

SEP , 1995

HISTORY 2500 A2
Grande Prairie Regional College
(FALL 1995)

Instructor: Alan Segal

Office: C410, 539-2011

Office Hours: Mondays/Wednesdays 2:~~15~~ - 2:55pm
Tuesdays/~~Wednesdays~~ 6 - 6:25pm
By appointment

Course Prerequisite: None

Text:

The Enduring Vision, Volume One, Second Edition -
Boyer, Clark, Kett, Salisbury, Sitkoff, Woloch

Don't Know Much About History - Kenneth Davis

Assignments:

Four Quizzes

- Each quiz is marked on a 9-point stanine range
- Your grades are totaled out of 36 and divided by 4 to get a single stanine mark out of nine
- Quizzes will be made up mostly if not entirely of questions you hand in
- This part of the course requirement is worth 33% of your final mark
- Quiz 1: Prologue to chapter 4
- Quiz 2: Chapters 5 - 8, "Declaration..."
Appendix, "Confederation..."
Appendix, "Constitution..." Appendix
- Quiz 3: Chapters 9 - 14
- Quiz 4: Chapters 15 & 16

Quiz Questions

- Any non-essay questions are acceptable
- Five questions for each quiz section must be handed in
- Each set of five questions will be marked on a 3-point scale
- The total mark you receive will be divided by four
- This part of the course requirement is worth 11% of your final mark

One Essay

- due date to be negotiated
- Marked on a 9-point stanine scale
- Lateness penalty is 1/2 stanine per day
- This part of the course requirement is worth 33% of your final mark
- More details on the essay may be found on page three

Three Journals

- One journal is due the first class of each month except September
- Each journal is worth a maximum of 1 stanine
- This part of the course requirement is worth 11% of your final mark
- More details on the journals may be found on page 3

Self-evaluation

- Forms to fill out will be provided
- Evaluate yourself on a 3-point scale
- Due the last class of the semester
- More details on the self-evaluation may be found on page 3

The total of all stanine marks available for assignments is 27. Your marks will be totaled out of 27, a percentage will be obtained, and the percentage will be re-converted to a final stanine grade according to the following table.

Stanine Grade	Percentage Equivalent
9	90 - 100
8	80 - 89
7	72 - 79

6
5
4
3
2
1

65 - 71
57 - 64
50 - 56
45 - 49
26 - 44
0 - 25

NOTE: No class averaging will be done.

NOTE: BONUS possibility: Because class discussion is a vital aspect of this course, everyone may (but not necessarily will) receive a bonus mark for the QUALITY of your class discussion, based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation. You will be eligible only if you display commitment to the course by reading and completing the required assignments. The bonus mark will have a range of 1-3. If you receive a bonus mark, it will added to your overall grade total prior to its conversion to a percentage.

NOTE: You may choose not to write an essay, but this will mean the highest mark achievable in the course is 6. You will have to sign a form indicating your choice, and you may change your mind up to the rewrite due date. Selecting this option means only the quizzes, journals, and bonus eligibility count toward your final mark.

Essay

You may choose whatever topic relevant to pre-civil war American history interests you. Critically analyze the topic, using your own and others' ideas. Do not write a descriptive report; think about the ideas you express. Additional research is expected (ie. books, articles, newspapers, journals, etc.). Be precise. This is not merely an opinion piece. Be grammatical. As this course encourages you to think as a junior historian, the quality of writing is important. Grammatical and effective written communication is expected. Aim for a maximum length of 1500 words. Please include a reference section and double-space the essay. You can choose to have me audiotape my evaluation. You must provide the tape. If you prefer this you don't have to double-space.

Journals

Each journal is usually one page. Anything pertaining

to American history, class discussions or lectures, class interaction, or course observations and suggestions, is a suitable topic. No research is necessary or expected. The purpose is to allow informal communication with the instructor.

SELF-EVALUATION

This provision asks for your assessment of your overall contribution to the course. Explain your reasons when you hand in the evaluation. Marks are generally accepted without question if you:

1. Complete all assignments.
2. Cite valid, accurate reasons to support your mark.

What is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is intellectually disciplined thinking, based on skeptical, careful, and logical analysis of evidence. Take nothing for granted and challenge universal truths or explanations. Defer dis/agreement until a later stage of analysis [or at least do not allow it to guide your analysis], and consider alternative understandings, explanations, and ideas. Critical thought is independent and autonomous.

Uncritical thought is naive, conforming, dogmatic, and closed-minded. Uncritical thinkers do not strive for greater understanding or awareness beyond what they already possess.

Reflective historians are knowledgeable people who think deeply and openly about what, who, and how they research, and the circumstances in which they do research.

Critical Thinking Objectives

1. Identify and clearly articulate problems and issues
2. Identify arguments:

Try to recognize your Premises (beliefs, assumptions, evidence), inferences, and conclusions

Distinguish between evidence and conclusions based on that evidence

3. Evaluate arguments:

Question the accuracy of assumptions in arguments and practices

Decide upon the quality of the evidence

Identify implications and consequences of beliefs, assumptions, and conclusions

4. Construct and communicate sound arguments

A Critical Thinker's Vocabulary

Argument: Reasons given for or against something. A line of reasoning in which statements are presented to support or refute a point.

Assumption: A statement accepted as true without proof or demonstration [or without immediately obvious proof or demonstration]. An unstated belief or premise, something taken for granted.

Conclusion: A judgment, decision, or proposition reached by reasoning.

Evidence: The data, facts, information, or understanding on which conclusions are based, or by which proof or reliability may be established. Standards for evidence include accuracy, relevance, and completeness.

Inference: The reasoning or logical thinking that lead from premises to conclusions.

Premise: A statement from which something is inferred or concluded. A statement on which an argument is based.

Valid Inference/Argument: A logical inference.

DISCUSSION SEQUENCE

1. Introduction to course

2. Prologue and chapter 1

3. Chapter 2
4. Chapters 3 & 4
5. Chapter 5
6. Chapter 6
7. Chapter 7
8. Chapters 8 & 9
9. Chapters 10 & 11
10. Chapter 12
11. Chapters 13 & 14
12. Chapter 15
13. Chapter 16