

History 329U
Perspectives on Science and Mathematics
Prof. A.J. Lustig
Final paper guidelines and schedule
NEXT ITERATION

The final essay in this course is meant as an exercise for you to pull together themes and facts from the class and combine them with some further research into a particular subject of interest to you in the history of science or mathematics. It should combine in a longer, thoughtful work the research skills practiced in the short paper with the synthetic and analytic approach asked for in the quiz essay questions. It should be about 3,500 words long (with plus twenty, minus ten percent leeway).

The paper is not envisaged as a contribution to the scholarly literature in history of science (although if you do write such a paper, great! and I'll help you get it published). Instead, it's an exercise something like a 5E: this course is the engagement; your research will be the exploration; and writing the paper serves as the explanation (as you sort out the information and interpretation for yourself), the extension/elaboration (because writing it out is the most efficient way to make sure that you understand a subject clearly and completely), and the evaluation (for me, but also for you – Do I really understand this?) To give you an idea of scale, a ten-page paper covers about as much material as a single lecture for this course.

As with the 5E, your research for the paper *must* contain print sources in the history of science and mathematics (books and/or journal articles; these may be accessed online), and *may not* contain history of science drawn from science textbooks or the equivalent (usually biased and/or wrong). You must be prepared to evaluate and explain the provenance and reliability of each of your sources in the ways discussed in the library research skills workshop. You may use any widely recognized system of scholarly citation (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago); you must state at the top of your bibliography which system you are using.

We will work on the paper in stages:

- At the time of the library workshop (DATE ABOUT THIRD WEEK OF SEMESTER), you may already have a general subject of interest in mind for the long paper in addition to the subject for the short paper, although you will not be bound by it.
- By DATE MIDSEMESTER, you must see me in office hours or by appointment with a brief abstract of your subject and 3-4 primary and/or secondary sources you plan to use (you may well end up using more). You should be prepared to discuss why and how you have chosen these sources, how you intend to use them, and in what ways you consider them reliable.
- A written abstract, along with a bibliography including an analysis of your sources – where did you find them? How did you find them? Why do you think they are reliable and/or useful for your paper? – will be due DATE ONE WEEK LATER.
- A draft will be due DATE THREE WEEKS BEFORE END OF SEMESTER. This will be the primary focus of the assignment. The draft should be as complete as you can make it, both in terms of mechanics (spelling, grammar, syntax) and of structure and argument. I will thoroughly edit this and return it to you by DATE ONE WEEK LATER.
- Expect to revise this draft thoroughly, probably to the extent of more or less completely rewriting it. A final version will be due on the last day of class, DATE.

Grading will be based on the thoroughness and quality of your research, on the sophistication of your analysis, on the coherence of the paper's structure, and on its style and mechanics (spelling, grammar, and syntax).