

Research Paper Assignment: Ten Pages Due December 9

Write a focused, analytic paper, 10–12 pp. in length, making an argument about at least one of the texts in the course. Your argument must be supported by research of *at least one* of the following kinds:

(1) *Secondary research*. In this case you will frame your argument in relation to previous scholarship on your subject. Your paper should engage other scholars' arguments, building on them and critiquing them. We will discuss the many ways in which scholarship can be used in a paper; we will also discuss how to find appropriate secondary sources. I can give you specific help once you have formulated a topic, so the earlier you choose a topic, the better. The suggested secondary texts from the syllabus might, but need not, be jumping-off points.

(2) *Single author, multiple sources*. In this case your argument will draw on additional writings by one of the authors we have touched on in this course. You might use other fictional texts, or you might use non-fiction: essays, letters, journalism. This raises some of the same problems as the comparative paper: how will you relate the texts to each other? What can you do with multiple texts that you can't do with a single one? Here, too, I can guide you with suggestions; most of the authors we're reading have had their writings collected in volumes you can find at the library.

(3) *Other primary sources*. This, the most challenging possibility, involves making use of contemporary materials of any kind to illuminate one or more of the texts discussed in our course. You might consider newspaper or magazine articles from the same year as a book or story was written, or visual materials (paintings, photographs) related to the themes of your literary text. The challenge lies in showing why your sources matter to your literary analysis. Sometimes reading secondary sources can lead you to relevant primary sources. To undertake this kind of research, you must start early and work closely with me.

N.B. As in the first paper, you are not required to discuss issues related to cosmopolitanism or expatriation, though you are welcome to. You are free to write on any text from any part of the course. I am not specifying how many texts should appear in your bibliography; what matters is the *quality* of your engagement with your sources, not the quantity.

Due Dates

On **Monday, November 16** we will workshop your research paper topics in class. In preparation, compile a preliminary bibliography and write at least one page—either a partial outline or the beginning of a draft—for class.

The syllabus due date for the paper is December 2, the last day of class, but I am extending this to **Wednesday, December 9**. Turn in your paper by midnight. Short extensions are possible if you contact me ahead of time. I must turn in your final grades by December 15.

Please use the CourseWork site's Drop Box to turn in your work electronically **in PDF**.

Format

Use one-inch margins, twelve-point font, and somewhere between one-and-a-half and double spacing. Number pages. Citations should follow either MLA or Chicago style;

consistency is more important than exact conformity to a manual. Proofread carefully. I will be glad to answer any style questions that come up.