Assignment Description:
Students will compose a research paper in this course, providing historical analysis of events, ideas, or themes relevant to the themes of this course. You will choose the topic in consultation with me.
This is not a paper based on an essay prompt. Instead, you need to identify a topic that interests you and devote time to an in-depth understanding of it, then craft an essay that makes an original interpretation to explain, interpret, or analyze past events.

The Research Paper makes up 40% of your final grade in this course and will be divided into four parts, due throughout the term:

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Getting Started:
1. Select a general topic or time period that interests you.
2. Find some primary sources and start reading them.
3. Find a small number of secondary sources to stimulate your thinking about the subject.
4. Identify a “problem” question (often posed as “why,” “how,” or “to what extent”). Choose something for which you do not yet have an answer, but for which you believe your primary sources will help you find an answer.

Prospectus:
Students will submit a one-page prospectus stating their selected topic and identifying at least two potential primary sources to begin their research. The prospectus should include your problem question that you intend to answer in the course of your paper.

Bibliography:
Students must compile at least twenty sources to be cited in their papers, five of which must be primary sources. All secondary sources must come from monographs or peer-reviewed journal articles. Blogs, Wikipedia articles, and the link are not acceptable bibliographical sources for the purposes of this paper.
Bibliographies must be formatted using Chicago Manual of Style.

Paper Drafts:
The main subject, and your own interpretive claim about past events, ought to be laid out plainly in your introduction. That claim is called a thesis. This thesis is your argument, and you will devote the paper to using evidence to persuade your reader that your argument is strong. To be effective,
the paper should be organized according to three key points and/or themes that guide the course of your argument. Include a conclusion that reiterates your thesis and recapitulates the main themes.

1. **Introduction**: The introductory section should be approximately three paragraphs and should accomplish these three tasks:
   a. Paragraph 1 should include a “hook,” i.e. a story or anecdote from the past that establishes the main issue, question, or tension to be explored in the paper. Then explicitly state the issue/question/tension for the reader. Good research questions often ask “why” or “how.”
   b. Paragraph 2 should include a discussion of how the topic has been approached already, by other scholars (secondary sources) Include only the ones that are most pertinent to your paper’s question.
   c. Paragraph 3 should make your own interpretive claim. This is your thesis. It is what you intend to prove. After stating your thesis, mention how your primary source(s) will help you to demonstrate it, and identify three key themes you intend to develop in the paper in support of the thesis.

2. **Headings and Body Paragraphs**: Each theme should have a heading. Spend several paragraphs within each theme, using specific historical evidence to tell your story and to make your points. Ensure that each topic paragraph makes a claim, and that each paragraph includes historical evidence from either primary or secondary sources.

3. **Conclusion**: Your conclusion should be no more than one paragraph. It serves to remind the reader what the main claim of the paper has been, and what the key themes have been. You can also provide “food for thought” in the conclusion, to provoke the reader to think of any consequences of your story worth thinking about.

4. **Length**: 4500-5000 words, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins

5. **Citations**: Use footnotes when citing sources. NO PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS! Footnotes, like bibliographies, should be formatted using the [Chicago Manual of Style](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/). Avoid extremely long quotations. Whether quoting or paraphrasing, ALWAYS cite your sources. Expect heavy penalties for not citing sources.

**Editing and Review:**

I will not edit your papers for you. If you feel that your paper would benefit from further review, please access one of the following resources:

1. Graduate Writing Center: Waldo Hall, 102
2. Online Writing Suite: [http://writingcenter.oregonstate.edu/online-writing-lab](http://writingcenter.oregonstate.edu/online-writing-lab)