

## Political Science 150: American Government and Politics

Instructor: Nicholas Jacobs

Term: Spring, 2018

### Post-Debate Paper Assignment

Each student will write a paper on the debate topic they selected. They may incorporate any material used in preparation for the debate in writing this paper. Students do not need to maintain the same position or argument; i.e., they may switch sides. Students should use the instructor's comments, the opposition's counter-argument, and their peers' questions to construct a more robust argument.

Papers must not exceed five-double-spaced pages. Please use Times New Roman 12-point font, with standard 1-inch margins.

The paper is due the Thursday TWO WEEKS after your debate performance by 11:59 p.m. You must submit your assignment via email to [jacobsnf@longwood.edu](mailto:jacobsnf@longwood.edu). Your grade will be reduced by two points every day that your paper is late. You are responsible for saving your work and backing up your files. *Computer failures are not warranted excuses in this age of USB devices, external hard drives, the Cloud, and Dropbox (free!).* Include both your last name and page number in the footer of each page.

*All essays, regardless of topic, should extensively draw on arguments, ideas, and terms we have discussed in lecture and from the readings found on the syllabus. Of course, you are welcome to bring in other textual evidence to support your position, although it is not required. Make sure, however, that the argument you present is your own and that it does not simply restate positions that you have heard in lecture/section. I also encourage you to take my questions and the questions of other students into consideration while composing your paper. Consider the paper assignment as a revision to the work you did for the debate. In sum, this assignment is an opportunity for you to demonstrate a firm command of a wide range of reading and lecture material, and apply your knowledge in making an argument about American politics.*

I will assess you based on the following criteria, in order of importance:

<b>Argument</b>	A clear, compelling, and original argument is explicitly presented that directly responds to <i>all</i> parts of the question – PRESENTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PAPER
<b>Evidence</b>	Describes and explains how each piece of evidence introduced in the paper relates to the argument. Quotations and specific references are explained – both substantively (what is said) and analytically (how it helps demonstrate the argument). Multiple perspectives are used to demonstrate the argument. May draw on information from outside of the course, including referencing contemporary events.
<b>Structure</b>	<i>Forcefully</i> develops the argument presented in the thesis in a clear, logical style. Historical background is provided, where necessary. Each section has a clear “sub-thesis” and remains focused on one part of the argument at a time. Address counter-arguments and predicts objections.
<b>Use of Course Materials</b>	Cites course materials (lecture/readings/discussion) appropriately, specifically, and extensively. Theories/concepts used from the literature help to motivate the paper's overall argument.
<b>Grammar/ Style/ Proofing</b>	Clear and almost flawless. Uses space judiciously. All references and in-text citations/footnotes follow a consistent style guide.