



## Subject: Written Assignments

Throughout the courses at APUS, you will undoubtedly write a multitude of short papers. Other types of assignments that you might be required to write / produce are presentations, book reviews, film reviews, and research papers. This course does not require a research paper so I will not discuss it, but I will quickly discuss each of the other types of assignments as well as the citation format you will use in your history classes.

## Citations

History and military history students should become familiar with the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) format for citations and the bibliography. The CMS is the standard format for historians. As such, it is our responsibility to ensure that you use this format so that you become comfortable with it during your undergraduate years. Please be familiar with it when you must cite material in your paper. Non-history majors can use APA or MLA as the citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University. A common rule is that if you use any of the information from your sources word-for-word, you must use quotation marks and you must cite the source. If you read the information and write it in your own words and it is not common knowledge, then you must cite the source because you are paraphrasing someone's information. Failure to cite properly is plagiarism and is taken seriously by the university. You need to include citations in your forums and written assignments as needed. Do not just list the URL or "CNN" but try to follow the standard as dictated by the format you use. You may not use Wikipedia for your citations since it is not a reliable source of information. Do not use encyclopedias either because they condense information.

An important note is that we do not expect perfection in listing your sources, but we do expect you to make a reasonable attempt. If you have questions on the CMS, it is available in the APUS library in the Tutorial & Student Study Center. Unless otherwise informed by your instructor, you will use endnotes in your written assignments. An endnote is a complete bibliographical citation indicated by a number in the text and listed at the end of the paper. Your instructor can also provide guidance if you have any questions on citations.

## Assignment Format

- ❖ Font: Times New Roman, 12 point
- ❖ Spacing: Double-spaced, with no additional spaces between lines or paragraphs
- ❖ Margins: 1" on every side (top, bottom, left and right)
- ❖ Page Numbers: Centered at the bottom of every page except the cover page
- ❖ Chicago Manual of Style Format: You need to include a title page, rather than a heading on the first page. You also need to use endnotes and provide a proper bibliography.
- ❖ Save your paper with an easy to recognize naming convention, such as JonesHIST101ShortPaper1

## National Archives Assignment:

For this assignment, you need to visit the National Archives Site. Historians typically use two types of materials, secondary source, and primary source documents. Secondary sources are typically books and articles written on a particular historical event, well after the fact. Primary source documents are usually generated by first-hand participants. Good historians rely heavily on original materials created at the time of the event. For this reason, historians spend a good deal of time at the archives. There are many types of archives, but by far, the largest in the United States, is the National Archives in Washington, D.C.



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The National Archives contains more than 10 billion documents, and they have collected thousands of those in the National Archives DOCSTeach site. After you have opened the above link, click on “Menu” on the upper left, and then “Documents.” In the “Keyword” box type in the subject you wish to research. Please remember that your topic should fall within the period of history covered by this course. Typical keywords might be something like Jefferson, American Revolution, Madison, Civil War, Lincoln or any number of topics.

After your images have appeared, you need to select five (5) of them that are relevant to your topic. In the upper right hand corner, just above your image, there is an icon to save that image. You will also note that below each image there is some information about that document as well as full citation.

There are two ways that you can complete this assignment. Once you have collected your documents, you can create a PowerPoint, or use them as evidence for writing a 3-5 page essay. Naturally, you will need some other information, and you can gather that through the internet, or other books and articles. As a precaution, avoid using textbooks.

You are allowed to choose your own topic as long as it pertains to the subject of this course. If you have any questions on the subject matter, please contact your professor. This is your opportunity to look a little deeper at a subject that interests you. All information must be cited. You are welcome to use APA, or MLA, but if you are a history major, you are strongly encouraged to use the Chicago Style format. If you are writing a paper, it must be double-spaced (Times New Roman, font size 12), and include a cover page with your name, course number and course title, instructor’s name, and date.

Once completed, you should post a copy of your project in the Assignments’ section, as well as the forum reserved for that. The Project is due on Sunday by 11:55 PM, ET. You are also responsible for responding to the submissions of three of your classmates by the following Sunday at 11:55 PM, ET.

## Short Paper

The writing of a short paper allows you to demonstrate your research skills to your instructor and to receive feedback that will benefit you when you write other papers. With this assignment, you will learn how to conduct proper and adequate research that will prepare you for writing the research papers in upper level classes. The writing of a short paper may sound relatively easy, but it actually requires skills that only through writing multiple short papers can a person begin to master. This primary skill is the ability to construct a concise and well-written paper that shows your comprehension of the topic through analysis of several sources. Unless otherwise informed by your instructor, a short paper is at least three full pages of text, and you must consult a minimum of two academically credible sources. The topic of the written assignments must fall within the scope of the course and your instructor may provide you with a list of preferred topics.

The initial step in writing the paper is choosing the topic, the second is choosing a bibliography (your sources), and the third step is creating an outline. The next steps include gathering information from your sources to assist you in writing the paper, keeping notes of your sources, and writing a rough draft. As you write the rough draft, it is strongly



recommended that you keep accurate notes of where you found each aspect of information for your bibliography and to assist you with your citations. After you complete your rough draft, you need to read it again and revise the paper into your final draft. Once you have the final draft complete, proofread the paper and submit it to your instructor.

The short paper must include a cover page, footnotes, and a bibliography at the end. While composing your paper, use proper English. Do not use abbreviations, contractions, passive voice, or first/second person (I, me, you, we, our, us). Before submitting your paper, check your grammar and use spell check. Remember, the way you talk is not the way you write a paper. To assist your instructor, save your paper with an easy to recognize naming convention, such as JonesHIST101ShortPaper.

## **Presentation**

In some cases, your instructor may allow you to create a presentation instead of a short paper. A presentation is generally a visual representation of a short paper that instead of having paragraphs has bullet points or short paragraphs on each slide. The presentation will have to include a cover page, a bibliography, and talking notes for each slide. Your instructor can provide you with more specifics if a presentation is allowed in lieu of a second short paper. In all cases, you will not have to create a presentation if you do not already have a working knowledge of the proper programs used in creating a presentation; your instructor will allow you to write a second short paper instead.

## **Reviews**

A review is not the same as a report. The process of reviewing articles, books, films, Internet sites, etc. is not easy since it requires you to report on the content and evaluate the work. When you evaluate the work, you need to consider items such as organization, logic, evidence, style, and conclusion. Your instructor may ask you to evaluate the work and offer your opinion on it. If you have a review in your class, your instructor will provide specific guidance and if you are unsure of how to write a review and want to ensure that you are actually writing a review and not a report (which is what most people did in high school), contact your instructor. Unless otherwise directed by your instructor, a review is at least three full pages of text and you must include a minimum of two academically credible sources.

## **Critical Thinking Assignment for the Short Paper, Presentation, or Review**

When your instructor grades your written assignment, the instructor will ask you at least three content related questions and place them within the body of the paper. Two special forums exist in the class where you will post the question and the answer to one of the questions asked by your instructor for that particular assignment. The first written paper is due during Week Three. Your instructor will grade your work during Week Four and include the three questions in the returned graded work. During Week Five, you will answer the question in a special forum by Friday night and read the questions and answers of your classmates and you may comment on their postings as well. The second written assignment is due during Week Six. Your instructor will grade it during Week Seven, and you will answer one of the questions during Week Eight.



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## Cover Page

The cover page consists of the title, your name, student ID number, course number, instructor's name, and date. You need to center this information both horizontally and vertically. An example is:

Tecumseh

By John Doe (96525) American  
Public University System September  
1, 2011  
HIST101: American History to 1877  
Professor Smith

## Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

Work posted or submitted after the assignment due date will be reduced by 10% of the potential total score possible for each day late up to a total of five days, including forum posts/replies, quizzes, and assignments. Beginning on the sixth day late through the end of the course, late work, including forum posts/replies, quizzes, and assignments, will be accepted with a grade reduction of 50% of the potential total score earned.

## Conclusion

In some classes, you may have to submit a book review, a battle analysis, a film analysis, and other written assignments. In all cases, if you have questions, contact your instructor for guidance once you have a question, do not wait until the day before the due date. Remember, instructors are here to help you in your learning of the subject and will do all that they can, but you shoulder the responsibility of doing the work and asking questions as they arise.



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