an era we are studying in the first semester. As such, the focus of your paper should be on history between the years 1865 and 1929. Such topics could be on the Age of Industry, the Progressive era, American imperialism, the US in World War I, the 1920s, etc.

The paper will be completed in phases, so that by the time January comes around each student will have a well-developed research paper.

Themes of US History

- American Diversity
- American Identity
- Culture
- Demographic Changes
- Economic Transformations
- Environment
- Globalization
- Legacies of Slavery in North America
- Politics & Citizenship
- Reform
- Religion
- War & Diplomacy

Phase 1: Content

- Topic Selection

- **Students must choose a topic no later than Friday, September 12th.**
 - Worth **two** HW grades.
 - Must be submitted in the proper format and should include the topic, and why you chose that topic.
 - Should be about 1 paragraph long.

- Historical Content

- This is the narrative portion of your essay. It should be a general explanation of your topic.
- Must be submitted in the proper format (an actual essay)
- Should be between 800-1000 words
- **Draft due on Friday, October 10th.**
- This is worth 1 Quiz/Essay Grade

- Comparative Analysis

- This is usually what makes some essays stand out from the rest of the pack. In addition to your historical content, I would like for you to use some comparative history.
- Option 1: Compare on a global scale
 - Example: If you are writing about Southern identity in the colonial era, your comparative portion could be Spanish settler identity in Spanish America (the same era).
- Option 2: Compare different eras.
 - Example: If you are writing about Southern identity in the colonial era, your comparative portion could be Southern identity in the antebellum period (same geographic area)
- There are more options, but this allows you to be more creative.
- Should be between 250-500 words
- **Comparative topic is due no later than Monday, October 20th**
 - This is worth **two** homework grades.
- **Draft due on Monday, November 3rd**
 - This is worth 1 Quiz/Essay Grade

Phase 2: Historiography

- Any academic of note will always research the historiography of a given topic. The research will involve the identification of 3-4 historians in order to compare their different insights and interpretations on a given topic of your choice. By comparing the differences and similarities from three distinct perspectives, students will be involved in a level of analysis that goes beyond plain narrative.
- Should be between 800-1000 words
- **Draft due on Tuesday, December 5th**
 - o This is worth 1 Quiz/Essay Grade

Phase 3: Final Draft

- This is where everything you have worked on comes together.
- The final result should be between 2000-3500 words.
- **Draft due on Tuesday, December 9th**
 - o This will be returned to you during your Midterm Exam
 - o This is worth 2 Quiz/Essay grades
- **Final Paper due on Tuesday, January 13th**
 - o This is worth 1 Test/Project Grade

Presentations

During the two weeks after the Winter Break the students will present their papers to the class. As with the essay, grades will be assigned based on the rubric posted on the class web page. Sign-up sheets for presentation dates will be passed around as the date approaches. Each presentation is worth 2 Quiz/Essay Grades