

History 291H
Spring 2001

Instructions for one-page essays

Due: in class (see below for exact dates)

Discussions work better if you come with responses to the readings in mind, and if they start with your interests and concerns as well as mine. For that reason, and to give you practice in formal writing, you will write several one-page (250-300 word) response essays over the course of the semester.

These papers should address one of the discussion questions for the day (the questions are given on the syllabus). You should consider why the question is important and how the readings help us answer it—unless you think they don't, in which case you should explain why.

In a short paper, it's vital to be concise; for tips on concision, see Joseph Williams, *Style* (the book is on the recommended reading list). You don't need a formal introduction or conclusion in a short paper, but make sure to state your main point in the first couple of sentences.

You will not need to type or hand in your short papers, but you should bring them with you. Each day they are due I will select three students at random to read their papers, verbatim, in order to begin discussion. I will try to make sure you are each called on a roughly equal number of times. If you are called on and do not have your paper, you will be marked absent for the day's discussion. Since you will be asked to read your papers out loud, you should make sure their style is formal but not too complex.

At the end of the semester you will select your three best one-page essays for inclusion in the course portfolio, where they will count toward 15% of the final course grade.

As a reminder, here are the dates on which one-page essays are due:

Thursday, February 8

Thursday, February 22

Thursday, March 1

Thursday, March 8

Thursday, March 15

Thursday, April 5

Thursday, April 19

Tuesday, May 1

Tuesday, May 15 (Note: this was listed incorrectly on the printed syllabus as May 10)

Please ask me if you have any questions about this assignment.