

FALL 2018 SEMESTER FINAL EXAM ESSAY PROMPTS

Your cumulative final exam will consist of two parts: a multiple choice component that will be weighted 80% of your exam grade and an essay that will be weighted 20% of your exam grade. Your assigned essay will be one of the 6 prompts below – you will decide ahead of time which topic you'd like to write about and execute it on your exam day. You can prepare for the essay in anyway you choose however you will NOT be allowed any notes when taking the exam.

Essays will be graded for content and need to demonstrate writing at an 11th grade level. Essays should have a clear thesis, be well organized, and contain paragraphs with supporting factual evidence. Pay close attention to your essay prompt and be sure to answer all parts of the question.

Essay Prompts

1. In 1776 the United States consisted of 13 states all bordering the Atlantic Ocean. By the end of the 19th century, America had accumulated a vast amount of land, spanning to the Pacific Ocean and beyond.

Describe, with specific examples, the territorial expansion of the U.S. from 1776 through the end of the 19th century. Be sure to discuss the various **reasons** for expansion and the effects of expansionism on **minority groups**, **businesses**, and **politics**.

2. Throughout American history there are numerous examples of the **expansion** of freedoms and participation in democracy as well as examples of the oppression and the **exclusion** of particular groups from political participation.

Choose **ONE** of the social groups below and discuss their oppression and exclusion from democracy and American society as well as their movements towards greater equality, through 1920. Note specific **actions** and **individuals** who helped and/or hurt their cause.

- A. Women
- B. African Americans
- C. Landless white men

3. After the embargos of the War of 1812 the United States began its quest to industrialize and become more self sufficient. By the end of the century the United States was a true world power mass producing new products and bringing riches to many industrialists.

Discuss the **technological**, **legal/political**, and **business** changes that promoted the industrialization of the United States from Henry Clay's American System in 1816 through the end of the 19th century. Also include the **impact** of these changes on the average American citizen and worker.

4. Beginning with the compromises involved in writing the Constitution, the United States has had to deal with regional differences and disagreements. Eventually these regional differences resulted in the Civil War.

Discuss the nature of these **regional differences** from the Constitution through the Civil War and the steps, if any, which were taken to **resolve** them peacefully. Also discuss the regional differences that were not resolved peacefully and that ultimately led the North and South to fight each other in the Civil War.

5. One of the key features of the Constitution is separation of powers. The president (executive branch), supreme court (judicial branch), and congress (legislative branch) all made a tremendous impact in shaping our country.

Discuss the one branch that had the greatest effect in shaping our nation through 1920. Explain the effect it had, citing at least 3 specific examples and analyzing the effect each had on our nation.

6. The Constitution has the ability to adapt to a changing society through Amendments, which modify or change the Constitution. By 1920, 19 Amendments had been ratified.

Choose one Amendment from the 18th century, one from the 19th century, and one from the 20th century to discuss. Explain the purpose of the Amendment, why specifically it was passed, and the long-lasting effects of it.

