GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SHORT TERM PAPERS

The use of the word “requirement” in the title means just that: the application of the flowing rules is mandatory, not optional. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that you review this memo before you write each paper and as you proofread your paper after you draft it. Failure to follow this guidance may result in a ZERO grade for that paper.

If you do not think the paper is important enough for you to dedicate the time and energy necessary to turn out a good product, then it’s not important enough for me to expend my time and energy in grading it, beyond giving it a ZERO.

It is especially important that you understand the use of sources and plagiarism, as discussed below.

In choosing your subject bear in mind – because I do – that some topics are easier than others, easier to find, easier to research, easier to write about. Papers that have a topic that shows imagination, that is on an issue not covered in class, that requires much more effort to research than the average paper, will receive a higher grade. Papers that required little effort from the student in terms of research, data compilation, and time, will not.

GENERAL

1. The topic for each paper is explained in the course syllabus, with supplemental information provided in class. Your paper must conform to the required subject if a topic is specifically assigned. If the assignment is more general, then your paper must be in keeping with the overall course subject. If you’re not sure if your subject is acceptable, ask me.

2. Papers are due in my office on the date/time shown on the syllabus, preferably in hard copy! You will know, from the first day of class, when each paper is due, so you are expected begin your research and writing in ample time to meet that deadline. Hence, LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED and instead will receive the grade of ZERO.

3. I do not accept emailed papers unless approved ahead of time; you are to submit a hard copy only, either to me in class or slipped under my office door. Emailed papers are to followed up with a hard copy at the next class period.
4. You should print out your paper well in advance of the time it is due. The excuse that “the printer in the computer lab wasn’t working” when you tried to print it 5 minutes before the due time, is NOT an acceptable reason for a late paper.

5. Due dates are assigned at the first class on the first day of the semester. Because of this advance notification, no extension of due dates will be granted simply because you subsequently receive assignments (papers, exams, etc.) from other professors that fall due within the same time frame. For this reason, if none other, you should not put off until the last minute doing the work for my papers. If you find yourself over-burdened, seek relief from the other professors, but do not ask me.

6. No extensions of due dates will be granted for conflicts that you know of well in advance (e.g., weddings, family reunions, non-emergency medical appointments, etc).

7. I expect your papers not only to cover adequately the assigned topic, but also to be written in a competent manner. In short, you are to treat each paper as an assignment in English composition. Papers are to be grammatically correct and thoughtfully composed. Papers that appear to be “stream of consciousness” or that look as though they were thrown together the night before will receive the grade of ZERO.

8. An important part of good writing is subjecting the product to a thorough proof-reading, in which typos and errors of spelling, grammar, composition, and syntax are to be identified and corrected. Spell-check was created by the designers of word processing software for this purpose. Papers that have quite obviously not been proofread and emended will be graded Zero. You should follow carefully the separate handout on proofreading.

9. I highly recommend that you finish the papers at least several days before the due date, let them sit and “percolate” until a day or two prior, and then re-read them again with a fresh eye to catch any remaining uncorrected errors. When this method is utilized, you’ll be amazed at how many problems you’ll find in what seemed to be a clear and well-written composition. Better that you should find any major problems than me.

10. The central idea behind doing papers is for the student to learn more than what is presented in classroom lectures and discussions. Hence, papers done on a subject or issue that was specifically discussed in detail in class will NOT be viewed with favor. Conversely, papers that cover an issue or event which was not discussed or mentioned in class will be treated much more favorably. In short, students who expend a bit of time and energy simply to identify their subject will fare better than students who (thought lack of desire or imagination) merely repeat an issue or event covered in class.
PAPER FORMAT

It is important that you follow the format as stipulated below. Failure to do so will result in significant penalties, as explained in the GRADING STANDARDS handed out separately.

1. Margins: Use 1 inch margins for the top, right and left sides. The bottom margin cannot be more than 1 ½ inches. Set the header/footer at 0. If you do not know how to use Page Setup in MSWORD, ask.

2. The paper must be double-spaced, and it must have page numbers. (NB: the title page, endnotes page(s), and bibliography are not numbered.)

3. You MUST use Arial or Times New Roman fonts only; font size is to be 12.

4. The paper must have a title page, a separate endnotes page, and a separate bibliography & sources page. None of these pages count toward the required paper length. Example: A paper that is to be seven pages must at least seven full pages of text, not 6 ½ or 6 ¾ pages, and not including the title, endnotes, and bibliography & sources page.

5. Quality counts over quantity. If you turn in just seven pages on a paper that is to be seven pages, and you’ve covered the topic suitably and well, that’s fine. But if you turn in only seven pages and you’ve omitted key or important elements, you’ll be penalized. Hence, the emphasis is on identifying the most important and/or relevant points and then discussing them clearly and succinctly.

6. Papers MUST be printed out on standard typing paper. Do NOT use the perforated, continuous printer paper.

PLAGIARISM

1. “PLAGIARISM” is at heart the intentional offering of other people’s words, concepts, thoughts, and ideas as your own original product, by including this material in a composition without giving appropriate citation, sourcing, or credit.

2. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If caught, you will be referred to the Student Honor Court and I will ask for a penalty of: F for the class, suspension from the University for one year, and the proceedings be made a part of your permanent student record. This will definitely change your life, at least in the short run, and you need to balance whether the risk is worth the cost.
ENDNOTES, REFERENCES, SOURCES

1. **All papers, no matter the length, require that end-notes** be used to identify materials – quotations, ideas, concepts, etc – that are not products of the students own mind or work.

2. **DO NOT use foot-notes nor embed the source in the actual paper text (in the APA style).** Utilization of the “Reference” menu in MSWORD easily facilitates the creation of end-notes, and it is strongly suggested that you use this program.

3. If you’re unsure whether something should be sourced in an end-note, err on the side of caution and do so.

4. **DO NOT locate material on the Web and copy it into your paper, unless you give full sourcing.** (See below for restrictions on use of the Internet in general.)

5. To avoid committing plagiarism, unwittingly or otherwise, you should first thoroughly research your material and take notes on what you might use in your paper. Then, draft the paper in your own words. **These papers are to be your be your original creation, so do not turn a paper that is little more than a collection of other’s work, even if properly sourced in end-notes.**

6. Most papers will require that **you use at least five credible sources at a minimum.** This means books and articles from peer-reviewed academic and professional journals – only. Documents should be used and cited as appropriate. Obviously, the longer the paper and the more complex the subject, the more sources you should use.

7. Articles from newspapers and news magazines in most cases may be used **only as supplemental or background sources for your personal enlightenment.** If writing about a very current topic on issue, newspaper and newsmagazine articles may be appropriate, but check with me first. In no case should be they used as primary reference materials.

8. **DO NOT COUNT YOUR TEXT BOOK AS A SOURCE.**

9. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES USE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRY AS A CITED SOURCE IN YOUR PAPER.**

10. **THE USE OF WIKIPEDIA IS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED AS SOURCE, PERIOD. YOU ARE FORBIDDEN TO USE WIKIPEDIA.**

11. You may use the Internet **only** to access academic papers through search engines such as JSTOR or Lexis-Nexis, or on a valid, credible organizational website (e.g., Council on Foreign Relations; Federation of American Scientists, etc.) When citing something from the web, you must apply the correct citation for the source as well was the full URL for the website, including date accessed. Otherwise, use of the Internet as primary
sources – or any sources, for that matter – is not permitted. If you have any questions, ask.

10. **DO NOT NOT NOT** list or cite court cases as one of your five sources; if a court case is needed for your paper, then you should rely on a book or law review article that discusses or analyzes the case, in addition to simply looking at the court’s decision and opinion. However, for any cases you discuss or mention, you must include in a separate “Case Citation” list on your source/bibliographic page. Legal citations should follow the standard legal citation format (see the style guide at either [www.legalcitation.net](http://www.legalcitation.net), or [http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation](http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation)).