

Paper #1

This paper is due **before 11:59 pm on Saturday, October 3rd.**

[Note that this date has been revised from the original October 2nd deadline.]

How Long?

- Papers **MUST be 1500 words** and no more than 1900 words.

Format?

- Typed, double-spaced, 12-point font with one-inch margins all around.
- Please remember to number your pages.
- Give your essay a **title** that indicates what the paper is about. (Something more revealing than “Essay #1” or “Roosevelt”) Clever titles will be duly noted.
- Base your essay **only** on the assigned course reading.

Don't forget to put your name at the top of page 1 of the essay. (People actually forget to do this.)

How to cite?

If you are quoting directly from the assigned readings, cite the author and page number in parentheses within the body of the text, i.e. (Reynolds, 47).

All direct quotes **MUST** be in quotation marks. If you are paraphrasing from a range of pages, indicate that as well: (Reynolds, 47-49).

It is **not necessary** to include a works cited page.

How will I be graded?

You will be graded on:

- 1) **focus** (do you have a thesis statement and does it answer the question asked?)
- 2) **evidence** (do you back up your argument adequately with specific information from the reading?)

- 3) **coherence** (is your argument consistent and understandable throughout the piece?)
- 4) **scope** (does your paper deal with the question in appropriate depth and breadth?)

If you have any questions or are in any way unsure about what you are being asked to do, be sure to speak with me via email or in person.

The Assignment

Choose from **ONE** of the following four prompts:

1. Arguably, Woodrow Wilson had a clear vision of what he wished to achieve when he left for Paris to participate in the writing of the Treaty of Versailles. Why did Wilson have such difficulty turning his vision into reality? What impediments did he face? To what extent did contradictions in his own thinking contribute to his difficulties?

[In answering, be sure to address each aspect of the question. You should explain the nature of Congressional opposition to Wilson's program; the European leaders' unwillingness to abide by Wilson's 14 Points; Wilson's own compromises at Versailles; and, finally, the inconsistency between his democratic rhetoric and un-democratic prejudices, particularly regarding race. Draw on a variety of course readings to introduce specific evidence that supports your case.]

2. How did Franklin Roosevelt redefine "national security" between 1938 and 1941? How did his definition of "national security" differ from that of the isolationists? What did FDR see as the major threats to U.S. national security and how did he propose to defend against them?

[In answering, draw particularly on the material in Reynolds's book, though you might also take a look at the articles by Utley and Doenecke. Be sure you address BOTH aspects of this question: how FDR defined national security and how he proposed to preserve the nation's national security.]

3. In his essay "The Roosevelt Foreign Policy: An Ambiguous Legacy," Justus Doenecke acknowledges that Franklin Roosevelt, more so than Stalin or Churchill, was the "architect" of Allied victory in World War II. As such, Doenecke concludes, FDR's place in history is "secure." Yet he also finds numerous weaknesses in Roosevelt's approach to foreign affairs. David

Reynolds's book also provides a mixed evaluation of FDR's conduct of diplomacy.

Drawing on the information in these sources to support your argument, indicate what you believe were Roosevelt's greatest strengths and weaknesses as a policy maker between 1938 and 1945? Do you believe the Roosevelt administration's shortcomings were attributable more to FDR's own management style and character flaws or to circumstances largely outside the President's control?

[In organizing your essay, be sure you engage BOTH aspects of the question – make the case for your choices of FDR's most significant pros and cons as a policy maker, but also make the case for what or who is to blame for the shortcomings in US foreign policy during this period.]

4. During World War II and the early years of the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the Western powers (primarily the United States and Great Britain) grew increasingly suspicious of each other. These suspicions often led each side to misperceive the rhetoric and behavior of the other, leading both to pursue policies that further worsened relations.

Choose three instances in which you see this process occurring and explain how it worked. What made the Soviet Union suspicious of the Western powers? What made the Western powers suspicious of the Soviet Union? How did each side's (often incorrect) perception of the other's rhetoric and behavior fuel tensions between the two powers?

[In answering, you should draw on Levering, et al., Debating the Origins of the Cold War, but also take a look at the Messer essay. Since there are many instances of misperceptions causing tensions, in choosing your three examples, try to pick the ones that demonstrate most clearly that this process was indeed occurring.]

- 1.