

AAFS / AHIS 287: Africa in Modern World

Critical Response Paper: Guidelines

The critical response paper will consist of a 5-6 page critical response to the content of video #2: 'Africa: States of Independence - The Scramble for Africa' listed on the syllabus and available on Blackboard. Students are expected to provide critical summaries of the video and link them with specific examples from the class texts. The response should highlight the main issues discussed in the video.

Guidelines:

1. What is the main focus of the specific videos (What is the narrator/producer seeking to discuss)?
2. Identify the main issues highlighted in the videos and discuss them in specific paragraphs (how are the issues presented?)
3. Explain how the discussed issues are relevant or irrelevant to the main focus of the narrator.
4. Explain whether the narrator has been successful in presenting his or her ideas. Did they make any unsubstantiated claims? Where any points misrepresented or omitted?
5. Students must link the videos to readings from the assigned texts (A minimum of **SIX** examples are required). What issues discussed in the video are similar to points made in the readings you have read so far? Cite specific examples from specific assigned readings where applicable. Connecting the video to assigned class readings is a requirement.

Style: Do not editorialize!

6. Avoid personal references (example, I feel..., I think ..., In my opinion...)
Instead: It is apparent from the narrator's choice of words that he/she... etc
7. Use the present tense in the essay: ex. Davidson highlights, the narrator discusses ... etc
8. Paraphrase specific quotes from the videos to illustrate your points. But, be specific about the issues you are discussing.
9. Underline the title of books/texts (except when written in *italics*)

Format: Your essay must follow the following format

- a. **Introduction:** A paragraph introducing the main focus of the essay and the main issues highlighted in the videos
- b. **Body:** The body of your essay comprises of a point-by-point discussion of the themes/issues identified in the videos. The points are separated by paragraphs. Hence, the body of students' reflections must comprise of paragraphs with each paragraph making a separate but specific point.

- c. **Conclusion:** The critical response must have a closing paragraph that sums up all that has been discussed in the body of the essay.
- d. **Citations:** In-text citation of class readings or other texts used in the essay are very important (required). Students may use any citation style. See examples below:

APA (American Psychology Association):

Example – (Khapoya, 2013, p.14)

MLA (Modern Languages Association):

Example – (Khapoya, 14), or placing the exact page number after the quote: (14)

Chicago:

Example 1 – (Davidson, 1994, 14) or Davidson (1994, 14)

Example 2 – (Abarry & Asante, 1996, 14) or Abarry & Asante (1996, 14)

- e. **Works Cited:** The Critical Response Paper must have a works cited page listing the full information of cited works (author, title, publisher, year etc.)
- f. **Cover Page:** All Critical Papers must have a cover page which must have the specifics of the assignment (name of student, class information, assignment, name of instructor etc.)

Miscellaneous:

1. **Spelling:** Students must make sure they spell-check their papers before turning them in.
2. **Grammar:** Students must use the correct grammar in writing their critical responses.
3. The critical response paper must be typed in MICROSOFT WORD format, using a 12 point font. The writing **MUST** also be **double-spaced**.
4. All Critical Papers must be submitted electronically via "PAPERS" on blackboard no later than 10:00PM on its due date. Papers submitted via email will not be accepted. **A hard copy of the paper is not required.**
5. Students who complete their papers ahead of time may submit them any time before or by the due date, but not after. Late papers will not be accepted (refer to class syllabus for complete policy on late papers).
6. Students who need assistance with their writing skills should contact the University at Albany Writing Center located in Humanities, Room 140 (518) 442-4061.