

## General Guidelines for the Written Exercises

History 104 / Spring 2013

As specified in the syllabus, you will be required to write *four* exercises over the course of the semester. All of these exercises will ask you to grapple with documents assigned in James Brophy et al, *Perspectives from the Past: Primary Sources in Western Civilizations*, 5th edition, Vol. 2. Typically I will pose 2-3 questions in each assignment. Your task is to respond to these questions insightfully.

You should expect to devote a minimum of 750 words to each exercise (counting all the questions together). That only amounts to three pages of double-spaced typing when using a 12-point font, so this is hardly a daunting task. Please do not write more than four double-spaced pages.

Although this is a fairly informal writing assignment, you should be certain to follow standard rules of English grammar. Papers that are marred by spelling errors, sloppy punctuation, and arcane sentence structures will earn lower grades. If you want your ideas and perspectives to be taken seriously, you need to take the time to make sure they're communicated effectively. (I don't have a hang-up about contractions, however, as you'll surely notice if you read this handout carefully.)

### Pointers on content

- Base your responses on the *source material*. Don't just summarize the points made by Brophy and the other editors in the introductory and concluding sections of each individual chapter, or by the authors of our accompanying textbook. I'm asking you to present *your own interpretation* of these documents, photographs, and images.

- When quoting from documents in the source material, don't forget to make clear to the reader *whose words* you are citing. After the quote, indicate in parentheses where you found the material; for simplicity's sake, "Brophy" and a page number will suffice.

Example: *As Machievelli argued in The Prince, "if you have to make a choice, to be feared is much safer than to be loved."* (Brophy, 52).

- Although direct quotes from the sources can help to make your analysis more vivid, at times it's more appropriate simply to paraphrase another's views. This applies especially to visual sources, where you will have to provide a brief description of what you're seeing.

- No matter what kind of detail you mention (or quote), be certain to explain *how* this material serves to reinforce the broader point you're trying to make. If your paper consists of nothing more than a string of quotes or examples, you have *not* addressed the question effectively. Ultimately, it is the strength of your analysis that matters most in determining the merit of your written exercises.

### Submitting your paper

- You will be submitting your papers via “SafeAssign,” a Blackboard function.
- Please do not supply a bibliography accompanying your exercises; the assumption is that all of your evidence will come from the Brophy reader or – in rare cases – from the textbook by Judith Coffin et al.
- You do not need to include a cover sheet, or to write out your PUID. Just be sure to have the name and date on your paper, preferably at the top of the first page.

### Reminder: Essential course policies

1) Late exercises will not be accepted. Plan your schedule so that you will have an opportunity to read over your work before submitting it. You will receive the assignments far enough in advance to allow you to balance among obligations for various courses.

2) Plagiarism – passing off another’s words or ideas as your own, without attribution – is a serious violation of academic integrity. Plagiarized exercises will earn a “zero” and may result in further detrimental consequences.