

Hostos Community College (CUNY)
Syllabus Checklist for Writing Intensive (WI) Courses

Course Name: **United States History From Reconstruction to the Present**

Course number: HIS 4665

Credit Value: 3 credits

Department: Behavioral and Social Sciences

Prepared by: Professor Marcella Bencivenni

1. Indicate which of the following **informal “writing to learn” activities** you plan to utilize in your WI course. After each item you check, indicate the frequency with which you plan to utilize each activity. Please provide examples of some **“writing to learn” assignments** or activities.

	once/month	twice/month	once/week	twice/week
Summary writing	_____	_____	_____	_____
Journal/log writing	_____	_____	_____	_____
Double or triple-entry journal	_____	_____	_____	_____
Letter Writing	_____	_____	_____	_____
E-mail discussion/forum	_____	_____	_____	_____
Responding to prepared questions Homework	_____	_x_	_____	_____
Defining key terms or concepts	_____	_____	_x_	_____
Personal response writing	_____	_____	_x_	_____
Free Writing	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (please specify) Group Paragraphs	_x_	_____	_____	_____

2. The WI guidelines require a minimum of 10-12 pages of formal writing in all WI courses. Indicate which of the following **formal writing assignments** you plan to use in your WI course. Indicate also the number of pages of writing you require for each type of assignment.

	number of pages
Personal response essay _____	_____
Summary essay _____	_____
Expository essay _1_	_2-3_
Compare/contrast essay _1_	_4-5_
Research paper _____	_____
Book report _1_	_2-3_
Lab report _____	_____
Poster presentation _____	_____
Other (please specify)_1_ Analyzing a Primary Source	_2-3_
Total number of pages of formal writing	_10-14_

3. Of the total number of formal writing assignments you plan to give in your WI course, indicate the percentage of assignments in which students will have the **opportunity to revise** and resubmit their work for evaluation.

10-25% 26-50% 51-75% 76-100%

4. Indicate the **total number of exams** you plan to give in your WI Course. Then indicate what percentage of these exams requires writing by students. (Note: Exams do not need to contain writing.)

There will be 2 exams. The final will include a book review.

5. WI guidelines stipulate that **grades** in WI courses “**should be based in substantial part on students’ written work.**” In determining the **final grade** for your WI course, indicate what percentage of the grade involves written work by students. Circle one.

10-25% 26-50% 51-75% 76-100%

6. Does the **syllabus** for your WI course clearly indicate the type of written work to be completed at particular times in the semester?

Yes

7. Please identify or explain any **terms** you use in your WI syllabus for types of writing assignments that correspond to other commonly used labels (e.g., writing exercise for composition or reaction paper for personal response essay).

See attached

8. Along with your WI course syllabus, please provide **examples of written assignments** which comprise the formal writing assignments for this course.

See attached

Please indicate any departmental pre- or co-requisites for your section:

Please indicate English co-requisite:

___x___ ENG 1302

_____ ENG 1300/1301

Prepared by the Hostos Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) Task Force

HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE – SPRING 2007
HIS 4665: US HISTORY FROM THE RECONSTRUCTION TO THE PRESENT - WI

Class Session:

Prof. Marcella Bencivenni

Office Hours:

Tel.: 718-518-6573 (Department Tel. 718-518-6781)

Classroom:

Behavioral & Social Sciences

Office Room: B-325

E-mail: mbencivenn@hostos.cuny.edu

Course description:

HIS 4665 is the second of the two introductory courses in United States history offered at Hostos Community College. It examines major issues and developments in the making of the United States from the Reconstruction Era (1866-1876) to the present. Among the topics to be discussed are industrialization, immigration, the New Deal, the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the current war on terrorism.

The course, however, is not merely a documentation of U.S. history but also a critical interpretation of it. While we will learn of the country's past presidents, wars, mainstream politics and values, we will also study the experiences of ordinary people often omitted from traditional history textbooks, such as blacks, women, and immigrants. And while we will learn of the country's accomplishments and triumphs, we will also evaluate its failures and wrongs. Particular attention will be given to the ideas of freedom and democracy, and the struggles of different groups to achieve them.

History and writing:

This section is designated writing intensive; therefore you are expected to complete a great deal of writing, such as homework, informal exercises in class, and formal papers. Integrating writing into the course material will increase your learning while also improving your thinking and writing skills. The required papers, homework, and in-class exercises are not meant to make your life as a student more difficult but rather to facilitate and enrich your learning experience. Simply put, writing in this course is "writing to learn." Each assignment is intended to aid your thinking and understanding of the course material. Writing about what you are studying will push your thinking forward, making you a more inquisitive and critical student. At the same time, by practicing writing you will also enhance your writing skills, preparing yourself for the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) as well as for other challenges beyond Hostos. Indeed, whether you plan on entering the job market or a four-year college, the ability to think, write, and communicate clearly and effectively will be indispensable to your success.

HOSTOS WRITING CENTER: Room C-350- Tel. 718-518-6624

ONLINE RESOURCES: <http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/wac/> click on "Material for students."

Course objectives:

- to provide general knowledge of US history and understanding of American society and culture
- to promote and strengthen the following lifelong skills:
 - o the ability to read and understand text (comprehension)
 - o the ability to remember and retain information (learning)

- the ability to summarize and evaluate ideas (synthesis and analysis)
- the ability to question ideas and draw personal conclusions (critical skills)
- the ability to communicate clearly and effectively (writing and verbal skills)

Required books (available at Hostos Bookstore and on reserve in the library):

- Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, vol. 2 (Seagull edition , 2006)
- Paul Robeson, *Here I Stand* (Beacon Press, 1998)

Recommended books (all available on reserve at the Hostos Library):

- Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom, A Documentary History, Vol. 1* (Norton, 2005). We will be using this book frequently to read primary documents.
- Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States, 1492-Present* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999). Zinn offers a critical view of American history.
- Daniel Letwin, *Study Guide to Accompany Give Me Liberty!* Great guide to prepare for exams.
- Jules R. Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, 9th edition (Bedford Books, 2001). Extremely useful to learn how to read a history textbook, take notes in class, read primary sources and prepare for papers and exams.

Websites:

Give me Liberty! Sources of Freedom Digital History Center: www.wwnorton.com/foner. On this site you can find micro-lectures by the author of *Give Me Liberty!*, multimedia documents, review questions, and other sources. You can find additional websites in the student guide. Note that for this class you can ONLY use online articles that have authors and digitized collection of primary sources.

Course requirements and grades:

1. **Class attendance and class participation** You are expected to attend class regularly and participate actively in all classroom activities. It is crucial that you read all assignments beforehand and come to class always prepared. I cannot stress enough the importance of completing the readings before class meets. It will be much easier for you to follow the lectures and participate in class discussions if you have already familiarized with the topic.
2. **Informal writing:** As part of the requirements for this course, you will complete a series of short assignments, some of which will be done at home and others in class. Assignments will include responses to a specific question, definitions of concepts, summaries, and group paragraphs. This is writing primarily for yourself; the emphasis will be more on your thinking than organization, structure, and grammar. These assignments can be handwritten or typewritten. In both cases, however, develop the habit of proofreading your writing and correct errors. All informal writing will be graded satisfactory (V⁺), passing (V), or unsatisfactory (V⁻). **Late homework will NOT be accepted. E-mail me the assignment, if you can't come to class on the homework due date.**
3. **Exams:** There will be a midterm and a final. The midterm will consist of multiple choice questions and short-answer questions. The final will also include an essay question. **Note: There are no make-up exams except in cases of verifiable emergencies.**

4. **Papers:** You must write three formal papers. See attached assignments for specific information and due dates. All papers must be submitted electronically, as they will be screened for plagiarism through the college's software TURNITIN.
5. **Workshops:** You must also take two workshops in the library: one on "Plagiarism" and one on "Research." Dates for the workshops will be announced in class.

Grade breakdown:

You final grade is cumulative and will be calculated as follows:

- **10 points**, or 10% of your final grade, for attendance, class participation, and workshop attendance. To get all 10 points you must have no more than 3 absences and attend both workshops.
- **10 points**, or 10% of your final grade, for all homework and in class exercise. I will deduct 1 point for each assignment that you miss.
- **40 points**, or 40% of your final grade, for in-class exams, 15 for the midterm and 25 the final.
- **40 points**, or 40% of your final grade, for all the formal papers (10 points the first, 10 points the second, and 20 points the third one)

Hostos grading system:

A: 100-90 (Excellent)	B: 89-80 (Good)	C 79-70 (Satisfactory)	D: 69-60 (Passing)	F below 60 (Failing)
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A good course performance implies attending classes regularly, participating actively in class, completing all homework, and receiving a grade of B or more in all graded exams and assignments. So, if your grade expectations for this class are high, start studying right away. Also be aware that this course will cover a lot of material and requires a significant amount of weekly reading and writing. Working full time and taking many classes could seriously limit your time to study and preclude your chances of getting an A or B. Please keep this in mind in setting your goals and grade expectations for this course: use your free time effectively and be well organized.

General rules:

- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you arrive after I take attendance you will be marked "late." Four latenesses count as one absence.
- If you have an emergency and you must miss a class or leave early, please let me know.
- All beepers, cell phones, and i-pods must be turned off for the whole class period.
- No eating in the classroom.
- Do not bring pre-school children to the class.
- Inattention and undue talking are disruptive to the class and will negatively impact your final grade. Stay focused, take notes, ask questions, participate actively in all class activities.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

Plagiarism occurs when one is intentionally or unintentionally copying someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging it (or, in other words, without citing the source). Copying from the textbook or the internet is also a form of plagiarism! Please take this seriously. Don't say I did not warn you.

Any incident of plagiarism on the homework and papers or cheating on tests will result in failing grade for the assignment and an additional 10 points penalty. Students who plagiarize may also be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Course Outline:

Class schedule and exam dates may be subject to change. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to get information on what you missed from a classmate. Lectures should be considered a supplement, not a substitute for, the assigned readings. Do the readings before class meets and always bring your textbook to the class. VOF is the abbreviation for the book *Voices of American Freedom*.

Date	Topic	Readings
1/30	Course introduction	Preface, p. xvii-xxii
2/1	“The US After the Civil War”	Chapter 15, p. 449-562
2/6 Homework # 1	“Reconstruction, 1865-1877” “Sidney Andrews on the White South”	Chapter 15, p. 562-585 VOF, p. 10-14
2/8	“America’s Gilded Age, 1870-1890”	Chapter 16, p. 591-613
2/15 Homework # 2	“Sumner on Social Darwinism” Henry George, “Progress and Poverty”	Chapter 16, p. 614-633 VOF, p. 28-32, 36-40
2/21 Homework #3	“The Rise of Populism” “The Populist Platform”	Chapter 17, p. 635-662 VOF, p. 45-50
2/22	“The Rise of American Imperialism”	Chapter 17, p. 662-672
2/27	Paper #1	Chapters 15,16,17 Review Sheet #1
3/1	“The Progressive Era, 1900-1916”	Chapter 18, p. 675-690, 709-716
3/6 Homework #4	“Feminism and the New Woman” Sanger on “Free Motherhood” Gilman’s “Women and Economics”	Chapter 18, p. 698-709 VOF, p. 82-85 VOF, p. 68-71
3/8	The Working Class Movement	Chapter 18, p. 690-697
3/13	“World War I, 1914-1920”	Chapter 19, p. 719-732
3/15	“Governmental Repression and Red Scare” “Debs’s Speech to the Jury”	Chapter 19, p. 733-762

Homework #5		VOF, p. 94-98
3/20	“The Roaring Twenties”	Chapter 20, p. 769-798
3/22	“The Scopes Trial”	VOF, p. 123-127
Homework #6		
3/27	Paper #3	Chapts.18,19,20 Review sheet #2
3/29	“The Great Depression” “Roosevelt First Inaugural Speech”	Chapter 20, p. 799-806 Textbook, Appendix p. A-28
4/3	“FDR and the New Deal”	Chapter 21, p. 809-846
Homework #7		
4/5	“The Second World War, 1939-1945”	Chapter 22, 849-861
4/10	“The Four Freedoms”	<i>Chapter 22, p. 862-890</i>
Homework #8		VOF, p. 158-160
4/24	Paper # 3	Chapters. 20, 21, 22 Review Sheet #3
4/26	“The Cold War, 1945-1953” “The Truman Doctrine”	Chapter 23, p. 893-906 VOF, p. 175-178
5/1	“The Red Scare”	Chapter 23, p. 907-910, 916-926
5/3	“The Fifties” Allen Ginsberg, “Howl”	Chapter 24, p. 935-963 VOF, p. 214-216
Homework #9		
5/8	“The Civil Rights Movement” King, “I have a Dream” (Appendix, A-30)	Chapter 24 & 25, p. 963-972, 979-985, 994-998
5/10	“The Sixties” Paul Potter on the Antiwar Movement	Ch. 24 & 25, p. 972-76, 998-1008 VOF, p. 235-239
Homework #10		
5/15	“The Women and Gay Liberation Movement” Betty Friedan, “Feminine Mystique”	Chapter 25, p. 1009-1017 VOF, p. 239-243
5/17	“9/11 and the War on Terror” “The Bush Doctrine”	Chapter 28 VOF, p. 278-281

Hostos Community College – Spring 2007 – Prof. Marcella Bencivenni
HIS 4665: US History from Reconstruction To the Present– Section WI
Paper #1: The Haymarket Affair

Draft date:

Paper due:

Grading: 10% of your final grade

Length: 2-3 pages

Goal: To learn how to do research, analyze primary sources and critically evaluate historical events.

Assignment:

In this assignment you must research and learn more about the Haymarket Affair of 1886 by reading *The Haymarket Scrapbook*, edited by Dave Roediger and Franklin Rosemont (Charles H. Herr, 1986) and/or the Haymarket Affair Digital Collection of the Chicago Historical Society (<http://www.chicagohs.org/hadc>). Both the book and the digitized collection include a general narrative and detailed chronology of the event, as well as a wide range of primary documents which record the actual words or insights of those who participated directly or indirectly in the Haymarket affair.

Pretend you are a journalist: using the above sources, write a report to commemorate the 120th anniversary of the event. Your report should include

- A summary of the Haymarket affair (when, where, what happened and why)
- A discussion of the main themes related to this event (such as anarchism and the labor movement)
- An evaluation of its overall importance/significance: Why should we study the Haymarket Affair? – What is its relevance today?
- A detailed bibliography of all sources used.

Make sure you follow my guidelines on format, structure, and general writing.

Any plagiarism, even partial, will result in F grade for this assignment plus 10 points penalty.

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Paper # 2: Analyzing a primary source

Draft date:

Paper due:

Grading: 10% of your final grade

Length: 2-3 pages

Goal: To test students' ability to read, understand, and analyze a primary source.

Assignment:

In this assignment you must do what historians do: analyze a primary source. As we discussed in class, primary sources record the actual words or insights of someone who participated directly or indirectly in the events that are being described. Primary sources include: newspapers accounts, diaries, interviews, political documents, books, official statements, governmental papers, census and legal documents. Primary sources also include artifacts and visual arts, such as photographs, paintings, and films. For more information on primary sources read Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, p. 11-17.

Assignment step by step:

1. Select one of the primary documents on “Socialists and Wobblies” (Chapter 13) included in Howard Zinn’s *Voices of a People’s History* (on reserve at the Hostos Library)
2. Get familiar with the source, read it closely and look up unknown words.
3. In about two double-spaced pages:
 - a. Describe the source (i.e. What kind of source is it? Who wrote it?)
 - b. Summarize the main points of the source, using your own words.
 - c. Explain the overall significance of the source and how it relates to what we are studying. (i.e. What does it tell you about American culture and politics? How does it help you to better understand the Progressive Era?
 - d. Conclude by discussing what kind of questions this source has raised for you.
4. Make sure you provide a title that includes the author, title, and date of your primary source.
5. Attach your primary source to your completed paper.
6. Make sure to follow my guidelines on format, structure, and general writing.
7. Any plagiarism, even partial, will result in F grade for this assignment plus 10 points penalty.

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HIS 4665: US History from Reconstruction To the Present– Section WI
Paper #3

Draft due:

Revised Paper:

Paper length: 4-5 double-spaced, typed pages

Grade: 20% (or 20 points of your final grade)

Goal: To apply knowledge of historical events, analyze factual information, and develop critical thinking skills.

Assignment: For this paper you must study in detail the Sacco-Vanzetti case and the Scottsboro case. Using the documentary films we saw in class, primary documents and the textbook, you must write a paper that compares the two cases and the historical circumstances under which they took place. Your paper must explain:

1. What are the cases about : Who did they involve? When and where they took place? What were the charges against the defendants?
2. What are the main differences and/or similarities between the cases (emphasis should be on the *meaning* of the cases, not on petty details such as the different dates, the different charges, or the different penalties)
3. What is their overall significance? For example; what do they tell us about American society and politics in the 1920s and 1930s? What do they suggest about American attitudes toward class, race, and immigration?
4. What were the implications or impact of these cases on American society
5. What are the lessons we can draw from these two cases?

Be sure to include a full bibliography of the sources used. Below are some reading suggestions.

Suggested Readings:

- *The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti*, Penguin, 1997
- Michael M. Topp, *The Sacco and Vanzetti Case: A Brief History with Documents*, Bedford Books, 2004.
- Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, Princeton 1995
- James Barter, *Famous Trials - The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti*, Lucent Books, 2005
- James Goodman, *Stories of Scottsboro*, Vintage, 1995
- Clarence Norris, *The Last of the Scottsboro Boys: An autobiography*, Putnam, 1979
- James Haskins, *The Scottsboro Boys*, Henry Holth, 1994
- Lita Sorensen, *The Scottsboro Boys Trial: A Primary Source Account* (Great Trials of the 20th Century), Rosen Publishing Group, 2003

**Hostos Community College – Spring 2007 – Prof. Marcella Bencivenni
HIS 4665: US History from Reconstruction To the Present– Section WI**

Book Review Essay for the Final Exam

The second part of the Final Exam will consist of a review essay in response to the reading of Paul Robeson's autobiography *Here I Stand* (Beacon Press, 1998, \$14). Your essay must be structured in three parts:

- I. Part One must provide biographical information about the author and his political ideas. Who was he? What were his main contributions to African American history?
- II. Part Two must answer the following question: How does the book relate to the question of race and Cold War politics in America?
- III. Part Three must offer your reaction to the book: Do you think it is an important book? What did learn from this book? Would you recommend it for a course on the Cold War? Yes/no, why?

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Samples of Informal Writing Assignments

Homework

- #1. Imagine you were living in US during the 1890s: write a letter to President McKinley in which you express your support or opposition to American expansion in the Caribbean, Hawaii and the Philippines.
- #2 Who do you find more persuasive and effective in dealing with the problem of race in early 20th century America: Booker T. Washington or WEB Du Bois? Please explain your choice.
- #3. If you were to vote in the famous election of 1912, whom would you have voted for and why?
- #4 . Which of the New Deal reforms is the most important to you? Why?
- #5. Which of the four freedoms articulated by Roosevelt in his 1941 speech – freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom from fear, and freedom from want – is the most important to you? Why?
- #6. Compare the “Truman Doctrine” with the “Bush Doctrine.” What similarities/differences do you see?

Group Paragraphs

- #1. What are the differences between Roosevelt’s New nationalism and Wilson’s New Freedom?
- #2. Why are the 1920s often referred to as the “Roaring Twenties?”
- #3. If you were among the members of the jury in the Scopes trial, what verdict would you have declared: innocent or guilty? Explain your decision.
- #4. In which ways did the Progressive Era expand freedom? Provide at least three specific examples

Definitions:

Using full sentences give a definition of

- Social Darwinism
- Populism
- Nativism
- Progressivism
- Liberalism
- Socialism
- Cold war
- Consumerism or consumer culture
- Fundamentalism
- Globalization

Hostos Community College – Prof. Marcella Bencivenni

Guidelines for Writing History Papers

Writing about history is much more than listing facts and information: it involves interpretation and critical thinking. To understand history means to understand the causes behind why certain events occurred or certain ideas developed. History papers, whether they are essay questions, creative papers, or research papers, are meant to test both your knowledge of the material and your ability to analyze and discuss critically historical issues.

Below you'll find extensive information and suggestions about paper's structure and content as well as grammar and style. For further information check the CUNY Write Site at www.cuny.edu (click on resources and select CUNY Write Site). An excellent guide to writing, grammar, and general composition is *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White. See also Jules Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, chapter 3. Some of the following information has been taken from the history Web Site of John Jay and Hanover University. (www.web.jjay.cuny.edu/history/writingsite and www.history.hanover.edu)

GENERAL STEPS TO WRITING PAPERS:

1. **Read the assignment carefully:** make sure you understand what you are asked to do. Do you have to compare, describe, discuss, summarize, explain or comment on a subject? Is this a creative paper, a book/article/film report, an essay question, or a research paper? If you are not sure ask the professor for clarification.
2. **Become familiar with the topic of the assignment:** read the textbook and/or other assigned sources. Use a notebook or index cards to write down important information or quotes from your sources that you will use for the paper. Remember to write down where you found the information (author, title of the book, page number, etc., so that you will be able to cite them). Work from the general to the specific, finding background information first, then going over concepts, definitions, ideas that are linked to the topic.
3. **Begin shaping your ideas:** start thinking about the assigned question and go deeper into the subject, stating what is your main idea, thesis, or objective. To have a thesis means basically to provide an answer to the question you are discussing. Typically your thesis is expressed in the introduction of the paper. The rest of the paper then develops the argument to prove the thesis. Discussing your views with a classmate is an excellent way to test your argument.
4. **Create an outline:** this will help you organize your material and ideas, giving you an overall sense of your piece and of where you are going.
5. **Write a draft:** at this stage don't worry about the form and structure of the paper but focus instead on the content. Consider showing the professor the draft before your start writing the actual paper.

6. **Revise your paper** using the following checklist
- Have you followed the assignment?
 - Do you have an argument?
 - Have you provided enough evidence to support your position?
 - Is your discussion coherent and clear?
 - Is the paper well organized?
 - Are grammar, spelling, and punctuation correct?
 - Have you followed the proper format?
 - Is the language vigorous and moving?
 - Have you cited your sources?

PAPER FORMAT:

1. Papers must be typed, double-spaced and with a 12-point font size. The font that is most commonly used for academic papers is Times New Roman (like in this handout) or Arial.
2. On a separate page or on top of the first page put:
 - your name
 - the course's name and section
 - the professor's name
 - the title of the assignment
 - the date
3. Number the pages.
4. Staple the paper in the top left-hand corner.
5. Use paragraphs to organize your paper. Use a new paragraph each time you introduce a new theme or idea. Each paragraph must be connected logically to the paragraphs around it. The first line of each paragraph should be indented five spaces (one standard tab). There are no gaps between paragraphs.

PAPER STRUCTURE:

A formal paper should consist of a beginning, a middle, and an end.

- I. Introduction /opening paragraph, where you state the major points of the paper. Depending on the nature of the assignment, in the introduction you typically state your purpose or your thesis.
- II. Body of the paper. This is the longest section of the paper where you provide an extensive discussion/critical analysis of the assignment.
- III. Conclusion/final paragraph, where you explain the overall importance of the topic, returning to your major point and possibly including your personal insights about the significance of the topic or the questions that it raises for you..

Your objectives must be clear, the discussion coherent, and the individual paragraphs linked to each other and to the whole. More importantly, the logic of your argument, from your general statement to your discussion, must be expressed with clarity and precision.

Use of evidence:

The evidence that you use to backup your position are the building blocks of your argument. As much as you think that your argument is self-evident or obvious, you must explain why you are taking that particular position. In doing so you must offer specific evidence of your argument by providing specific examples and detailed information. (Imagine you are a lawyer trying to convince the judge about the rightness of your cause.)

GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX

Good grammar is of course essential to good writing. Most undergraduate students' mistakes are caused by inattention and could be fixed by effective proofreading.

Spelling. Good spelling is essential to good writing. Always use a good dictionary or computer spell-check. Misspelling affects negatively the reader as it reveals little attention on the part of the writer. Misspellings can also result in serious misunderstandings.

Punctuation. Be aware of the use of punctuation: commas, semicolons, question marks, are all used to organize the sentences and make the writing more effective.

Correct use of verb tenses. Use proper verb tense and do not switch continuously from one tense to the other. When writing about past historical events, use the past tense. However, you can use the present tense if you are discussing a specific written document or artifact that still exists. (Ex: Thomas Jefferson *wrote* the draft of the Declaration of Independence. This document *states* that "all men are created equal.")

Passive voice. Do not use too many passive forms. In the passive voice, the main subject is receiving rather than performing the action described by the verb ("This play was written by Shakespeare...." Much better and more effective if you make the subject of the action also the subject of the sentence: "Shakespeare wrote this play....")

Incomplete sentences or fragments. Make sure there is always a subject and a main verb in your phrase. Can the phrase make sense if it stands alone?

COMMON MISTAKES:**Its and it's.**

It's = contraction for it is, third form singular of the verb to be. "It's very nice".

Its = possessive adjective of the pronoun it (like mine, his/her). It indicates possession. "Greece and its culture..." (meaning the culture of Greece).

There and their.

There = adverb: there is, there are. "He is there!"

Their = possessive adjective of the pronoun they. "The Greeks and their culture" (meaning the culture of the Greeks)

Past tenses.

Please be aware that many verbs in English are irregular, and instead of forming the past tense by adding –ed, have their own form.

Use of apostrophes:

Apostrophes are used to shorten words (such as I'm, You've) or to indicate possession of one thing by another. Do NOT use the apostrophe to form plurals. (as in student's for students)

Correct use of apostrophes: "The student's book" (meaning the book of the student). If the word that possesses is plural (therefore ending in –s) the apostrophe goes immediately after the s. "The students' books" (meaning the books of the students).

Capitalization:

Do NOT capitalize words unless they are: the first word in the sentence; names of people, cities, countries, nationalities and languages, or nouns in titles of books or documents..

STYLE:

Titles of books, periodicals, and plays must be underlined or in italics. Title of essays or articles must be enclosed in quotation marks.

Foreign words must be underlined or in italics.

Bibliography. Please check *Chicago's Manual of Style* for more information.

a. Books:

Author's last name, first name. *Title* (italicized or underlined). Publisher, date of publication.

- Cannistraro, Philip and John Reich, *The Western Perspective: A History of Civilization in the West. Vol. A.* Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2004.

b. Articles:

Author's last name, first name. "Title of article." (within quotation marks). *Journal's name* (italicized or underlined), volume number, (date): page numbers.

- Robertson, Noel. "The Dorian Migration." *Classical Philology*, 75 (Fall 1980):30-45.

c. Encyclopedia entries:

Name of Encyclopedia (italicized or underlined), edition, s.v. (look under the word) "subject."

- *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, s.v. "Alexander the Great."

d. Web Sites:

Author (if any). "Subject." Full web site address

- Smith, Jack. "Hammurabi." <http://www.hammurabi.com>

PLAGIARISM:

Since all history is written by writers you must always cite the sources of your information. The phrases or sentences that you copied from other authors must be placed in quotation marks and their sources must be cited in a footnote or parenthesis. Failure to do so makes you guilty of plagiarism, meaning that you are deliberately or unintentionally presenting someone else's words as your own words.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

Don't be repetitive or redundant.

Don't make a point if you are not going to discuss or explain it

Avoid quotations unless specifically directed by the professor. If you feel you must quote do so briefly to give the flavor or to provide a succinct definition. Never quote to avoid explaining or analyzing something in your own words. If you do quote you must use quotation marks and you must provide the source and page number of the quote.

It is ok to be creative and lively in your language, but don't be too informal. Especially try to avoid using "you," "being that," "they" and other similar expressions.

Proof-read your paper carefully, preferably aloud and slowly, looking for misspellings, typos, punctuation marks, and grammatically errors.

Finally, write for yourself. This means asking yourself whether you'd be interested in your paper if you were to come across it in a book or magazine

**Prof. Bencivenni –U.S. History from Reconstruction to the Present
Score-sheet and evaluation**

Student
Grade (XX% of the final grade)

CONTENT:

The student has followed the assignment	yes	a little	no
The student’s main point is clear and logically supportable	yes	a little	no
The student offers appropriate evidence, using at least 2 primary sources	yes	a little	no
The student shows a good understanding of the topic under review	yes	a little	no
Overall, the student provides an adequate response to the question	yes	a little	no

ORGANIZATION:

The paper is well organized: it has a clear beginning, middle, and end	yes	a little	no
Paragraphs are appropriately used to organize the discussion	yes	a little	no
The main ideas are presented logically and coherently	yes	a little	no

GRAMMAR

Grammar is almost always correct	yes	a little	no
Verb forms are correct and used appropriately	yes	a little	no
Sentences are well constructed and fragments are generally absent	yes	a little	no
Overall, the writing is good and does not interfere with comprehension	yes	a little	no

LANGUAGE

Student’s vocabulary and tone are appropriate for academic papers	yes	a little	no
Spelling is generally correct	yes	a little	no
Use of punctuation is correct	yes	a little	no

STYLE

Sources are used responsibly and are cited in the appropriate style	yes	a little	no
The paper is correctly formatted	yes	a little	no
The student quotes and paraphrases appropriately	yes	a little	no

PLAGIARISM

yes	a little	no
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OVERALL EVALUATION: excellent satisfactory unsatisfactory serious problems

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Student reference for understanding corrections

Students, please note: these are some of the symbols I typically use to signal errors in your papers:

1. A circled word means misspelling. (i.e. explotacion)
2. A irregular line under a verb, word, or sentence denotes a grammar mistake.
(i.e. workers were expose - The main concerns in 1912 was.....)
3. A questions mark on the margins (?) means that the main point of the sentence is unclear.
4. “Awkward” means that the sentence is badly constructed, making it hard for the reader to follow what you are saying.
5. “Fragment” means that the sentence is incomplete, the main subject, verb or secondary sentence are missing.
5. # means you should start a new paragraph.
6. a check (v) on the margins means good.