

What Is the History Department Required to Do?

These statements are from the syllabus, but with definitions added.

1. Create an argument through the use of historical evidence.

[Merriam Webster Online](#) on the words:

- *argument*: “a coherent series of statements leading from a premise to a conclusion” – In this course, the argument must be based on evidence from the listed reliable sources.
- *evidence*: “something which shows that something else exists or is true”

2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.

Term	Explanation
sources, primary	Using information gathered directly from those performing the actions or making the statements.
	Examples of primary sources include census data, diaries, film, and interviews.
sources, secondary	Using information, analysis, and interpretation based on primary sources.
	Examples of secondary sources include historians’ analysis and history textbooks. (Because textbooks rely on secondary sources, sometimes textbooks are called tertiary sources. If you want to know more about tertiary sources, see http://www.lib.umd.edu/tl/guides/primary-sources)

3. Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on this period of United States history.

The History Department requires a minimum of 25% of your grade from your writing assignments. This course has close to 25% writing, with some informal writing in the total. **Caution:** To repeat the syllabus, given those percentages, doing written work is essential to pass. Please ask if you do not know why.

In this course, your assignments are meant to meet those objectives, and

- To use historical evidence in small assignments that also reveal how history changes
- To make it possible for students to earn a good grade even though they may not have experience with
 - United States history
 - Reading and writing with evidence about real things (History is frequently the first time many students have to write about real things with evidence.)

What’s an Example of How You Could Make a Good Grade for a 40 Point Assignment – 20 for Content and 20 for the 5 Good Habits for Evidence?

If you follow the 5 Good Habits for Evidence, you can make a decent grade even if you are not skilled or comfortable with writing. Here’s how the separate grade for Good Habits for Evidence helps you.

14 For the content – 20 points X .7 (C) = 14 if the lowest C but you’d get more if you’d written more

20 For following all of the 5 Good Habits for Evidence

34– a B out of the 40 possible points (34 divided by 40 = .85 or 85%, a B)

Equally important to that good grade is that by practicing the 5 Good Habits for Evidence you will get to be more skilled and more comfortable with writing.

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