

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO USE W-DESIGNATION

LSC # 219
Action _____

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

- (X) Professor Alan Baumler Phone 7-2573
(X) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when?) Piedmont College, 1998
(X) Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)
(X) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

- () Department Contact Person _____ Phone _____
() Course Number/Title _____
() Statement concerning departmental responsibility _____
() Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- () Professor(s) _____ Phone _____
() Course Number/Title _____
() Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

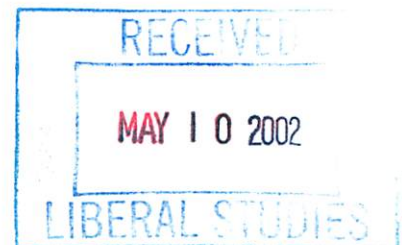
Professor(s) [Signature]
Department Chairperson [Signature]
College Dean [Signature] 5/19/2002
Director of Liberal Studies [Signature] 10/03

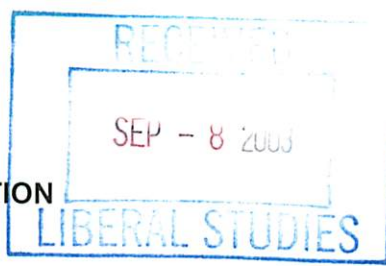
COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

- I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.
- II. Copy of the course syllabus.
- III. Two or three samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students. Limit: 4 pages. (Single copies of longer items, if essential to the proposal, may be submitted to be passed among LSC members and returned to you.)

Please number all pages. Provide one copy to Liberal Studies Committee.

Before you submit: Have you double-checked your proposal against "The Liberal Studies Committee's Most Frequently Asked Questions"?





REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO USE W-DESIGNATION

LSC # 231
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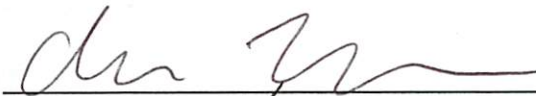
TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

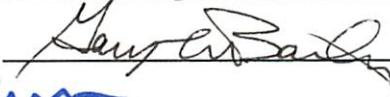
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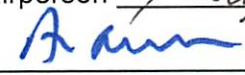
TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- () Professor(s) _____ Phone _____
- () Course Number/Title _____
- () Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) 

Department Chairperson 

College Dean 

Director of Liberal Studies _____

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Summary Chart for Writing Assignments*

A. Writing Assignments					
Assignment Title	# of Assignments	# of total pages	Graded (Yes/No)	Opportunity for Revision (Yes/No)	Written Assignment represents what % of final course grade
Book Reviews	2	12-14	Y	Y	30%
Exams	2	12-20	Y	N	50%
Article Review	1	3-4	Y	N	5%
Source Analysis Papers	5	15	Y	N	12.5%
Totals	10	42-52	NA	NA	97.5

B. Examinations (Complete only if you intend to use essay exams/short answers as part of the required number of pages of writing.)			
Exams	Approx.% of exam that is essay or short answer	Anticipated # of pages for essay or short answer, or approx. word count	Exam constitutes what % of final course grade
1.	100%	6-10	25%
2.	100%	6-10	25%
3.			
Totals	100%	12-20	50%

***Total writing assignments should contain at least 5000 words (approximately 15-20 typed pages) in two or more separate assignments; written assignments should be a major part of the final grade—at least 50% or more.**

Writing summary for History of Modern China HIST 334

As this is a request for a W designation for a professor rather than just for the course I will discuss both the assignments and the philosophy behind them. The course in question is HIST 334, Modern China. Like most of my upper-division classes this one usually has a mix of History majors, Asian Studies minors, and students who are just interested. The amount and level of writing required are typical for upper-division history courses, and this usually does not present a problem for the non-majors.

-Book reviews

Each student will write a review of one monograph selected by me, in this case Wang Zheng's *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, and the other a monograph chosen by the student. The students will have to summarize a fairly complex argument, and present and defend their assessment of the book's value. Each of these things can create problems. Students are often unable to explain what the overall purpose of the book is, and their assessments are often irrelevant ("I thought it was boring") or not supported by evidence from the book. The point of the assignment is for students to learn how to assess and make an academic argument. What, exactly, is the author trying to say? What evidence have they used to support their positions, and how well do you think you have done it? Then students have to turn things around and make their own well-supported argument.

I find that students learn how to deal with these things best by discussing them in the context of a specific book in our classroom discussions. Thus the first time the students are writing a book review we will have done about 50% of it in class. Many will still struggle, and that is where the revisions come in. I will grade the papers and return comments describing what needs to be done to improve the paper. For some reason students seem to do much better with these instructions when they have already written the first version (often really more of a first draft) and will do the things in the revision that I had asked them to do in the first version. I have book reviews in all my upper-division classes, and they are pretty common in the history department in general. Students usually get better at this (being able to summarize a historical argument and assess how well it has been proved) by the end of the semester, and much better by senior year. Together these reviews make up 30% of grade. Students will be evaluated based on how well they do what I have asked them to do on the assignment. Handout attached. The **article review** assignment is essentially a practice run for the book reviews.

Source analysis papers.

Each student will write 5 short (3-page) papers analyzing a primary source reading. Each of these will require students to assess the value of the reading as a historical source. The main purpose of this is for them to learn how to read things like this, but of course they have to demonstrate their understanding in writing. In their papers students will have to summarize the position of the author, and then analyze how this reading fits into the larger interpretations of the period that we have been talking about. Although I do not usually allow these to be re-written we do enough of them that there is usually improvement over time. Students are graded on how well they have done what I have asked them to do on the assignment.

-Exams

There are two essay/short answer exams. These exams are based on the study questions, and to respond to them students have to synthesize information from the lectures, texts, and other readings. Usually the mid-term is a take-home exam and the final is in-class. Students will be evaluated based on how well they do what I have asked them to do on the assignment.

Summary

There are several different forms of writing involved in the class. The exams and to some

extent the book review(s) involve synthesizing information. The source papers and to some extent the book reviews are intended to teach students to read critically. The book reviews and source analysis papers are intended to teach students how to analyze an argument. The source readings and to a lesser extent the book reviews are intended to teach historical analysis, i.e. how historians work with primary and secondary sources.

History 334 Modern China



Wang Guangyi
Great Castigation Series: Coca-Cola
1993

In the 19th and 20th centuries China faced a series of interconnected crises. The most obvious crisis was foreign imperialism, which threatened to divide China into colonies of foreign powers. As the Chinese struggled to find a response to this problem they discovered a host of others: a weak dynasty, a corrupt government, overpopulation, a backward economy. A host of solutions to these problems were debated, and a series of revolutionary changes were carried out.

This course is about these revolutions and their effects on ordinary Chinese people. In some respects it is a success story. Today China controls its own borders and is recognized as a world power, and many believe that China will dominate the world in the 21st century. Many of China's problems remain, however, and the price that the Chinese people have paid for such success they have had has been staggering. We will attempt to understand the nature of China's problems, the solutions that have been proposed and how they have worked or not worked. Hopefully by the end of the course we will in a better position to understand the position of contemporary China and to make predictions about the future.

Professor Alan Baumler 222 Keith phone 7-2573 E-mail baumler@iup.edu Office Hours MWF 10:30-11:30. 1:00-2:00

Books

Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River NJ, 2002.

Baumler, Alan *Opium and Modern China: A Reader*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2001.

Wang Zheng *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

Wang Shuo *Please Don't Call Me Human*, Hyperion, 2000.

Attendance, reading and writing

I will not be taking roll, and there is no penalty as such for not attending class. On the other hand, since the class meets only once a week by missing one night you are missing 1/13 of the class and will not be able to turn in any of the assignments and will almost certainly fail the exams.

Attendance does not just mean showing up. You have to have done your reading and completed whatever written assignment is due that day so that you can actively contribute to the class.

8/26 The world of the Qianlong emperor

Ways of looking at modern China, periodization and such. Emperor and elites. Merchants and economy. Peasants, rice and geography.

- How do Chinese and western historians periodize modern China? What do these periods mean?
- Does it matter that the Qing emperors were Manchus?
- What is the difference between a *shi*, an official and a merchant? How were these categories changing in the Late Imperial period?
- What is a peasant? Were there any peasants in China?

Shoppa, 1,2

Exam System

For next time please read one of these three articles and write a brief (3-4 page) review of it. For guidelines on how to do the review, look [here](#)

All of these articles can be found on [Project Muse](#), which you can find on the library website

- Yingcong Dai, "The Qing State, Merchants, and the Military Labor Force in the Jinchuan Campaigns" *Late Imperial China* 22.2 (2001) 35-90.
- Blaine Gaustad, Prophets and Pretenders: Inter-Sect Competition in Qianlong China *Late Imperial China* 21.1 (2000) 1-40.
- Cynthia J. Brokaw, "Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: The Zou and Ma Family Businesses of Sibao, Fujian" *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (1996) 49-92

9/9 China in Crisis and responses

Forces of disorder, Uprisings and secret societies. The *shi*: statecraft and local society. Auto-organization and state attempts to maintain stability.

- When did the Qing dynasty start to decline? What does that mean?
- How did ordinary Chinese express their unhappiness with life? How did the state respond to this?
- How did members of the Chinese elite understand the changes that were going on? What methods did they use to maintain stability?

Opium, 1

9/16 Opium, foreigners and the treaty ports

The foreigners and their empires. The world of the treaty ports. Missionaries, compradors and coolies.

- Who were the foreigners and what did they want from China?

- Was the First Opium War the beginning of Modern China?
- Was opium a good thing for China or a bad thing?

Shoppa, 3
Opium 3,4,5

9/23 Taipings and self strengthening

The great rebellion and the foreigners. Li Hongzhang and the provincial reformers. Ships and guns and *ti* and *yong*. Sino-Japanese War, 100 Days Reforms and the Boxers.

- Were the Taipings a result of the opium war? Why were they defeated?
- Who helped the court to get rid of the Taipings? How was the dynasty different when they were gone?
- What was Self Strengthening supposed to accomplish? How did it change China?
- How did coastal China fit into the rest of China in 1830? In 1903?

Taiping reforms

Schoppa 4 and 5; Opium 2,6

9/30 New Policies and the Wuhan revolution

Abolition of the exams, schools and foreign study. The New Army, provincial assemblies and Constitutionalism. Sun Yat-sen and the revolution.

- What were the New Policies intended to accomplish? How successful were they?
- Why did the Qing dynasty fall? What did Sun Yat-sen have to do with this?
- Why did Liang Qichao turn against the dynasty?

Shoppa 6 and 7; Opium 7,8,9
Revolutionary Army

10/7 Warlordism and disintegration.

Yuan Shikai and the 21 Demands. Bandits, Shanghai and peasant immiseration.

- What is a warlord? How would Feng Yuxiang or Huang Xiaoxiong react if you called them that?
- Why was the warlord era a Golden Age?
- How bad was the warlord era? What specific problems did it create and why?

Schoppa, 8; Opium 10,11,16

Mid-term exam handed out in class

10/14 May Fourth, new youth and *New Youth*

New culture and the Treaty of Versailles. *Bai hua*, science and democracy and attacks on religion. The family and liberation of women.

- What was wrong with China and how were vernacular poems supposed to save it?
- How were the personal and the political connected in the May Fourth period?
- Why was Communism so important intellectually for the May Fourth generation?

Schoppa, 9; Opium, 12,13,14
Wang Zheng, all

10/21 Canton, Northern Expedition and the Nanjing decade

The Comintern and China's first revolutionary government. Sun and harnessing May 4th. Chiang, the warlords, and National Reconstruction.

- Why was Sun Yat-sen able to bring together so many disparate elements in Canton? How important were Sun's legacy and Russian material and organizational aid to the success of the Northern Expedition?
- Who supported the Nanjing government? Why?
- What were Chiang's strategies for re-building China after 1927? How successful were they?

Schoppa, 10,11; Opium 15,17
Wang Zheng papers due

10/28 Peasants, Nation and Revolution

Peasant immiseration and the meaning of China. Mao's peasant strategy and creating classes. People's War and making power out of nothing. The rural Soviets, class struggle and the Mass Line.

- How did the situation in rural China change between 1900 and 1945? How did Chinese governments try to deal with this?
- What is Maoism? How is it different from Marxism-Leninism?
- How did the Soviets work? What were the main disputes between Mao and the other leaders?
- What did class mean, in theory and in practice, in the Soviet areas?

Report on an investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan

"Mud" by Mao Dun (on e-reserve)

Schoppa, 12.

11/4 War, occupation and collaboration

Japan, colonialism and the war. China as a Great Power.

- How did Chiang deal with the Japanese and the Communists? How successful was he?
- What did the Japanese want in China? Why did this lead to war?
- Why did Chinese collaborate with the Japanese?
- What kind of a war was this? What problems and opportunities did it present for Chinese?

Schoppa, 13,14; Opium 18

Mao Zedong "On Protracted War" you only have to do the section on Political Mobilization for the War of Resistance

11/11 War, Civil war and Communist consolidation

- Why did the Communists win? Why did the Guomindang loose?
- Who won the Korean War? Who lost?
- How did Mao and the Communists consolidate their power? How did they deal with the problem of regionalism and the Russians?

Schoppa 15-16; Opium 19
Kang Zhou "The First Step" on e-reserve

11/18 100 Flowers, the Great Leap, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
Maoist reforms and self-criticism. Making the revolution permanent. Campaigns, red vs. expert and the series of disasters.

- What is a campaign? Why were they so popular with the Communists?
- How did Mao want to re-make China? Why was he disappointed with his government?
- Which was a bigger disaster for China, the Great Leap or the Cultural Revolution?

Schoppa 17, 18
Propaganda posters

11/25 China under reform
Deng Xiaoping and cats. Export-led growth and the iron rice bowl. Tiananmen and the Fifth Modernization.

- Why were the Reforms successful? What problems did they create?
- Why did the Tiananmen movement demand Democracy? What did they mean by this?
- How did the Reforms effect different groups of people in China?

Schoppa 19, 20
Readings from Dutton "Streetlife China" on e-reserve
Second book review due

12/2 China and the world
Taiwan and democracy. The Pacific century. China as manufacturer to the world. Re-legitimizing the party. A China that can say no.

- How has the party tried to re-legitimate itself? How successful has it been?
- How has China tried to deal with the rest of Asia? How well received has this been?
- How have Taiwan and Hong Kong changed since 1945? What do people in there think of re-unification?
- Why are Americans so annoying?

Schoppa, 21, 22, and 23.
To screw foreigners is patriotic

Grades

Mid-term 250 pts
Final 250 pts
First Book Review (Wang) 150 pts
Second Book Review 150 pts
Article Review 50 pts
Source analysis papers 25 each
Map Quiz 26 points

Total of 1000 points, 900+ is an A, etc.

Exams

There will be two exams, a mid-term and a non cumulative final. Note that to write a good exam answer you need to be able to answer question thoroughly and give examples to support your points.

Book reviews

Each of you will write brief (6+ page) reviews of two academic monographs; one on the Wang book and one other of your choosing. The book you select must be approved by me. All papers that are turned in on time are eligible to be revised for a higher grade. See the Book Review Guidelines for more help. If you need help finding a book there is a bibliography here . Note that not all the things on the bibliography would necessarily be good for a review.

Source Analysis papers

We will be working a lot with primary sources in this class, and so we will be doing a fair number of source analysis papers. Guidelines for doing these are here . Each of you will have to write at least 5 of these, and you can write as many as you like, tossing out the lowest grades. Most of these should be on the readings we do in class, but you can also do up to 2 movie reviews if you like.

How to Write

Being able to write well is the most valuable thing you can get out of your education. In fact it is your education, since writing well is just thinking and organizing your thoughts in a way that others can understand. These guidelines will be useful for all the assignments for my classes, and also for other classes as well.

Before you begin

Begin Early--by reviewing your sources, writing an outline or compiling your bibliography. Even if you are not sure how your final argument will be structured there should be some parts of the paper that you would feel confident writing right now. Write them. Writing helps you to figure out what research you still need to do, what problems you have still not thought through and what you do know for sure. Filling up pages with words also makes you feel like you are making progress and makes you a little less anxious. Anxiety causes procrastination, which prevents you from doing your best work, and the only sure cure for the anxiety is to face it and get to work early. On the other hand you need to remember that work has a way of expanding to fill the time available. Don't allow a project in any course to take an unreasonable amount of your time. One part of doing any project is being able to budget your time properly.

Analyze your assignment--Pay close attention to the wording. If you are required to answer a question, what is the question really asking? If you have come up with the topic on your own is it a good one? Will this topic or thesis really lead to an interesting and worthwhile paper?

Do some research--Doing more than the minimum amount of research needed to complete the project is almost always worthwhile. Students have a tendency to try to limit research, since they think it does not contribute to their final goal. This is true if you goal is to fill up pages with words. If your goal is to write a good paper in a limited amount of time, research helps a lot. It is pretty obvious that more research will lead to a better paper, but it also often makes writing the paper much quicker. Students often trip over the fact that they don't understand what the author is talking about. If the book keeps mentioning the Treaty of Westphalia and you have no idea what that is, **look it up**.

Writing the paper

Controlling your voice

The most consistent problem that students have is with controlling their voice. This can mean several things. First, you need to be clear on who is speaking in your paper. Is this paragraph a summary of what your author is saying, your own opinion, or your author's opinion of what someone else is saying? I am often confused as I try to figure out what each part of your paper is trying to say, and this is often because you are not not sure yourself. It is natural to write by summarizing what you are reading, but when you do that you get a long summary of the source with occasional comments by you tossed in. This is o.k. for a first draft, but then you need to go through and figure out what you want to say say and what would be the most effective way of saying it.

Citations

Although the short papers you will do for my classes usually will not have much by way of scholarly apparatus (footnotes, bibliographies, etc.) it is very important that you do include citations when called for. First is a matter of professional courtesy. Your work is building on the work of others, and it is only polite to acknowledge them.¹ Second is a matter of professional honesty. Claiming someone else's work as your own is plagiarism, and will get you expelled. Third and most

importantly, footnotes allow the reader to see where your data is coming from and how you are supporting your argument. Notes are not just a meaningless add-on, they are an important part of your argument. There is a brief citation guide here.

Other Tips

-Use the basic patterns of development to extend and support ideas and to discover new topics:

-Define and explain an important term: "The *Genro* were the elder statesmen of the Late Meiji era who, regardless of the actual posts they held, were the real leaders of the government."

-Offer a clarifying example: "The most democratic of the *Genro* was Ito Hirobumi."

-Classify your subject into types: "All democracies are not the same. There are four main types . . ."

-Compare or contrast your subject with something similar but different.

-Distinguish your subject from a related concept or member of a larger class:

"Although Yan Xishan was considered a warlord he was also a reformer with a real concern for the development of China and Shanxi . . ."

-Consider the real goals of your essay. Student writers often let the immediate, personal goal of completing the essay replace the actual goal of the essay itself. As you write, you should be developing a clearer, more specific idea of what you want to get your reader to believe or feel, and of what you yourself have learned from concentrating on your topic.

-Develop a real argument for your point. Support for your thesis depends on the value of the evidence you present to support it, and on the logic of your thinking. Repeated or passionate assertion without supporting argument works in advertising and politics, but not in academic writing. The logic of your argument should dictate the outline of your ideas.

-Beware of substituting summary for the development of ideas. Some assignments require summary of another writer's argument, or of the plot of a film, book, or play. Usually, however, you should summarize, review, or cite the work you're writing about only as much as is genuinely required to support your point. Academic writing is more than an opportunity to show you've done the required reading.

-Beware of allowing the order of ideas or episodes in your source to dictate the order of ideas in your writing. Sometimes analyzing an argument, a poem, or a play point by point works very well, and it certainly makes things easier. But generally you want to organize according to your own thesis, and place ideas in the order necessary to support that thesis.

-Consider your audience. Usually in academic writing, it's your colleagues—your fellow students and instructors. What do they already know and believe? Do you really need to impress them with your knowledge? Imagine them as specifically as you can. (it may help to imagine how you would explain the same point to a very different audience: your parents, a Hollywood producer, a visitor from another planet.)

Avoid the most common problems in student writing:

-Use separate paragraphs to make separate points. Paragraph structure is the key to essay writing. Developing ideas and developing paragraph structure go together. An essay that unfolds in one or two long paragraphs is clearly in trouble.

-Vary sentence patterns, to keep yourself and your reader interested. If variety doesn't come naturally, work at it consciously. See how many different ways you can say the same thing, and what new relations you can create among sentences—for example, by subordinating or coordinating statements.

-Write like a real person. Serious writing does not require dissolving yourself into a detached, limp, mechanical voice. You've been advised in English classes to use active, specific verbs (especially avoiding overuse of the verb "to be") and to avoid passive constructions. Your English teachers were right. Let yourself write vividly, specifically, and with personality.

-But don't make yourself your subject. Telling the history of how you wrote your essay or arrived at

your opinion places the focus on you rather than on your ideas. So does insistent use of phrases such as "I think," "I feel," "I believe." You are very aware that you are writing an essay, and you may resent it or feel uncertain of your powers. So you may be tempted to allude to the situation over and over. But the reader is more interested in your ideas, your arguments, your discoveries. Qualifying phrases are just a distraction.

-Don't pad your writing, no matter how many words the assignment requires. *Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts.*¹

-Avoid inappropriate diction. Excessive informality is as pretentious as pomposity. Everybody knows that nobody likes a stuffed shirt, but for some reason, a lot of writers seem to believe that people just love a smartass.

Revise your work thoroughly. Take the time to make revision a separate process, so that you're not tempted to skip it.

-Read your writing aloud. No other technique makes as much difference as this simple step, which most inexperienced writers avoid.

-Ask someone else to read it aloud. Notice if and where they stumble.

-Ask a friend to evaluate your work, and tell you where your point doesn't get across. You wouldn't hesitate to ask them to look at a painting or photograph you did. Take the same attitude toward your academic writing.

-Reread your introduction and conclusion. Is the opening really necessary, or is it just a way to warm up to your subject? Does your conclusion rush to the ending, or does it really allow you to show the strength of your thesis?

-Mark every single phrase you're not pleased with—not just errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. Go back and try several different ways of solving each problem, not just one.

-Check your diction for exactness. Be especially wary of the weak verbs "to be" and "to have."

-Use a dictionary and a handbook. Great writers are made, not born. One of the most important, simple things they learn is to use reference works instead of expecting to find everything inside their heads—and then failing into despair when it can't be found there. Every professional writer uses dictionaries and style manuals to check their work. Why should you be any different?

-Let a computer do the work for you. Use a spellchecker function to point out errors you might not catch yourself. And take advantage of the computer's ability to make revision relatively painless. Cut and paste functions let you try out sentences or paragraphs in more than one order. If you don't use a computer now, you'll probably find soon that reserving one, catching on to typing, and learning a simple word-processing program—as complicated as it all may seem at first—still saves you plenty of time and effort compared to writing and revising your work by hand.

1. This guide was based on one by Keith Allen.

2. Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style* Allyn & Bacon, 2000 p.23.

Book reviews

These are guidelines for writing a book review for any of my classes

Picking a book

This is the hardest and also the most rewarding part of the assignment. Since you can pick a book on pretty much any topic you like, there is no reason that you should end up with something boring, but on the other hand if you wait till the last minute you may get stuck with something you find boring or that is hard to get a good review out of. The book you pick should be a historical monograph, not a survey text, an edited volume, a memoir or a novel. All of those things are useful in studying history, but they are not the point of this assignment.

A monograph is a book on one, fairly limited, topic. Usually it is based on primary source research and it is almost always by a single author. It is usually pretty easy to tell a monograph from other types of books by the title. Monographs usually have a colon thus *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* by Gail Hershatter and *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* by Louise Young are both monographs. Usually what comes before the colon is intended to draw in readers, and the bit after tells you what the book actually is. Monographs don't always have a colon. *Policing Shanghai 1927-1937* by Frederick Wakeman and *Forests and Peasant Politics in Modern France* by Tamara White are both monographs. When in doubt you should look at the table of contents and try to figure it out, but since most of you will be working with the IUP library it is helpful to be able to tell just from the title, rather than ordering the book and then finding out it is not what you want.

Academic presses (ones run by universities, like the Harvard University Press, Cambridge, etc.) publish most of the better historical monographs. If a university press publishes something a group of scholars have decided that it is a good book with something to say. They aren't always right, but they rarely publish really awful books. Routledge and St.Martin's, among others, also publish solid works on history. In general you should try to pick fairly recent books, after 1970 at least, since many (though not all) older books have been at least partially superceded by later work. If you are only going to read one book on a topic you might as well read the most current one.

Your book must be approved by me before you can start reading, so you need to start work on this early. Note that your book selection is part of your grade for the paper in the sense that if you pick a good book writing a good review will be easy, and if you pick a bad book it will be very hard and maybe impossible. I will be able to tell you if a book looks o.k. to me, but the ultimate responsibility for picking a good book rests with you.

Where to find a book

There are a few good books in the library, but you will probably end up having to use interlibrary loan or PALCI. It is important, therefore, to get started on finding a book as soon as possible. The American Historical Association's *Guide to Historical Literature* (it's in the library (REF D 20 .155 1995) is probably the best source for a good book. I can also make recommendations if you tell me what you are looking for. I have provided a short list of possible books for some of my Asian history classes on the web site. Some are in the library, some are not. Some may not even be good review books, (I have not read all of these, many are just things that caught my eye) but they should give you an idea what sort of things to look for.

Reading the book

This is not as easy as it may sound. These are hard books with some hard ideas in them, and the

point is not just to run your eyes over each page, but to understand the author's argument enough to make a critique of it. This takes at least three steps, figuring out what the argument is, figuring out how it is being proved, and then putting the book in context.

The first of these, figuring out the argument, is usually easy, although authors sometimes assume you know quite a bit about the topic already and therefore don't explain what they are arguing as clearly as they could. It is important to figure out what the book is trying to do before you start reading page-by page. You should usually start by reading the introduction and the conclusion. When you start reading the body of the book you should already know what the author is trying to prove, making the second part of your task, figuring out how well this has been proved, fairly easy.

In your paper you need to explain *why* you think something is convincing. It is not enough to just say that you accept or don't accept their argument, you need to be able to explain why you think that. Almost always you will start having opinions about the book before you are capable of explaining why you think this and proving to the reader why they should think the same. This is natural, but you need to move beyond that. Rather than thinking of the author as Moses coming down from the mountain with the truth, think of them as a lawyer presenting a case and think of yourself as the jury. What evidence is the author using? What are their sources? In writing a book review you will probably have to spend more time looking at footnotes than you are used to.

The third part, putting the book in context is the hardest. This book was written in the context of an existing scholarship and the author is both responding to and building on that literature. In an academic review you would be expected to explain how this book fit into this larger literature from the point of view of a person who had read this larger literature. You obviously have not done that, but you have at least read a textbook on this topic, and should have some knowledge. You should be able to make at least a few comments on how this fits into our larger understanding of the period.

Writing the paper

The book review is not a book report. **I do not want a summary of the book.** A book review is less like writing an essay and more like grading an essay. When I grade your essays on the outside readings I will look to see what your thesis is and then look to see how well you prove it. You need to do the same thing with this book. In your first page or so tell me what the book is trying to prove. Then tell me if you think they have proved their thesis or not, and what evidence in the book makes you think this. You don't have to entirely agree or disagree with the author. Most students come down in the middle somewhere, which is fine. There is no right or wrong 'answer' to this paper. As long as you make it clear what the book is saying and what you think about it and why, you will do fine. You may want to look at my [general guidelines on writing](#) for some tips on how to structure your argument.

-Your review should be typed and double-spaced. You should provide the title of the book, the name of the author, the publisher and the year of publication. You should use footnotes (embedded page numbers are fine) to show where the information in your paper is coming from.

-If the paper is turned in on time and all the other requirements have been met you will have the option of revising the paper for a higher grade. All revisions must be turned in within one week of the date the papers are returned. Note that to get a better grade the paper must actually be better. If you struggled with it the first time you will probably struggle with it the second time, and I strongly recommend you come and talk to me before starting on the revisions.

Here is a [Sample book review](#)

Here are some [general guidelines on writing](#)

16

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Liberal Studies Program

certifies that

Alan T. Baumler

has participated in the *IUP Writing Workshop*
with facilitator Dr. Robert Yagelski

May 19 and 20, 2003



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary E. Sadler", positioned above a horizontal line.

Mary E. Sadler
Director
Liberal Studies

DATE: September 3, 2003

TO: Dr. Mary Sadler, Director
Liberal Studies Program

FROM: Dr. Nicholas Karatjas, Chairperson
Department of Economics

SUBJECT: Approval of Dr. Jack Julian to Teach a Writing-Intensive Course

The Department of Economics would like to request one-time approval for Dr. Jack Julian to teach ECON 345 International Trade as a writing-intensive course in the Spring 2004 semester. I have spoken with him and he has agreed to teach it as a writing-intensive course. He has had experience teaching these types of courses in the past. Dr. Asamoah, who would have taught this class as a writing-intensive class, has agreed to discuss with him the criteria for this course.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.