**Dr. Neal’s AP U.S. History Fall 2016**

**SEMINAR #1**

***DUE: Tuesday/Wednesday, August 30/31***

*The Seminar will provide us an opportunity to discuss historical information, form and share opinions, analyze different perspectives, and hopefully come up with new insights into challenging questions and controversial issues. The discussion is to be entirely student-centered with the instructor acting only as the moderator. Students are encouraged to express opinions, respectfully challenge others, and ask questions to help all of us understand the past and present issues and cultural differences.*

**Focus Questions:**

* ***Why is 1492 seen as one of the most significant turning points in history?***
* ***Should we consider Columbus a hero or a villain?***
* ***What are the values and the controversies of celebrating Columbus Day as a national holiday? Should we continue to do so?***

***Support your opinion with historical documentation, news articles, and other relevant information.***

*Your grade for the seminar is dependent on two parts: a written component and an oral component. Each is worth 50 points for a total of 100 points for the seminar. You must do both parts in order to earn a passing grade.*

**Written Component (50 points):** The written part of your seminar is intended to help you formally prepare for the seminar and provide the instructor with clear evidence of the depth and breadth of your research and preparation. It includes three sections: 1) a thesis and introduction, 2) documentation, and 3) a bibliography. The written component is to be turned in immediately after the seminar discussion.

* **Thesis and Introduction** (15 points): In your introduction, you should include a thesis statement which essentially **expresses your opinion in answer to the focus questions**. It can be more than one sentence. You should also briefly explain how you arrived at this opinion and include several key points you are prepared to discuss. This should be one page or less. (I will not read past the first page of your introduction.)
* **Documentation of Evidence** (25 points): This section is basically a **collection of facts, quotes, and other evidence** that helped you form your opinion. Use it to support your discussion and be ready to use different pieces of your collected information to help you fit into the discussion no matter which direction it may go. This means you may want to collect information from perspectives other than your own—even the opposition—and be prepared to challenge its validity or share a quote or fact that weakens the opposition. This section should **be typed,** single-spaced with double spacing between quotes or lists of facts. (Do not count the documentation I have included in the sample below). Be sure to **cite where the information** comes from.
  + A = 17-20 examples of clear, knowledgeable **evidence** (quotes, facts, etc.)
  + B = 12-15 examples of quality evidence
  + C = 8-10 examples
* **Bibliography** (10 points): Include a separate bibliography page, properly formatted of all the sources you used in your preparation for this seminar even if you did not cite them directly in your documentation or introduction. URLs (website addresses) alone are not sufficient citation. You must include authors, if known, titles of websites and website dates and/or date of access as well as the URL.

**Oral Component (50 points):** Be prepared to share, debate, agree, question, and challenge other members of the class during the seminar. Your grade for the oral part will be based on the following:

* For a **C** – Speak at least once with effective comments that demonstrate you understand the historical issues. Provide point, evidence, and analysis.
* For a **B** – Speak up two more times, clearly expressing your opinion and providing relevant evidence to support your argument, including effective analysis of how your evidence supports your points. Build on, or respectfully refute, the argument of other students.
* For an **A –** Speak up two or more times, showing evidence you are actively engaged in the flow of the discussion and/or acknowledging counterpoints. Introduce insightful analysis and/or unique and valuable evidence to support your argument.

**Sample Documentation:**

“A sailor on board the *Pinta* sighted land early in the morning of October 12, 1492, and a new era of European exploration and expansion began.” ~Library of Congress, *Today in History*

1st recorded celebration was October 12, 1792 by the Society of St. Tammany (a.k.a. Columbian Order) to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the landing.

1st official Columbus Day was in 1892, the 400th anniversary when President Benjamin Harrison signed a proclamation promoting the holiday. It was enthusiastically received with school programs, plays, and community festivities throughout the U.S.

The 1893 world’s fair in Chicago honored Columbus and is remembered as “The World’s Columbian Exposition.”

Colorado was the first state to pass legislation declaring October 12 a legal holiday.

The above list of facts was taken from *Today in History* at <http://memory.loc,gov/ammem/today/oct12.html>

“The ‘Transform Columbus Day’ rally was organized by American Indians and other activists who say Christopher Columbus was a slave trader whose explorations set off centuries of abuse for indigenous people. . . . The crowd yelled ‘No more Columbus Day!’ and joined in songs and prayers. Others beat drums or carried flags.” ~Judith Kohler, Associated Press

“Columbus Day should serve as a day of celebration for all Italian Americans. It is an opportunity to remember the role that they have played while shaping this great nation of ours. . . Maybe the first Italian who had an impact on these Americas, and it is for this that Oct. 12 was chosen as a day for Italian American’s to celebrate Columbus, but more importantly as a time to celebrate their own history and heritage. The blacks and Chicanos are given a whole month to celebrate their history and heritage, why can’t the Italians have at least one undisputed day to remember theirs?” ~Bryan G. McKeough, *The State News*

“Schooled in hardship, pessimism, and violence, the Aztecs saw themselves as living in the World of the Fifth Sun, a final human era destined to end in cataclysm . . . Eager to expand their empire . . . they launched fierce wars against neighboring lands. . . . Aztec warriors demanded tribute and took prisoners from the people they subdued. They then sacrificed numerous captives at pyramid temples to placate the gods. These deities, they believed, would in turn protect them . . .” ~Jacqueline Jones, et al, *Created Equal*, p. 12

“Spanish arrival in the West Indies in 1492 triggered widespread ecological and human disaster within decades. Well-armed and eager for quick wealth, the early colonizers brought havoc to the Taino Indians and Caribs who inhabited the islands. The strange newcomers killed and enslaved native peoples and extracted tribute from the survivors in the form of gold panned from streams. . . Worse, European diseases ravaged countless villages . . . 19 of every 20 people [died] within a generation. ~Jacqueline Jones, et al, *Created Equal*, p. 26

**Sample Bibliography:**

de las Casas, Bartolome. “The ‘Sins’ of the Spanish Invasion.” Reprinted in Berman, Marjorie, compiler., *Retrieving the American Past: A Customized U.S. History Reader*, Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2001.

Jones, Jacqueline. *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States*. Vol.1. New York: Longman, 2003.

Kohler, Judith. “Anti-Columbus Day Rally Draws about 1,500 Protesters at Colorado State Capitol,” *Transform Columbus Day*, 6 Oct. 2001 <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ today/oct12.html> Sept. 5, 2002.

Library of Congress. “Columbus Day,” *Today in History*, <http://www.tranformcolumbusday. org/media/20011006-ap.htm>Sept. 5, 2002.

McKeough, Bryan G. “Columbus Day Serves as Italian Celebration,” *The State News: Michigan State University’s Independent Voice*, 16 Oct. 1998 <http://www.statenews.com/ editionsfall98/101698/op\_ltr2.html>Sept. 5, 2002.