DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINAL ESSAY

1. The final essay should be 20-30 pages typed or printed, double-spaced, on one side of the page only, with page numbers (with no page number on a title page if you use one), and with one-inch margins on all sides. Do not use a font that is unusually small or large and do not use bold print for the main text. If you really want to use subtitles, you can try to convince me that it’s a good idea for your particular paper.

2. Include specific evidence for any generalizations you make and footnotes or endnotes (whichever you prefer) for all specific information. Use the format for footnotes or endnotes required in the latest edition of Turabian, including the proper order of information, punctuation, etc. You can also use my handouts and/or the notes in any relatively recent book by a professional historian published by a university press as additional guidelines. Avoid direct quotes of historians or other recent scholars unless the exact words are helpful in explaining a historiographic issue, but include a note even if you are paraphrasing.

3. Be careful to avoid plagiarism of any kind. Any clear evidence of the use of someone else’s words or ideas without a proper note will mean an automatic “F” (after a chance to explain the lapse). If you are uncertain about anything connected with this issue, please talk to me about it.

4. Introduce in the first or second paragraph the primary question and time period you are addressing in the essay and general aspects of your thesis (main conclusion), as well as the most central community/ies, family/ies, people, and/or other especially relevant specifics. It is not a good idea to write the introduction segment first because it can then become too lengthy and/or because you may not realize exactly what precise question you are covering until you have written most of a draft of the essay.

5. After you have finished the main body of your essay, decide what explanatory information you need to give readers about the broader history that is a context for what you are analyzing, as well as what historiographic information might be helpful. These additions can be interwoven with other material and/or discussed separately toward the beginning of the paper. Do not expect to go into extreme detail about subjects or periods that you are not including in your special focus.

6. Most of the essay will involve the special question that you are addressing. See if any of the monographic essays you have read can be helpful as a model for how to organize your discussion of your hypotheses and the evidence for them.

7. At the end of the essay, summarize any conclusions you can make and any questions that remain about your special topic and what it suggests about the people you cover, as well as about any broader groups.

8. Use a combination of Spell-Check, the Skrunk and White book, and any other references to correct the technical aspects of your writing (spelling, grammar, punctuation, general syntax, etc.) Pay attention to the style of the professional historians you appreciate the most. A “rough” draft is not supposed to be “rough” in terms of writing mechanics and I do not want to waste my time or yours suggesting corrections that you could make without my help. Don’t forget the Writing Center as another source of help for the mechanics of writing.

9. Call at anytime if you have questions.
APPENDIXES
1. You may include as one or more appendixes any information that might be helpful and interesting for readers but which do not fit easily in the body of the paper, such as maps, chronologies, photocopies of photographs (no original copies of anything irreplaceable, please), transcripts of interviews, genealogical charts, other kinds of charts, etc. Stick to what really does help a reader understand more fully the information in your essay. You do not have to include the bulk of your primary sources.
2. You may, if you wish, include a special appendix after the bibliography, explaining any plans you have to build on what you did for this essay, whether for a thesis or some other project, and/or what you would have liked to do if you could have had more time. This can include an annotated supplemental bibliography of primary and/or secondary sources, thoughts about other kinds of primary sources you would like to find (including, if relevant, people you would like to interview), as well as ways in which you might want to expand or otherwise change the focus of your research and writing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE ESSAY
1. Include all sources, primary and secondary, that were helpful in researching and writing your essay. You do not have to have direct references to sources in your footnotes or endnotes in order to include them in your bibliography. Consider what materials might be useful to a reader with similar interests.
2. Use the format required in the latest edition of Turabian, including the proper order of information, punctuation, etc. You can also use my handouts and/or a bibliography in any relatively recent book by a professional historian published by a university press as additional guidelines.
3. Divide the references into primary and secondary sources. You can decide whether or not to include separate categories for primary sources (such as newspapers, oral histories, letters, census reports, etc.). You do not need to do separate sections for books and essays in the secondary source category.
4. The bibliography does not need to be annotated, but you may add any comments for individual sources that you think might be especially helpful for a reader (or for someone grading the paper).