### Paper Guide

### Length:

* About 2000 words (5 to 7 pages: double spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt. Font, standard margins)

### Paper Topic:

* Your paper should produce a nuanced and critical analysis of a particular problem/challenge/question utilizing the theoretical and analytical frames discussed in the course. Students must decide upon their individual paper topics/questions in consultation with the instructor.
* Your Paper Could be:
  + A critical and more in depth analysis of one of the themes/topics discussed in the course by engaging closely with the supplemental texts assigned to the theme/topic, as well as by engaging with additional materials found through independent research.
  + A country report that analyzes political dynamics of one particular country by utilizing the concepts, theories, and methods discussed in the course. To do so the report must engage with course texts, supplemental readings, and additional materials found through independent research.
  + A comparative analysis of two or more countries to answer a specific and well focused research question. To do so the report must engage with course texts, supplemental readings, and additional materials found through independent research.

### Framing Question and/or An Argument

* The point of the paper is to answer a question or to make an argument. Your paper will have to have a thesis. Your paper should make a point.
  + There could be number of supporting points or sub-theses. However the paper should be organized around a main point/theme.
* So start the project with a well-defined question or argument. As you formulate your question or argument keep in mind that you only have limited space and limited resources and time to answer your question or prove your argument. So think seriously about what is possible to do given the scope of the paper and resources you have available.
* Your central question or the argument could be tentative at the beginning and may change during the course of your research and writing.
* However, your conclusion should be strong and complete. By the end of the paper you should be able to answer your question and/or provide data and analysis to support your argument.

### Research

In doing your research about a particular issue or a case you should consider the following two categories of information:

1. Theoretical Literature – what other scholars and experts are saying about the topic, what are some of the accepted conclusions or consensus about the topic, what are some of the controversies, debates, and disagreements surrounding the topic.
2. Data, statistics, examples that will help you understand and analyze the topic.

### Finding Resources

* Consult the texts used and discussed in class and look up references (Foot Notes) there.
* You may do web searches to see what people – academic and non-academics – are saying about the issue in order to gain a broad understanding of the lay of the land.
* Read newspapers and magazine articles
* Use the library to search and look through online academic journals
* Find and read books related to the topic.

### Good Source v. Bad source

* Keep in mind that you are not going to use everything you read or find while doing your research. Do not get overly committed to a particular source.
* In doing your research you must learn how to distinguish between good sources and bad sources as well as between useful and useless sources.
* In making a judgment about good vs. bad sources you should ask who is the publisher of the material and how credible, trustworthy, and bias-free is the publisher.
* Acceptable Sources
  + Books, published by university presses and major publishers.
  + Academic Journals or Periodicals
  + Data, reports, and papers produced by Governmental, Intergovernmental Organizations, Research Institutes, Think Tanks
  + Major Magazines, News Papers, and News Outlets
* Suspect Sources
  + Encyclopedias – online or otherwise
  + Blogs
  + Websites of individuals and interest groups

### Writing your paper

**Your paper should contain clearly defined parts.**

* Introduction – Hook or interest your reader about your paper topic. Present your thesis and give your reader a context. Give a preview of what is to come.
* Body – elaboration – point by point. Your paper should have multiple paragraphs, each making a point or a part of the general argument. There should be continuity and flow from one paragraph to other.
* Conclusion – give a sense of what you accomplished in the paper – whether you have been able to successfully answer the question that motivated your paper or whether you have been able to supply good data and argumentations supporting your argument.

### Start by creating an outline

* Start with your research question or argument
* Put down some notes from your reading and research
* Try to put them in some order to create the most clear, coherent, logical structure

**In Text Citation - Incorporate the Sources in body of the paper**

* As you discuss ideas and arguments of certain authors and texts, be sure to refer to them. You can use phrases like *according to the author X*, *the text Y argues*, *I understand the author X to be saying*, etc. to incorporate the authors and texts you use.
* Alternatively, you can make a statement followed by citation of sources that support your statement in bracket. The Format should be ----- Sentence. (The last name of the author year of publication. For example ---- *There have been many studies that demonstrate negative impact of smoking on human bodies. (Author X YEAR)*
* If you use any direct quote in your essay, be sure to place them within quotation marks - “XXXX” - and give specific page numbers of the text in which you found the quotation. The proper way to cite information is to give the authors’ last names followed by year of publication and page number.
* If you are referring to your sources without directly quoting them, just the last name of the author and year of publication will suffice.

**Bibliography/ Reference/ Work Cited -- List your sources at the end of the paper**

* Give a complete list of all the sources you used and cited in the body of your paper. The point of this section is to give enough information about your sources so that I (or any reader of your paper) can locate and check the source material, if I want to.
* Just giving a name of a website and/or a link will NOT be acceptable.
* List all your sources Alphabetically by the authors’ last name.
* There are many styles for formatting the reference section – APA, MLA, Chicago style etc. You are free to choose any style you like. However, make sure that you choose one style and stick to it consistently.

### Revision

* Read completely to see if it makes sense.
* Check sentence structure and organization of the paragraphs.
* Check for grammatical and spelling mistakes and typos
* Check formatting and citation
* Make sure the essential information such as your name, name of the course, pager number, date, etc. are there.

### Criteria for Grading:

I will grade your paper based on following criteria:

1. **Honesty**. You must make take the utmost care to keep your paper free of plagiarism.
   1. Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.
   2. It is the student’s responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited.
   3. Students who have any question about what constitute plagiarism, should talk to me and/or seek help from the writing center. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation should consult with me. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation.
2. **Relevance of the paper for the course.** The paper must be organized around or fundamentally engage with some of the themes, arguments, and the theoretical concerns presented in the course. The paper must demonstrate that it has emerged from the course and has been written exclusively for the course. Submission of a paper written for a different course will automatically result in a grade of “zero”. However, you may use research conducted or arguments developed in a different paper that you authored, provided that you clearly indicate that in the paper.
3. **Intellectual Engagement and Quality of Research**. Your paper should demonstrate that you have seriously thought through your question and/or argument and you have put serious effort in doing the research.
   1. The quality of the sources/data you use is usually a good indicator.
   2. Your paper should be interesting to read.
4. **Organization and coherence of your paper**.
   1. Your paper should make sense. It should be logical, clear, and coherent.
   2. All the parts of the paper – introduction, body, and conclusion – should fit together to create a coherent meaning.
5. **Scholarly format and tone**.
   1. Your paper should look like a scholarly paper and should have a formal scholarly tone.
   2. Citation of your sources both in the body (in text) and at the end of the paper should be properly formatted and consistent in style.
6. **Quality of Writing**
   1. Good grammar, clear sentences, absence of spelling mistakes and typos are important.