

Philosophy on Research Paper Writing
St. Louis University High School
Social Studies Department

Preface

Writing with sources at SLUH is an integral part of the Social Studies curriculum. The Social Studies Department provides appropriate, developmental, sequential instruction in all required courses. Students will actively engage in research paper writing in all required courses.

The research paper for each course should be a mountaintop writing assignment; a real work of scholarship, of which the student is justifiably proud. It should not be the only writing assignment of a particular course. Regular writing assignments – formal and informal, graded and ungraded – are a part of each history course. As students move through the curriculum, greater sophistication in researching and writing will be emphasized. Appropriate expectations for each grade will be set.

Topics for research papers should be relevant to the course material being studied. For example, Freshmen could write about the Persian Wars, but not about World War Two. Sophomores could write about Napoleon, but not about Lincoln.

Students will learn to use a variety of sources that may be categorized as primary and secondary. Primary sources are uninterpreted accounts of events, an "eyewitness" to history. Some examples of primary sources include a diary, letter, document, newspaper account, photograph, or similar. Students need to interpret this material. A secondary source has already interpreted the material.

The Chicago Manual of Style/Turabian will be used in all Social Studies department courses.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Seventh Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing) 7th ed. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2007.

Course Expectations

Freshmen – Global History 1

Freshmen should be required to complete a 3-5 page research paper.
Use 5 sources.

Sophomores – Global History 2

Sophomores should be required to complete a 5-7 page research paper.
Use 8 sources minimum, including at least 1 primary source.

Juniors – U.S. History

Juniors should be required to complete 8-16 pages of research-based writing.
Students make appropriate use of sources, including primary sources.