

Final Paper on Comparative Topic

Due dates:

Preliminary Paper Proposal Due: W 3/16

Revised and Expanded Research Proposal and Oral Presentation Due: W 3/28

10-minute oral research presentation: M 4/25, W 4/27, or M 5/2

- Visual aids such as PowerPoint are encouraged.

Final paper: M 5/2 (Final exam session)

- Hard copy due in class.
- Electronic Copy submitted to the D2L Assignment Folder

Write a comparative research paper on a historical topic. Choose two contemporary institutions, ideas, or issues--that existed in two parts of one country, two different countries, or two world regions--that can feasibly be compared and contrasted in 12 to 20 pages. For example, you could compare 18th century slave owners in Brazil and the U.S., opium dens in 19th century China and Britain, or soup kitchens during the depression of the 1930s in Detroit and Atlanta. Avoid topics that are too broad thematically or chronologically, such as the history of democracy in India and Britain.

You are welcome to develop this paper from one that you have written for another class. For example, if you wrote a paper on the slave trade in the U.S., you may integrate appropriate sections into a comparative paper on slavery. Although you are encouraged to build upon work done in other courses, your paper for this course should be a new effort.

Your paper should have a clear introduction with a thesis. The body should present evidence in a well-organized, comparative manner to defend your thesis. The conclusion should summarize evidence presented in the paper and highlight key points supporting your thesis.

Perhaps the best way to develop a thesis is to ask yourself a question based on your preliminary knowledge of a topic. For example: "Why was opium addiction more prevalent in 19th century China than Britain?" Based on further research, your ANSWER to the question becomes your thesis.

A bibliography and citations using Chicago A (Turabian Footnote-Bibliography) OR Chicago B (Turabian Parenthetical Citations-Reference List) must be included.

You are **REQUIRED** to do the following:

W 2/23: Attend a Presentation on Comparative Research (Library Room 134):

Laptops available, bring your own laptop if you have one.

W 3/16: Submit a Preliminary Research Proposal (3 pages)

- **Research proposal (1 page)** of the comparative paper topic summarizing the results of research to date. Discuss potential feasibility of the comparative research topic, preliminary thesis, and any problems finding sources, and plans to continue research.
- **Annotated bibliography in Chicago A or B style (2 pages):** Provide 3-5 sources on each side of the comparison (6-10 sources total). Each source citation should have a short annotation (2-3 sentences) describing the article or book and explaining why it is relevant to the comparative research project.

W 3/23: Attend a Research Workshop (Library Room 134)

Resume research based on my comments on your Preliminary Research Proposal

Laptops available, bring your own laptop if you have one.

M 3/28: Revised and Expanded Research Proposal and Oral Presentation Due

- **4-6 page expanded research proposal** that includes a **thesis**, summary of **findings and problems encountered in research**, and **annotated bibliography** in Chicago A or B style with 6-10 sources on each side of the comparison (12-20 sources total)
- Give a **4-minute oral research update** that briefly explains the content of your hardcopy. Classmates will have 1 minute to ask questions and provide feedback.

Final Paper and Presentations

10-minute Oral Research Presentation: M 4/25, W 4/27, or M 5/2 (Final exam session)

Paper Due: M 5/2 in class and to D2L

Paper Length: 12-20 pages, double-spaced in a 12-point font

- **Research Paper:** 80% of the grade will be based on how effectively the content of the paper defends your thesis. The other 20% will be based upon grammar (4%), spelling, punctuation, and capitalization (4%), organization (4%), readability (4%), and citations and bibliography (4%). The paper must be turned in electronically to D2L to verify that it is not plagiarized. **Evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of “F” for the course.**
- **Oral Research Presentation:** 80% of the grade will be based on how effectively you explain your thesis and present key points of evidence to defend it. The other 20% will be based upon clarity of expression (10%) and organization (10%). Up to 10 points of extra credit for visual aids such as PowerPoint will be awarded.

Final Oral Presentation Grading Sheet

Grade: _____

Start time _____

End time _____ (10 minutes maximum)

I. Content (80%): _____

A. Comparative research topic and thesis are clearly introduced.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

B. Comparative analysis is clearly presented: **Key** similarities and differences between your two cases are explained.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

C. Thesis is **persuasively** supported by your discussion of comparative evidence.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

D. A conclusion succinctly summarizes why the evidence supports your thesis.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

II. Style (20%) _____

A. Oral expression is clear.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

B. Oral expression is well organized.

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

III. Extra credit (1-10 points) _____

A. Visual aids, such as PowerPoint, coordinate well with talk. (Submit PowerPoint file to me via email attachment by 15 minutes before class. Bring backup copy to class on USB memory stick.)

B. Relevant questions are answered well. (Limit your presentation to 8-9 minutes to leave time for 1-2 questions.)