

History 230 First Ladies Paper Assignment

GE Focus Areas: Communication-Writing Intensive; Digital Literacy; Civic Discourse-Historical Awareness

The study of presidential administrations and the Commanders-in-Chief themselves continues to be an important component of U.S. history courses. To date, the office of President of the United States of America has yet to be filled by a woman, but the women behind the POTUS, or “First Ladies,” have had considerable influence over the past 125 years.

Each of you has been assigned three First Ladies. Your task is to research one of them and write a brief 4-5 page (1000-1500 word) essay about her image and influence. Questions to consider include: How did the American and/or international public see her? What programs or causes did she champion? How did she influence the President during his tenure in office? What is her legacy?

You will also share highlights of your research with the rest of the class through a brief visual presentation. Presentations will be shared through the First Ladies discussion board forum and may be in the form of a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation, video, PDF, DOC or JPEG file. Classmates will view your presentations and comment on them through the discussion board.

C-SPAN has excellent resources for this project at <http://firstladies.c-span.org/>. You may rely solely on those found on their website or use other books, articles or web resources.

- 1. Complete topic selection worksheet indicating which First Lady you will be researching and why you chose her.**
- 2. Bibliography and Outline**
Provide a list of all of the sources you have consulted in your research and a basic outline that covers the main points you will be discussing.
- 3. Final Draft**
The Final Draft will include the 1000 word research paper *and* your final bibliography.
- 4. Project Presentation**
You will share what you learned in your research with your classmates with a brief visual presentation uploaded into the First Ladies discussion board forum.
You will have one week to view and comment on your classmates’ presentations in the discussion board.

Notes on Mechanics/Formatting:

- Your final draft must be 1000-1500 words in length and include:
 - A title
 - An introductory paragraph
 - An organized discussion of the points introduced in the introduction
 - A conclusion
- Margins are to be no wider than 1”
- Use a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman, Courier, Arial)
- The essay is to be written in your own words and should contain few, if any, direct quotes from the text or other sources
- Proofread your essay for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors before submitting
- Use MLA or APA for citations and format
- Include a bibliography of all sources consulted, whether cited or not
- The Writing Rubric, MLA Basics and other resources can be found in the “Writing Resources” folder under the Course Info section of Blackboard