

Research Paper Guidelines, Spring 2009
History 4513

1. The paper should be from 2,000 to 2,500 words (roughly 10-12 pages) printed neatly, double-spaced, on a computer printer, using 10-12 point font, with one inch margins. The instructor will penalize papers which are significantly (over 10%) longer or significantly (over 10%) shorter than suggested length guidelines.
2. The paper must follow all pertinent rules of grammar and style, including the writing guidelines provided on the back of this separate handout. Points will be deducted for grammatical and stylistic errors.
3. All papers will involve historical analysis of a key American religious leader (for the period after 1950), focusing on his life, work, and most important writings. Selection must be approved by the instructor.
4. The paper should briefly discuss the individual's life from beginning to end (or to the present if still alive), including discussion of his private life, most significant works, and what he sought to achieve through his work. In conclusion, the paper will discuss the importance of the leader in American religious history, place him in proper social and historical perspective, and discuss, using specific examples, whether, in his work, he achieved his objectives.
5. Students must use adequate research and documentation for the paper. **At minimum** (i.e. for a "C"), this research must cite and make use of four works (books, speeches, articles, etc.) by the author in question (including the main book for discussion) and four published biographical articles or books about the author and his work (or closely related subjects). Additional material, especially primary material like letters or memoirs by the author, will significantly boost the historical quality of the research.
6. You may only use internet sources in which reputable articles from scholarly journals or books are printed in their entirety and which may be readily accessed by the instructor, using information from your footnotes.
7. Documentation must follow stylistic conventions from the Turabian manual of style, as available on the instructor's web page. **Citations must be in footnotes, not endnotes, and students must avoid placing citations parenthetically in the body of the paper. APA and MLA style citations are not acceptable.**
8. Papers should include **a title page but not a bibliography**. Students should include the title of the paper, their name, the date, and relevant class information, centered neatly on the title page.
9. Students should locate page numbers at the right hand top corner of each page, *except the first page whose page number should be in the center at the bottom of the page.*
10. The due date for the term paper is listed in the class syllabus. No late papers will be accepted.
11. Students shall make at least two hard copies of their paper and two electronic copies and keep a back-up copy of each for themselves.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS STYLE GUIDELINES
(Violations of these guidelines will be marked and penalized)

1. Do not split the infinitive (i.e., the verb)
Wrong: to directly exchange
Right: to exchange directly
2. **Avoid passive verbs. Use active verbs as much as possible:**

 Passive: The bill was passed by Congress.
 Active: Congress passed the bill.
3. **Watch pronoun references. Pronouns must have a direct and clear antecedent.**
4. Do not end sentences with prepositions.
5. Do not use contractions in formal papers.
6. Avoid excessive use of the word "it."
Wrong: It is said that some people like cats.
Right: Some people like cats.
7. **The words "this" and "these" must be followed immediately by a noun.**
 Wrong: This is a difficult course.
 Right: This course is difficult.
8. Use relatively short and simple sentences. Avoid overly complex sentences, run-ons, and sentence fragments. Two words are not better than one.
9. Watch verb tenses. Use the past tense for historical papers.
10. Avoid use of the first and second person personal pronouns--i.e., we, us, I, and especially you and yours. You may use first person, including the pronouns (I, we, us) **only** in the conclusion, where the instructor's directions call for such usage.
11. Spell out the dates of centuries in the text. Use "twentieth century" not "20th Century." If used as modifiers, centuries take a hyphen, i.e., "twentieth-century." Decades do not get an apostrophe: Use "1950s" not "1950's."
12. Place periods and commas inside quotation marks.
Wrong: "Woof", barked the dog.
Right: "Woof," barked the dog.
13. Minimize the use of "very" and "interesting." Neither usually adds much to a sentence.
14. Only use words such as always, never, all, and none if you mean them in their true, unconditional sense.

 Wrong: All lawyers are sleazy crooks.
 Right: Many lawyers are sleazy crooks.
15. When stating a person's name for the first time, include the first name, middle initial if available, and the last name. Also be sure to include the title or position that person holds.
16. Always cite (footnote) any idea that is not your own, even if the idea is not a direct quote. Use the Turabian form for footnotes, except where requested otherwise by the instructor.
17. Page numbers should be in the upper right hand corner of each page, **except** for the first page where the page number should be centered at the bottom
18. Direct quotes (those with "quotation marks") should be used sparingly and only for major emphasis. Restrict direct quotes to primary sources. Do not quote directly from secondary sources. Cite secondary sources but use your own words (paraphrase).
19. Limit quotes to short phrases or short sentences as much as possible. Do not use quotes to make your argument.
20. Always identify any person you quote and explain why the passage is important enough to quote directly.
21. Dictionaries and encyclopedias can help define topics, but they should not appear in footnotes or bibliographies. Papers can include citations for one or two **specialized** encyclopedias, i.e. the *Encyclopedia of American Socialism*.
22. Proof-read! Do not rely on a spell-checker to catch all errors of grammar and spelling.
23. **Write only in complete sentences. Avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences.**