HIST 3305: The World Since 1945
Project Paper Guideline

Students enrolled in this course are required to write a short paper (approximately 2000 words) comparing different interpretations of a single historical event relevant to the course. Your topic must have international political significance and the event must have occurred between September 1945 and December 1999.

The main part of your paper will be your analysis and comparison of at least three different primary or contemporary sources (i.e. produced by people directly involved, or published at the time of your event). You will need to compare how the event was presented by different authors. At least ONE of the three sources must be written by a non-American author (It is strongly suggested that you have more than one non-American source) and preferably from a publication outside the United States. If you are comfortable working with foreign language sources, feel free to use them. If you use more than one source written by an American, the perspectives of the authors must be different. These sources must be referenced and discussed at a reasonable length in the body of your paper. You are welcome (and encouraged) to use as many primary sources as you like as well as any secondary sources that would help in providing background material. If you do the minimum amount of work, using the minimum number of sources, you should expect a passing grade, but not necessarily a high grade.

The paper should focus on how and why your sources differ in their interpretations of the event. You should recount how each source covers the event, discuss how the coverage differs, and explain the reasons why the coverage is different.

For more information, consult “Critically Analyzing Information Sources” and “Library Resources Using Primary Sources” available at [http://www.kennesaw.edu/library/resources/bibliographies.htm](http://www.kennesaw.edu/library/resources/bibliographies.htm) (pdf)

Choosing a Topic:
Since the purpose of this exercise is to explore how a single event can be interpreted differently based upon one’s point of view, I recommend picking a topic that is likely to have produced different responses depending on the sources you consult. Such topics might include the origins of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Great Leap Forward in China, the Chernobyl disaster in the USSR, the UN’s role in the Rwandan genocide, or the 1964 escalation of US involvement in the Vietnamese conflict.

All of these events were controversial and therefore were interpreted differently by different nations, so your sources will provide you with varying points of view.

Try to focus your paper on a specific aspect of the event. For example, “The Arab-Israeli Conflict” is too broad, while “The 1981 assassination of Anwar Sadat” is a more manageable topic. Similarly, “The Vietnam War” is too broad, but “Reaction to the Mai Lai massacre of March 1968” would be fine.

In focusing on a specific event, it will be helpful in giving your paper a structure if you pose a question to yourself that your paper will seek to answer. For example, “Why was Sadat killed and why was this a significant event?” You can then use your sources to answer this question.

Choose 3-5 possible topics you may want to explore, in the order of your interest, and submit the topic ideas to your instructor by [to be filled on the first day of class]. If the instructor feels you first topic choice or other choices are no acceptable, you will be notified. If you want to change your topic completely, please email your new choice to your instructor.
**Choosing sources:**
Once you have picked your topic, look for sources that are likely to give you different points of view. If you are doing the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example, it makes sense to look for US, Soviet, and Cuban sources since it is very unlikely that these three sources will be telling the same story. If you are doing any aspect of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian crisis, you should try to find sources from both the Arab and Israeli perspectives. If you are doing a Latin American topic, try to find at least some sources that give the Latin American perspective.

Online sources can be used only if they are online version of printed materials. For example, you can use an article from the New York Times since you can get same article either in a printed or online version. You should be able to identify the author, name of the article / journal / book, and the date it was published. Open information sites or forums, such as Wikipedia, cannot be used since there is no single author and no way to verify the accuracy or credibility of the information provided. Web Blogs and similar open forums are also not considered valid sources unless I approve them in advance.

**Format Issues:**
Your paper must be double spaced with no more than a standard 12 point font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial etc.). The margin should be 1 inch on all sides.
Use Chicago style citation with **footnotes**. Parenthetical citations (MLA or APA) will not be accepted.

**Plagiarism**
**Do NOT plagiarize!**
Plagiarism can be defined 1) failure to cite quotations and borrowed ideas 2) failure to use quotation marks to indicate borrowed language 3) failure to use your own words for summaries and paraphrases. Remember even if you did not use direct quotes, you must provide citations. Plagiarized paper will receive a grade of zero and you **WILL** automatically fail the course and be turned in to the appropriate school authorities for further punishment.

**Structure of the Paper**
1. **Introduction** (1 paragraph’ about half-2/3 of a page)
   - Introduce the event you will be discussing. You need to cover basic information such as when and where it took place, the participants and the significance of the event to history.
   - Introduce the three different perspectives you will be examining.

2. **Main Body** (several paragraphs) There are two ways to organize the body of your paper:
   a) By perspective (For example, the British view, followed by the American view, followed by the Soviet view)
   b) By theme (how each of your three sources interpret different facets of your topic, such as positive, negative and neutral)

3. **Conclusion.** The conclusion should briefly tie together the essay and offer a parting thought (one well thought out paragraph, not some copout like I “learned a lot” or “I really enjoyed this topic”).

**Submitting Your Paper**
Your paper is due on ______________. You are required to submit both a printed copy and an electronic copy through www.turnitin.com. Your class ID number is __________. Class enrollment password is: __________. If you failed to submit an electronic copy, it will result in a 20 points deduction. For the printed copy, attach photocopies of articles or pages from the books you referenced in your paper and highlight the area you have quoted or summarized. Papers without attached documents will not be graded. Staple pages together.  No Plastic Covers, please.
No late papers will be accepted unless you have an absolutely compelling reason that prevents you from completing the assignment on time. Contact your instructor as soon as possible (before the deadline) if you encounter a situation that may warrant extended time and the Instructor will decide if the event warrants an extension. Please note that approved late papers will incur a grade penalty. The amount of the penalty will be at your instructor’s discretion.