

HIS 301 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

The final project for this course is the creation of an 8–10-page research paper that will incorporate both primary (historical) sources and secondary (scholarly) sources. The primary goal of History 301 is for students to learn more about the cultures of Japan, China, India, and Africa, while examining the ways in which those cultures interacted with the Western world. You will take a closer look at this mission by focusing on a key event or time period in history during which a person, group, army, or explorer caused Eastern and Western ideas to come together. Topic suggestions for your paper can be found in the sections below. You may use one of those directly or as inspiration for a different topic.

The purpose of this assignment is multi-layered. It encourages you to make connections among the themes of different modules in the course in a more focused historical moment. By incorporating primary and secondary sources, you will develop further abilities to synthesize complex ideas based on logical deduction and reasoned interpretation of existing course materials. Furthermore, you will hone your ability to locate refined and reliable commentary by judging each potential source and writing about it in a professional written voice.

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules One, Three, and Five. The final paper will be submitted during Module Seven.**

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Demonstrate an advanced level knowledge of the development of cultural traditions in the non-Western world (KNOWLEDGE)
- Critically analyze ideas from both primary and secondary sources (CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING)
- Develop arguments based upon primary and secondary sources and articulate those ideas in the written and spoken word (COMMUNICATION)

Suggested Topics

Feel free to propose and develop your own idea (upon instructor approval) or to use one of the following:

- Influences of African kingdoms on the Greco-Roman empires
- A cultural comparison of explorers Zheng He and Christopher Columbus and their travels to the New World
- The observations of Marco Polo in his famous journey East
- The journey of Jesuit priests throughout Asia
 - A narrow topic might trace Jesuit priests specifically in India, China, or Japan and investigate the consequences of their arrival.
- Compare and contrast Japanese religious ideals in the sixteenth century: Shinto, Buddhism, and Catholicism.
- Akbar's Din-i-Ilahi (the Indian Emperor's "Divine Faith" built out of the beliefs of multiple Eastern and Western religions)
- Compare and contrast the Tang and Song dynasties of China with the Italian Renaissance through historical themes (art, science, technology, etc.).
- The Mughal Empire and the British Empire

- A narrow topic might trace the cause of the British takeover of India, the implementation of British legal systems, the use of Indian Parsi and Sepoy in administering the British Empire, or the adoption of a parliamentary system following the Indian independence.
- The role of Western people and ideas during the Opium Wars or the Taiping Rebellion in China
- The European “Scramble for Africa”
 - A narrow topic might select a single African colony and investigate the changes that occurred under European imperialism.
- The development of a Japanese–German partnership during World War II
- The relationship between India and Japan following decolonization after World War II

Prompt

The cultural differences between East and West are so significant that one might assume there has been very little interaction among these cultures in history. However, these groups have not been isolated from each other. Examples of Western visitors to China, Japan, India, and Africa are found throughout history. The consequences of these interactions reveal some of the underlying causes of cultural differences among these areas that still exist today. How did members of these areas react to ideas, institutions, and the cultural ideals during moments of historical interaction? Select one example of interacting cultures in history and explore how individuals or groups reacted to the exchange of ideas. Ultimately, how have moments of interaction changed these civilizations?

The creation of this research paper will include the following critical elements upon which your grade will be based. Be sure to pay close attention to these elements.

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed in your final paper:

- Include an arguable **thesis statement**. The thesis statement should be well-phrased and set up the natural organization of the paper. The thesis statement should be included in the introduction paragraph of your paper. The thesis statement is the argument you are supporting throughout the paper with scholarly evidence.
- Place the chosen culture into a **historical context** through the inclusion of historical information regarding the country, religion, civilization, time period, dynasties or kingdoms, primary people involved, and any other relevant information.
- Your paper must compare **Western and Eastern elements** for the chosen topic, such as elements from Japan, China, India, Africa, or a combination of those AND an element (an explorer, an idea, a religion, an interaction, an empire, etc.) from Western civilization. Discussion of the comparative elements from the two regions should be throughout the paper to provide a comprehensive comparison.
- Analyze how members of your chosen topic react to ideas, institutions, and the cultural ideals during moments of **historical interaction**. Consider how the individuals or groups reacted to the exchange of ideas and how the interaction changed the civilization.
- You should analyze **scholarly evidence** to include in your paper that fully supports your thesis statement. You should include at least four primary sources and four secondary sources. Scholarly evidence can be included as specific examples, quotes, detail, events, or statistics to support the argument of the paper.
- **Conclude** with an analysis of the consequences of these interactions that considers how the cultural exchanges benefited both groups and are evident in the current day.

Milestones

Milestone One: Topic Proposal

In **Module One**, you will submit your topic proposal. Review the suggested topics and take some time to explore different topics before making a final decision. The topic proposal should include two full paragraphs: one paragraph explaining the topic itself, and a second paragraph containing ideas for exploring that topic in a way that satisfies the paper requirements. For example, your topic may be the British Empire. The primary paragraph would provide information about the British Empire's presence in Asia, and the second paragraph would explain how this topic would be explored thematically, in order to satisfy the requirements of the assignment. You will include a research question or potential thesis statement in your topic proposal. This statement should be arguable, as a thesis statement will set up a paper to allow for someone to argue against its basic premise. Avoid sentences that are mere observations. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Annotated Bibliography

In **Module Three**, you will submit your annotated bibliography. Begin the annotated bibliography with a statement of your argument. The sources that follow must include at least two primary sources and three secondary sources. You will include at least four primary sources and four secondary sources in your final project. No general website sources should be used. Your textbook does not count as one of these sources. For assistance in finding reliable scholarly and primary sources, please use the Guide to Research document found in Modules One and Three. Each assignment will need to be listed using the Chicago-style citation format.

This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.

Milestone Three: Rough Draft

In **Module Five**, you will submit your rough draft. The rough draft should include as much of the completed paper as possible. The rough draft must be 5–6 pages in length (including references). All citations in the rough draft must be in Chicago-style footnotes with a bibliography on the final page. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Research Paper

In **Module Seven**, you will submit your final project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This submission will be graded with the Final Project Rubric.**

Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Topic Proposal	One	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Annotated Bibliography	Three	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Rough Draft	Five	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Submission: Research Paper	Seven	Graded separately; Final Project Rubric

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your final project must be 8–10 pages in length (plus references) and must be written in Chicago-style format. Use double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, and one-inch margins. Include at least four secondary and four primary sources cited in Chicago/Turabian format for citations and bibliography. In terms of secondary resource material, ensure that the sources you use are indeed reliable. No general websites should be used. Instead, select sources that are written by historians. Feel free to use the Guide to Research document found in Modules One and Three.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Needs Improvement (55%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Thesis Statement	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and the thesis statement sets up the natural organization of the paper	The thesis statement is arguable and explicitly stated in the introduction paragraph	The thesis statement is included, but it is not arguable or located in the introduction paragraph	Does not provide a thesis statement	15
Historical Context	Meets “Proficient” criteria and provides in-depth analysis to fully place the chosen culture within a specific historical context	Provides historical context for the chosen culture through inclusion of historical information	Provides historical context for the chosen culture, but does not include sufficient historical information	Does not provide historical context for the chosen culture	15
Western and Eastern Elements	Meets “Proficient” criteria and describes the elements with use of scholarly evidence to provide a comparison throughout the paper	Focuses on an element from Japan, China, India, Africa, or a combination of those; and includes an element (an explorer, an idea, a religion, an interaction, an empire, etc.) from Western civilization	Identifies an element Japan, China, India, Africa (and/or a combination of the options), but does not identify or explain and essential element of the countries being discussed from Western civilization	Does not include an element from Japan, China, India, or Africa and a Western civilization	15

Historical Interaction	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports analysis with scholarly evidence	Analyzes how members of chosen topic react to ideas, institutions, and the cultural ideals during the moments of historical interactions	Analyzes how members of chosen topic react to ideas, institutions, and/or the cultural ideals during the moments of historical interactions, but there are gaps in the analysis	Does not analyze how members of chosen topic react to ideas, institutions, and the cultural ideals during the moment of historical interaction	15
Scholarly Evidence	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and the scholarly evidence is supported by necessary quotes from primary sources	Analyzes scholarly evidence to include evidence in the paper that supports the thesis statement	Analyzes scholarly evidence, but does not include evidence that supports the thesis statement	Does not analyze scholarly evidence or include scholarly evidence in the paper	15
Conclusion	Meets “Proficient” criteria and places the essay’s thesis into a larger historical discussion of the topic	Provides a conclusion that analyzes the consequences of the interactions that considers how the cultural exchanges benefited both groups and are evident in the current day	Provides a conclusion that analyzes the consequences of the interactions that considers how the cultural exchanges benefited both groups OR are evident in the current day	Does not provide a conclusion that analyzes the consequences of the interactions that considers how the cultural exchanges benefited both groups and are evident in the current day	15
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	10
Earned Total					100%