

## Guidelines for Conferences and Papers History 447

For this course I ask you to adopt the identity of a person or group who lived through the revolution (or part of it, anyway, since not everyone made it through alive). At four key points throughout the semester, you will represent your person or group, providing insights to our class about how the group or individual experienced the revolution: what s/he/they hoped for, sought to accomplish, witnessed, and so on. You will provide insights on both the subjective experience of revolution (i.e., how the groups/individuals in question perceived and reacted to the revolutionary context) and the objective consequences of the given group's behavior and its success in achieving its aims. For each conference you will compose a "position paper" in which you describe how the situation appears from the subjective standpoint of your group or individual (in the case of the last conference, you will turn in the paper later). Each paper thus informs the next one, which will have the cumulative effect of producing an assessment of the experience of your group/individual over the entire revolutionary process. The first two papers (3-4 pp. each) are worth 5% each, the second (7-8 p.) worth 10%, and the final (10-12 pp.) worth 15% of your total grade.

Although students will probably disagree with this next assertion, I call your attention to the fact that the required reading for this course—at the 400-level, I remind—is actually quite modest. This is precisely because while ensuring a common framework for our discussion, I want also to create space and time for students to explore individual experiences of the revolution. This requires you to engage in independent research for this course, which means accessing books and articles in our library. You will have to be self-directed, self-disciplined, and well organized. "Independent" does not mean that you will be without help, however. Note that we have a dedicated session to using library resources, as well as one to considering how we can use sources to make statements about the past. I also expect to meet with students as they plot their research strategies and contemplate how to present the material that they have found. Still, the burden to achieve is yours. Please keep in mind that you will—you must!—become the resident expert in our class on the group or individual you select. Others will be depending on you to represent that group/individual well, since only then can they properly represent their own group/individual. In short, independent and self-directed research, combined with aid and guidance from and library and me, represents a critical ingredient of this course.

Below I provide a list of individuals and groups that you might represent. This list is not exhaustive, but the adoption of anything beyond this list should be approved by me before you begin any serious or extensive work. A key question you might ask as you contemplate your choice is whether you are interested in leaders or in ordinary folk (both are critically important). Then think about whether you might like to explore someone who welcomed the revolution or someone who abhorred it—or for that matter someone who might have been ambivalent or largely indifferent (also a very important position). You could also ask yourself: do you like violence? If so, then some choices are more attractive than others. There are also some people and groups that I absolutely *must* have represented (Lenin, workers, Nicholas II, etc.), so if you yourself are indifferent to a choice, you can come to me and ask: *Whaddya need, boss?* And I will tell you.

Bolsheviks	Mensheviks	SRs (Left & Right)
Kadets (Constitutional Democrats)	peasants	workers
soldiers/sailors	non-Russian groups*	Orthodox or other clergy
monarchists	nobility	women
Cossacks	Imperial family	Nicholas II
Vladimir Lenin	Iulii Martov	Alexander Kerensky
Lavr Kornilov	Lev Trotsky	Pavel Miliukov
Viktor Chernov	White generals (Denikin et al.)	Alexandra Kollontai

\* Possibilities here are almost endless, but Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Georgians, Armenians, Tatars/Muslims, and Finns would probably be among the most viable options.

Take note of relevant deadlines. I ask you to have made a provisional choice already by 30 January, when we will be in the library together. This will allow you to do specific searches relevant to your individual or group. At the same time, the choice may remain provisional. By 11 February I ask you to make a definitive choice. Could your choice change after that? In extreme cases—and with my permission—yes, but that will negate a lot of the work that you will have done by then. So the goal is to feel confident about your choice. The first conference occurs on 20 February. By that point you are pretty much locked in.

At conferences and in your papers, you should focus on the subjective experience of the given individual or group, which of course will be shaped in part by the objective circumstances those people faced. So your paper and presentation will have to include elements of both the subjective and objective to be effective. In all cases, the main concern is to elucidate the events and experiences that have shaped the given person and that drive him/her to interpret his/her world in a certain way and to behave in a certain fashion. You should consider the aspirations of the group/individual, how these changed in response to changing circumstances, the kinds of political organization engaged in, and the extent to which the aspirations of your group/individual were met, etc. It is an exercise in empathy—seeking to enter into the mindset of someone very removed from you in time and space.

As concerns the papers, you may write in one of two forms: on the one hand, you may write from the first-person perspective of your individual/group. My guess is that this would be the more interesting, intriguing, and imaginative way to produce the paper, though perhaps not all would agree. On the other hand, you may adopt greater analytical distance and write from the third-person perspective of a brilliant UNLV student analyzing the situation in revolutionary Russia. This might be less imaginative, but it has the benefit of allowing you to examine matters in a cold and clear-eyed fashion. Either way, keep in mind that a core purpose of the exercise is for you to demonstrate a mastery of the material. Many actors were undoubtedly uncertain about how to make sense of the events going on around them. But if the actor that you construct is totally confused, then you forfeit the opportunity to show that you yourself actually have a handle on these events and processes. Making frequent reference in your paper to specific people, events, and institutions always helps. You can also have your actor relate the positions of others, even as s/he him/herself remains uncertain (e.g., “The Bolsheviks propose that we do this, but others say we should do that. What should I do?”). Regardless of how exactly you write the paper, at the conference you will need to speak in the first person (“We, the workers of Petrograd declare...” or “I, Lenin, assert that...”).

### Rules for Submission of Written Work

- Written work should be submitted to the instructor by email with a clear subject line and with your last name as part the title of the file that you send.
- Work is considered on time if it is received by noon on the due date listed in the syllabus. Thereafter, submissions are downgraded 1 point for every 30 minutes that they are late.
- All papers should be written in 12-point font with one-inch margins on all side.
- The paper should have a title that reflects its contents, but there is no need for a title page; just place the title at the top of the first page, centered and **in bold**.
- Pages should be numbered, preferably at the top center.
- The length requirements indicated will be strictly enforced. If I request a paper that is 3-4 pages long, then it should be at least three pages long (with no bogus padding or absurd margins), and it should not go onto a fifth page.
- You will need to cite the sources that you use. My preference is for footnotes and Chicago style. Seek guidance if you need it.

### Everyone Loves Rubrics

People love rubrics nowadays, so here are mine. Obviously, the precise nature of the four different papers will vary a bit, but these rubrics should be relevant in all cases.

A = excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper is well organized with clear structure and organization.</li> <li>• The prose is lucid and precise, with clear topic sentences.</li> <li>• The paper offers an argument or set of propositions and supports them with appropriate evidence.</li> <li>• The paper exhibits an excellent mastery of sources and the historical process; the paper is factually correct.</li> <li>• The paper deploys an appropriate number of sources.</li> <li>• All the technical requirements of the paper have been met, including standards of citation.</li> </ul>
B = good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization and structure are strong in general, but deficiencies remain.</li> <li>• The prose is intelligible (with good topic sentences) but at points imprecise or not clear.</li> <li>• The paper offers certain propositions, but these are somewhat vague, contradictory, or only partially supported by evidence.</li> <li>• The paper reveals a good mastery of sources and historical process; though there may be a few factual inaccuracies, the paper is generally reliable.</li> <li>• Some evidence that might complicate the paper's position has been ignored.</li> <li>• The paper relies too much on too few sources.</li> <li>• Technical requirements have been largely, but not entirely, met.</li> </ul>

C = marginally adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More serious deficiencies in organization, structure, and prose that begin to compromise the intelligibility of the essay.</li> <li>• A clear absence of proofreading.</li> <li>• Paper offers few propositions and gives poor indication about what it is trying to say.</li> <li>• There are factual deficiencies, and the paper reveals only an incomplete grasp of the historical process.</li> <li>• Little evidence is offered to support the claims being made.</li> <li>• The paper relies too much on an insufficient number of sources.</li> </ul>
D = seriously deficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very poor organization and prose.</li> <li>• No effort to offer any propositions, assertions, or arguments.</li> <li>• Bad or no topic sentences.</li> <li>• Almost no use of any evidence.</li> <li>• No signs of proofreading.</li> </ul>
F = horrible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any paper not actually turned in or turned in too late.</li> <li>• Any paper exhibiting any clear signs of plagiarism.</li> <li>• The writing is senseless, incomprehensible, and/or bizarre.</li> <li>• Absolutely no signs of proofreading.</li> <li>• The paper is substantially shorter than the minimum.</li> <li>• The recycling bin is the <i>only</i> place where this paper belongs.</li> </ul>