GBK 101.002

Guidelines for Essay 4

This assignment ties in with the University Quality Enhancement Plan. To read more about the initiative, see: https://qep.mercer.edu/program-structure.cfm

In order to demonstrate that GBK is meeting the goals of the QEP, we must be able to prove that our courses assign work that “equip students in our traditional residential undergraduate program with the skills required to engage in sophisticated research aimed at solving real problems facing humankind. We believe that the successful implementation of this plan will help us achieve our ultimate aim: to inspire students to use their gifts and talents to live lives of meaning and purpose.” (https://qep.mercer.edu/) We will talk in class about the assumptions that undergird this project. In the meantime, however, we must meet the student learning objectives for the QEP. At the “foundational level,” these include:

1. **Critically analyze** multiple perspectives or theories about a relevant issue/problem faced by a local, national, or global community.

2. **Propose solutions** to a local, national, or global issue/problem using academic knowledge and scholarship.

3. **Articulate ethical reasoning** in proposing ways one might serve to address or alleviate a local, national, or global issue/problem.

Here’s how we are going to get there. In conjunction with our reading of Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* we will read *The New York Times*’ coverage of international events. Broadly speaking, we are interested in societies at war. Some possible stories to track include: escalating political rhetoric, the refugee crisis, preemptive strikes, the effect of war on civilians, resource use (broadly defined), the human, environmental, economic, or cultural toll of warfare, and alliances. We will brainstorm other ideas.

Your task is to write an essay that demonstrates an understanding of Thucydides’ history of this ancient war **and** that you can extrapolate and apply what you learned to a “real world problem facing humankind.” The stakes are higher on this assignment. Ultimately, the QEP suggests that Mercerians will save the world. (No pressure!) But first, you must fulfill the requirements of this assignment. At the end of the semester, a team of Mercer faculty will read your essays – your names will be removed from your papers – in order to assess whether the GBK program has satisfactorily met the SLOs of the QEP. Don’t screw this up.

We will hold workshops throughout the rest of the semester on this project. Below, are the hard deadlines you must meet. Remember, your essay must run 1600-1800 words, employ standard fonts and margins. The assignment is worth 200 points.

**Wednesday, October 19** – Meet in Tarver. Review assignment and accessing/reading *The New York Times*

**Saturday, December 17** – Final Draft of essay due at 12:00pm. Submit via Blackboard.