

History 215 Writing Assignment.

You are required to write an argumentative essay that answers one of the following questions

1. While talking to a friend about your classes at WCC you divulge (admit?) that you are taking Dr. Fitzpatrick's class on the history of United States foreign policy. In the course of the conversation your friend states that she never understood why the Lyndon Johnson administration vastly expanded the American commitment to South Vietnam in 1965 and 1966. How would you answer her question?

Start Points: George Herring, *America's Longest War*
Larry Berman, *Planning a Tragedy*

2. Much has been written about United States diplomacy with Japan in the years prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Between 1939 and 1941 the United States took numerous diplomatic and military steps toward Japan. Why did the United States pursue its rather aggressive course?

Start Points: Waldo Heinrichs, *Threshold of War*
Robert Dallek, *Franklin Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*

3. John Fitzgerald Kennedy is a source of much controversy today among historians. In the realm of foreign policy he is seen by some as the "coldest cold warrior," a man who heightened tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union to nearly catastrophic proportions. On the other hand, he often is credited with the origins of a policy of détente toward the Soviet Union. What is your evaluation of Kennedy's prosecution of the Cold War?

Start Points: Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy*
James N. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*

4. Despite the objections of Secretary of State George C. Marshall, President Harry Truman extended formal recognition to the nation of Israel in May 1948. It was a very controversial decision at the time, and its consequences still are being felt. Why did President Truman do it?

Start Points: Michael J. Cohen, *Truman and Israel*
Bruce J. Evenson, *Truman, Palestine, and the Press*
Any **GOOD** biography of Harry Truman

5. Determine your own topic. If you decide to take this option, the topic must be submitted to me, in the form of a question, at the end of class next week, October 7

Additional Instructions

LENGTH. The final paper should be between 1500 and 2000 words in length and must be typewritten.

SOURCES AND CITING THEM. At a minimum, the paper should employ three books as sources of information. These books must be secondary sources (i.e., written by historians), *not* primary sources (i.e., written by participants). Assigned books for this course do not count against the requirement.

For first citation:

¹Chester Wilmot, Struggle for Europe (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1952), 103-107.

For subsequent citations:

¹⁵Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, 376.

For other citation formats I urge you to refer to *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian (available at numerous bookstores or on-line). You might consider purchasing it as it will prove invaluable to during your college career.

PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas in your writing without giving proper credit to the author. It is plagiarism to copy text from a book, a web site, a journal or newspaper article, or from a friend's paper (to name just a few examples) without giving proper credit. It is also plagiarism to submit a paper that you did not write as your own work.

Any submission that I determine contains plagiarized material will receive a "zero" and the case will be referred to the college for further action.

FORMAT. The paper should be double-spaced and, if you use a computer, the font size should be set at "12". These measures will allow me to make legible comments on the text of the paper. Please place on the paper a cover sheet with your name and the paper's title. Finally, insure that every page is numbered and has your name on it.

BOOKS. With each question I have provided the title of a book that is a "start point", a book to which you can turn to start your research. You are in no way obligated to look at or to use that book. It is simply my attempt to give you a "push" in the right direction. Also, at the end of each chapter in the textbook there is a section entitled "Further Reading". These books, too, can be a start point. Indeed, you need go no farther than to find the books listed in the text.

INTERMEDIATE REQUIREMENT. Two weeks from tonight (October 14) you are to submit the topic you have chosen as well as a list of books (bibliography) that you intend to use in your research. I will return the bibliography the following week. Though this requirement is ungraded, I will not accept a finished paper from you unless I have approved your bibliography. Also, you **MUST** submit that approved bibliography, with my initials and comments, with your paper.

DUE DATE. The paper is due at the beginning of class on December 2. Papers submitted afterwards will receive a reduction of one letter grade. Papers submitted after the beginning of class December 9 will receive a "zero".