

Rough Draft of the Final Paper

What is the “big picture”? What do I have to turn in? You have to turn in the rough draft of a 2,500-word research paper (or 3,500-word, if you’re taking this for graduate credit) that blends primary and secondary sources together to make a historical argument.

I've never written a history paper and am unsure about the structure. Do you have a template? I sure do! Download a copy of [this template](#), paying particular attention to the footnotes and marginal comments. Save a copy with your name (e.g. *SMITH--final paper-rough draft.docx*), and replace all of the gobbledygook Latin with your writing, sticking to the same formatting. Please follow the footnotes and the marginal comments to see how to structure your paper. This is the structure I will grade you on.

I've never written a history paper and I want to be clear about your expectations. Do you have a rubric? I sure do! Here is [the rubric](#) or the final version of the final paper; I'll be using this as a guide for the rough draft. I'd recommend you download a copy and even print it out.

What do I need to do in the final paper? Ultimately, at the end of the class, your job will be to do the following:

- 1) Write a research paper about food, one which presents a single argument. Your argument should be explicitly historical: you'll pick a dish (or a kind of meal, or a cuisine) and show how it changed over time, citing primary sources (I would stick mostly to cookbooks) and secondary sources. Your paper should explain why there was change over time.
- 2) Frame that argument in the context of what other historians have written on how to use cookbooks or recipes as historical sources (i.e. your paper should have a short historiography paragraph: more on this soon).
- 3) Find primary sources—You can use cookbooks, menus, recipes, and other primary sources as long as you find them a) in an archive or b) published and/or scanned. Our [course research guide](#) has a page on how to view over 2,000 [historic cookbooks](#) online.
- 4) Cite everything, using Zotero for the secondary sources and for any primary sources that are published.

How many words should I submit? If you're taking this class for undergraduate credit, your final paper should be 2,500 words (around six pages, single-spaced). If you're taking this class for graduate credit, it should be 3,500 words long.

Can I submit more than 2,500 words (or 3,500 if I'm taking this class for graduate credit)? No. Unless you've received permission from me to write a longer paper, I'd like you to stay within the upper limit for this assignment. If you have a good reason for wanting to write a longer paper, talk to me first.

How many sources do I need? For the final paper, you will need to use at least 10 total primary sources and at least 6 secondary sources. You can cite each primary source more than once, but you

have to cite ten different primary sources throughout your paper. You need at least three historical secondary sources for your historiography paragraph. You can reuse these in the body of the paper but you need to cite at least six historical secondary sources.

I'm taking this course for graduate credit. Do I need more sources do I need? Yep the paper is longer and so you'll need more sources: you will need to use at least 14 total primary sources and at least 8 different secondary sources.

Can I use more primary sources? Can I use more secondary sources? Absolutely! For the actual paper, you can use as many primary sources as you want. 10 primary sources and 6 secondary sources are the *minimum* for the final version of the paper (for undergraduate credit), not the maximum number you should use.

For secondary sources, do I need to cite historians? Yes, because this is a history paper. Cite historical work by historians. If you can't find any historical work by historians, see the short video entitled *Finding Secondary Sources* on the front page of the [course research site](#). (and all of the other videos under "Short and Very Helpful Videos" there) and/or make an appointment with the research librarians to help you find some. There should be one or zero social science-y articles cited in this paper. I am looking for historical sources.

I'm new at using secondary sources. Any advice? Yep, see my essay [here](#).

Can I use secondary sources from the course reader? Absolutely. I actually recommend that you start with the course reader. If you find a really good secondary source there, check the footnotes of that article/chapter—maybe it cites something equally good. Use these sources to help you find other ones.

You mentioned that I need some sort of provisional argument for this outline—that doesn't have to be my final argument, right? Absolutely not. *Do not start* by thinking of an argument and then searching for days for primary sources to support it. Start with the primary sources, then generate the argument from them. Your argument will evolve as you research and write the paper. Please put your argument in bold in the paper. See my article about [how to mine archival ore online](#) for more about how to write a paper.

Is this a policy paper? Can I use evidence from the past to suggest changes in policies in place now? *It is not* and *No*, to put it briefly. This is a paper in which you will describe a change over time, citing primary sources contextualized by secondary sources. It is not a paper in which you wag your finger at cookbook authors of the past or present and suggest a policy change for writing them today.

Any formatting requirements? Your outline should be single-spaced. Also, I would like you to use good filename habits. A good filename is not "outline.docx." A good filename is "SMITH--final paper outline.docx," where SMITH is replaced by your last name.

Do I need to use Zotero? Do I need to have footnotes at the bottom of the page? You absolutely need to use Zotero, for all secondary/printed sources. Use the "Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition full note" style. Please be sure to edit your Zotero entries so that the footnotes have all the information a reader would need to very quickly find the source in an archive or a library.

Should I have any parenthetical citations? No, none.

Do I need a Bibliography or Works Cited section at the end of the outline? No, your footnotes on each page give us all the information we need.

Any formatting requirements? Your paper should be in Garamond 12 pt, **single-spaced**. Also, I would like you to keep up your good filename habits. A good filename is not “rough_draft.docx.” A good filename is “SMITH--final paper-rough draft.docx.”

Do you have a specific filename I should use? Yep, I'm writing this twice: submit a single-spaced docx with the filename like this, but with your last name: “SMITH--final paper-rough draft.docx.”

Do you recommend waiting until the night this rough draft is due to hurriedly write the draft?

No. As I have said repeatedly, there is strong empirical evidence that writing in what are called “brief daily sessions” means more output, lower stress, and better writing. Think about those who say “My best writing is under pressure, at the last minute”: have they tried the alternative? Also, what would their professors likely say about the quality of their last-minute papers? And what sort of stress does last-minute paper writing generate? It is also particularly difficult to write at the last minute for a *history* paper, because sources are hard to improvise at the last minute. History requires sources, and it does take time to find those sources. It's also easier if you have a busy life to carve out a short daily session to write.

How will this be graded? This rough draft is worth 10% of your final grade but the paper will be graded out of 50 points to let me give different weights to content, structure, mechanics, etc.

You seem pretty specific in the template about how long paragraphs should be (no fewer than 250 words, no more than 400) and about making sure that we edit for good topic sentences, so the first sentence of each paragraph really describes what the paragraph talks about. That's just a suggestion, right? Nope, it's emphatically *not* a suggestion, it's a requirement. Overly long and overly short paragraphs usually lack good analysis or flow. I will very much take off disproportionate points for not following the template. Follow [the template](#): I did not take all the time to create it for fun. It's to help you be better at organizing your paper and that is exactly how I expect your papers to be organized. I strongly suggest you follow it and also refer to [the rubric](#).

I should have explicit section headings in this paper, right? No. You will have a vignette, an introductory paragraph, etc. but *there should be no explicit section headings* (e.g. “Introduction” “Early History” etc. This is a story: tell it from start to finish, in order, not in bits and bobs.

Should I download all these instructions and short essays, print them out, and refer to them as I write? Yes, I'd recommend it. You might even highlight and annotate, or create a checklist for yourself.

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