HIS 105
Course Project
Spring, 2019

<u>America and the Global Community</u>

As stated in the syllabus, students are required to complete a project that establishes a historical bridge between the history of the United States and the rest of the world. In addition to enhancing students' research abilities, general content knowledge, and analytical thinking skills, the project will seek to increase an understanding of how individuals, events, concepts, and ideas at the global level have contributed to the shaping of American institutions, attitudes, ideals, policies, etc. Course projects can be any of the following types listed below:

1. <u>Research Paper</u>: For this option, students will select a topic in American history to write about that includes a global component. Successful papers will a) provide a thorough **introduction** highlighting important issues/arguments/ideas/etc., of the topic selected b) a sound thesis statement included towards the end of your introduction establishing the purpose of your research c) a **body** that not only discusses and highlights important information and findings of your selected topic, but also supports your thesis statement d) a **conclusion** that restates your thesis statement and summarizes the main points of your paper. This is also where you should discuss future implications and/or consequences with regards to your topic e) a **reference page** that properly lists each source used in writing the paper. Students should use anywhere from **8-10 scholarly sources**. Scholarly sources are those that have been peer reviewed by an academic community and include **books, journal articles, interview transcriptions, government records, newspapers, documentaries, and reputable websites**. As such, encyclopaedical websites such as Wikipedia as well as bogus websites such as History Now are typically inaccurate and full of misstated "facts" and are barred for use with this assignment. If anyone has a question with regards to internet sources, just let me know. Completed papers will include a title page, minimal to zero grammatical errors, include proper in-text citations when necessary, and be double-spaced with 12-point font, and minimum of 5-7 full pages in length (this does not include the title and reference pages). Paper topics may include, but not be limited to concepts/events/individuals related to:

   Immigration
   Industrialism
   Progressive Era
   Spanish-American War
   First World War
   Red Scare
   Great Depression
   Second World War
   Cold War

Again, this list is merely suggestive and quite broad. It will be up to the student to select their topic and to narrow down their search. In any case, students should feel free to touch base with the instructor for help narrowing down their topics. Finally, with regards to writing style, students may use **APA, MLA, or Chicago Manual**.

2. <u>Book Review</u>: For this option, students will select a historical novel (fiction or non) to write a review on. Successful reviews will include a) a concise **summary of the novel**. This will also include information the plot, or topic, information about the author, and the novel's overall purpose, perspective, or argument b) a **critical assessment** of the content. This will include your overall reaction to the novel: what about it is noteworthy? Was it effective or persuasive? Did it increase your understanding of the issue(s) or topic at hand? c) a **conclusion** of the novel which will discuss why you felt the novel is important and what readers should hope to obtain by reading it. Completed reviews will include a title page, minimal to zero grammatical errors, include proper in-text citations when necessary, and be double-spaced with 12-point font, and minimum of 3-5 full pages in length (this does not include the title and reference page).

3. <u>Film Review</u>: For this option, students will select a historical film (this can be a movie or a documentary) to write a review on. Keep in mind, film reviews have their own sets of challenges and are similar to a book review. So, with that being said, do not select this option an as "easy way out" as I will have the same expectations as I would have as if you were to write a book review in that success reviews will include a) a concise **summary of the film**. This will also include information the plot, or topic, information about the director, and the film's overall purpose, perspective, or argument b) a **critical assessment** of the content. This will include your overall reaction to the film: what about it is noteworthy? Was it effective or persuasive? Did it increase your understanding of the issue(s) or topic at hand? Finally, was it authentic. That is to say was it historically accurate? If so, how? If not, what were its discrepancies? c) a **conclusion** of the film which will discuss why you felt the film was important and what viewers should hope to obtain by reading it. Completed reviews will include a title page, minimal to zero grammatical errors, include proper in-text citations when necessary, and be double-spaced with 12-point font, and minimum of 3-5 full pages in length (this does not include the title and reference page).

4. <u>Oral History</u>: Oral histories are a great way to establish an understanding of the past from the first-hand experiences of others. For this option, students will interview an individual (or individuals) who has experienced an event related to a historical topic, event, etc., within the timeframe of this course. For example, do you know someone who survived the Great Depression? A military veteran who served in Vietnam? Someone who remembers specifically how the Beatles impacted American youth and help to transform American popular culture? An immigrant, or even a first-generation American who can chronicle their experiences migrating to the United States or how being raised by immigrants has shaped their lives? The opportunities are endless. Nevertheless, successful interviews will need to be narrowed down to a specific topic. It's easy to take the "Forrest Gump" approach (in that he experienced A LOT), but time is a factor. Also, and this should be par for the course, interviews will be done with a **real person**. That is

to say, an individual who has first-hand experience with the topic you have selected. With that said, I will require both a **transcription and audio file** of the interview to accompany your written report to as a means to eliminate the risk of fabrication. Furthermore, I will not accept any written report without an interview transcription or its audio file. Successful oral histories will include a) an **introduction** discussing the topic selected as well as an overview of the individual you have selected to interview. You will also provide a summary of his/her experiences b) a **body** that discusses and highlight the person's experiences and how they relate to the topic you have selected to interview them about. Overall, the body is you discussing the end results as so to say about your interview. It is not including the entire interview transcription (that will be submitted separately). You will, however, use from time to time in your discussion, specific statements/quotes/examples stated to you by your interviewee c) a conclusion that includes a discussion of what the interviewee helped you to learn about the topic. What things stuck out to you the most? Where their any surprises? Why do you feel the experiences of the interviewee useful? In addition to the interview transcription and audio file, completed oral histories will include a title page, minimal to zero grammatical errors, include proper in-text citations when necessary, and be double-spaced with 12-point font, and minimum of 3-5 full pages in length (this does not include the title and reference page).

<u>Addition Information and Procedures</u>

1. All projects and their accompanying topics must be related to a historical event, individual, etc., that is within the scope of the course (1877 to the present). That is to say, any topic prior to this scope (i.e., American Revolution, Civil War) will not be approved nor accepted.
2. All projects must have a global component that addresses a relationship between American history and the world. For example, a research paper analyzing the effects of McCarthyism on American society must also include how developments abroad, in particular, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, have contributed to anti-communist attitudes in the United States, *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair highlights the harsh living conditions and exploited lives of European immigrants, in particular those from Lithuania, working in Chicago's meatpacking industry whose working conditions helped to fuel the growth of socialism in the United States, and *Platoon* highlights the moral crisis and the trials and tribulations of how the Vietnam War on a platoon of American troops. Oral histories too, must include a global component. For example, what factors abroad drove someone and his/her family to immigrate to the United States and how has their background come to shape their livelihoods in America?
3. All students must submit a written proposal no later than **February 17th** to the instructor stating the type of project they will be completing as well as its topic. This will simply be an email sent to the instructor providing a brief description of students' proposed project. **Students who do not submit their proposal to me by this deadline will receive an automatic 20% reduction in their grade for the project**. Furthermore, while I will be more than willing to assist students in narrowing down topics, developing ideas, and locating sources, I will not do these things for you.

4. All projects are due no later than **11:59PM on Sunday, May 5th** (see my policy regarding late work on the course syllabus). Submit projects into the Course Project dropbox. Please, do not email.

<u>Helpful Hints</u>

1. <u>Don't procrastinate</u>. Students have been given this project on the first day of classes and will be given nearly the entire semester to have it completed. Waiting until the last minute to start will give you nothing but stress-related problems and a non-empathetic instructor (remember, I've been in the trenches too).
2. <u>Manage your time</u>. This goes hand-in-hand with procrastination. Set aside certain days and times of the week to work on your projects. I strongly recommend that students do not try to write an entire review or research paper in one sitting. It's also important to think about the availability of resources. While the Parkland library has great resources, it may not have everything you need. That's when interlibrary loaning comes in and it can sometimes take up to ten days or more to receive your resource. Same with interviewing. Be sure to give your interviewee time to prepare. They're answering your questions. Give them a copy of your questions in advance in case they have to do some remembering.
3. <u>Enjoy yourself</u>. Yes, writing papers isn't always fun and games. I know this from experience. However, when you're enjoying yourself on this endeavor, I can promise you that you're going to have a good experience. With that being said, be sure to select a topic or type of project that you have a legitimate interest in. You'd be surprised how quickly you can become immersed in something when you're interested in it.
4. <u>Avoid temptation and deliver yourself from evil</u>. Okay, this isn't Sunday school but it's a reminder to avoid academic dishonesty at all cost (refer to the policy regarding academic dishonesty in the course syllabus). It's best not to put yourself (or even me for that matter) in that position. Always cite your sources, learn how to paraphrase, don't interview imaginary people, and do not submit a paper previously written by someone else.
5. <u>Communication</u>. If at anytime you have a question about the project, just ask me. I take all student matters seriously and will do my best to see to it that you are on the right path towards success. I will periodically contact students via email to assess everyone's progress. Ignoring my emails will do you no good and will only ensure me that you don't care about the project.
6. <u>Use your resources</u>. Students have been given some solid resources to help them along with this project to assist with writing, proper citation and research tips. Included are the writing example, the link to Purdue OWL, and the Parkland Library which are all located in the content under Course Resources.