History 2225, Fall 2019
Research Essay
Instructor: Anne Toews

Research question and first three sources: due Thursday October 24
Completed essay: due Thursday November 14

What’s this assignment all about?

This assignment will help you to develop your research and writing skills. You will choose a research question and locate seven useful sources that can help you to answer that question. Then you will read and evaluate your sources, and write an essay of 2000-2200 words as your answer to the research question in. There are three components to this assignment:

Component 1. Participate in the research tutorial in the Langara Library room L108 on October 3, 12:30 to 2:20 pm.

Component 2. Submit your research question along with citations for at least three of your sources, so that I can provide you with some early feedback. This is an informal portion of the assignment; no particular format is required, but you should list your sources in Chicago style. Upload the information to Brightspace: look under “Assessments” for the “Assignment Submission Folders.” Due date for this component is October 24, but you are encouraged to submit your list as early as possible.

Component 3. Write up your paper according to the instructions below and submit a printed copy in class by the due date of November 14. Please also send an identical electronic copy by e-mail as a back-up (Word or Pages format, please; not a PDF).

How many marks can I earn for this assignment?

Component 1. No marks, but your mark for component 3 will be reduced by 20% if component 1 is not completed.

Component 2. 5 marks (5% of your grade for the course).

Component 3. 25 marks (25% of your grade for the course). See page 6 for detailed explanation of how your paper will be marked.
What are my options for essay topics?

You may choose to answer one of the research questions below OR use one of these questions to inspire a more narrowly-defined question OR formulate a question of your own on a different topic. Your question should address the social history of Acadia or the geographic area that is now Quebec before the end of the 19th century.

If you formulate your own research question, rather than choosing one from this list, please discuss this with me before you begin your research.

1. How successful were the Jesuits at accomplishing their goal of converting Indigenous men and women to Christianity?

2. How significant was slavery under the French regime?

3. By the early eighteenth century the French had developed a vast array of alliances with various First Nations. What were the motives for the French and the First Nations, and what impact did the alliances have on each group?

4. Was the Acadian deportation of 1755 inevitable?

5. What brought Irish immigrants to Lower Canada during the nineteenth century, and how did they fare as a minority group in the province?

6. To what extent was the Rebellion of 1837 about achieving greater democracy?

7. Why was the Catholic Church able to assume such a prominent role in Lower Canada by the 1850s, and what were the social and political consequences of its ascendancy?

8. Many groups sought refuge and/or opportunity in the Eastern Townships over the generations. Why was this, and what factors shaped their relations with each other?

9. What was the social impact of the rise of industrial capitalism in Lower Canada/Quebec?

10. What were the causes of divisions in Quebec society by the 1880s?

11. In the decades between the British conquest and the 1880s, Indigenous peoples residing in Lower Canada/Quebec were confronted with numerous challenges associated with new economic, social, and political realities. What were those challenges, and how did Indigenous peoples respond?
What kinds of sources should I use?

This assignment requires you to identify SEVEN scholarly secondary sources. Your selections should include:

- at least 2 books (monograph, biography, or edited collections; you can include scholarly e-books in this category)
- at least 2 scholarly journal articles
- no more than 2 of your course readings
- NO textbooks, encyclopedias, web sites, or book reviews

You may also include primary sources if you wish, but these are not required and they do not “count” in your list of seven sources.

An important part of this assignment is to demonstrate your research skills by finding source material that will enable you to write a tightly-focused response to your chosen research question. Provide the most useful sources that you can find. Good sources for this assignment will:

- take a historical perspective,
- be written by scholars knowledgeable in the field, and
- include material that is directly relevant to your research question.

Overall, look for a variety of sources that would help you to address historiographical debate on your topic or allow you to examine various points of view related to the topic.

How do I find useful sources?

- Learn some useful research strategies at the library tutorial October 3.
- You may also find it useful to complete the optional Introduction to Research tutorial. Find this in Brightspace.
- One of the articles in your coursepack may be a good place to start.
- Look for journals published in Canada; many history journals include the word “history” in the title.
- Follow up on useful-looking sources that are cited in other authors’ footnotes. Tip: Look for recent scholarship because the introductions of newer works will usually address the existing historiography on the topic and will mention key classic works on your topic.
- At the end of each chapter in Dickinson and Young, there is list of “further reading” for the topics covered in the chapter. You can find similar reading lists in other Canadian history textbooks available in the Langara library (FC 165 section; 2nd floor).
I have located seven relevant sources. Now what?

1. Before you start taking notes from your sources, complete the Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial, unless you have already completed this tutorial for another class.

2. Find the most relevant material in the books that you have identified. Read the introduction so that you understand the author’s argument and the context for the work. You may then be able to use the index and table of contents to guide you to the most relevant pages for your topic. For journal articles, read the abstract first and then focus on material that will help you to answer your research question.

3. Write down the points that seem most relevant. Remember to use quotation marks where appropriate, and make a note of page numbers as well as the source.

4. Weigh all the main points that you have written down in step 3 and use these to formulate your own answer to the question asked. This is your thesis statement. It should appear in the first paragraph of your essay.

5. Return to the main points that you identified in step 3. Incorporate each main point into a paragraph that starts with a clear topic sentence — a “mini thesis statement” for the paragraph. Support the topic sentence with evidence drawn from the readings. Aim for 4-6 sentences per paragraph. As you go along, use footnotes to cite the source of all the evidence that you use. During the writing process, consider counter-evidence to your developing argument — do all your sources agree?

6. Write your ideas clearly, mostly in your own words. Arrange your paragraphs in a logical order.

7. Complete your introductory paragraph. Does the thesis statement that you developed in step 4 still make sense, now that you have written the rest of your paper? If not, revise it. Your introduction should include an indication of the scope of your paper, as we have discussed in class. It is also useful to use this paragraph to provide your readers with a brief overview of the main points of your argument, in a sentence or two. Think of an introduction as a “road map” to your paper.

8. Write a short concluding paragraph that indicates the connections between your main points and makes it clear why these particular points are important in answering the question. You may also reflect more broadly on the significance of the topic. Think of this as an answer to the reader’s question, “So what?”

8. Give your paper a title (not “Research Essay”) and prepare a title page.

9. Complete a bibliography page. List your sources in alphabetical order according to authors’ last names. Provide full citations for all sources in Chicago style.

10. Polish your paper by proof-reading it carefully before you submit it.
How important is it that I cite my sources correctly?

• It is absolutely essential that you cite the source of any material that you use in your work. It is your responsibility as a student to understand and avoid the serious academic offence of plagiarism. Please complete the “Avoiding Plagiarism” tutorial. If you are still unsure about what plagiarism is, please drop by my office hours before you hand in your paper.

• Historians cite their sources according to Chicago style: bibliography page at the end of your essay and footnotes as you go along. Use footnotes in the same way that most of your course readings do. Note that footnotes must contain correct page numbers.

• Use quotation marks and a footnote for any direct quotations, but remember also to cite the source of any ideas that you use, even when you are paraphrasing rather than quoting directly from the source.

• For examples of how to cite sources according to Chicago style, look for the link to the Purdue Online Writing Lab (in Brightspace, under “Tool Kit”). Choose the appropriate section from the sidebar on the left: books or periodicals (for journal articles, magazines, newspapers).

How should I format my paper?

• Please use bold type to highlight your thesis statement.

• Include a formal title page (title, your name and student number, instructor’s name, course number, date submitted).

• Type your paper using a 12-point Times New Roman or similar-size font.

• Double-space your essay.

• Include page numbers on all but the title page and the first page.

• Do not exceed the maximum word count of 2200 words (not including bibliography). Include a word count on the last page of your paper.

• Print your paper and submit it at the beginning of class. Please also send a copy by e-mail as a back-up; this must be identical to the printed copy.

• More information and examples of how to format your paper are available in the Guidelines for Academic Essays (in Brightspace under “Tool Kit”).

Where can I get help with my writing?

• Review some of the guides to writing a history paper in the “Tool Kit” section in Brightspace.

• Take a look at the very helpful Rampolla book that is on course reserves in the library.

• For some early feedback, bring your outline and thesis statement to my office hours.

• Seek help from the Writing Centre in the Langara Library.
Marking Criteria

Notwithstanding the criteria below, please note that an assignment that includes any plagiarized material will receive a mark of zero. It is your responsibility as a student to understand and avoid plagiarism.

A clearly-written and grammatically-correct paper is expected. No marks will be awarded for writing, but marks will be deducted if the writing does not meet expectations for a college-level essay.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Marks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory paragraph provides a useful “road map” to the paper, including an indication of scope and a clear and workable thesis statement.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper is well organized for logical flow of ideas. Paragraphs are 4-6 sentences long and tightly focused.</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argument is clear, logical, and provides an answer to the research question.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper makes good use of evidence from at least seven sources.</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citations and bibliography are accurate and formatted according to Chicago style.</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall format of paper (see page 3 for details).</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
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Deduction if component 1 is not completed (see page 1). - 5