



Position Paper Guidelines: “Does the Election of President Obama Mean Race Relations are Better?”

The position paper on the reality check handout entitled “Did the Election of President Obama Mean Race Relations are Better?” has been posted on the course website (look under “Projects”). The article was written following the 2008 election of Barack Obama. Two terms later, the legacy of Obama in terms of this nation’s race and ethnic relations are just now being analyzed. Because the article is dated (we have just recently elected our 45th president, Donald Trump), this assignment will require you to search out at least two scholarly references as part of your analysis. You can have more than two references. But two must be from scholarly sources. By this I mean refereed journal articles as opposed to popular magazine, alternate news, or mainstream newspaper articles or op eds. The later can be in addition to your two scholarly sources.

“Did the Election of Barak Obama Mean Race Relations are Better?” will require a minimum of at least 2 pages. This write-up is meant to serve as a culminating paper. You must state and then defend your position. Many of the grading criteria being used in the international scene and reality check write-ups will likewise apply for this assignment. First, limit your summarizing of the handout to the first paragraph. Second, don’t just provide a summary either of the handout or your two sources. You will be graded on your application of critical reasoning skills in your analysis of the handout in terms of the text, lectures, and outside sources. Your analysis will require you to make the case for your position employing concepts and theories covered in class. Material from the two scholarly sources must be incorporated into your analysis. I want to give you an example of a summary versus a critical analysis. Below is an example of a mere summary:

“Article A was about... by ... and this is what they found....article B was about...by...and this is what they found.” State your topic in a way that the findings of the research articles either support or negate your position.

What I’ll be looking for is this:

“Article B’s author conjectured that race relations deteriorated over all during the eight years of Obama’s presidency. He cited polls taken from Pew research at the end of each year of Obama’s two terms. Two-thousand respondents were randomly selected by Pew each year the survey was conducted. Author B noted that respondent’s reported each year that relations among whites, blacks, and Latinos had worsened. This trend held true irrespective of whether the respondent indicated they were white, black, or Latino. The survey conducted in 2015 showed the greatest downturn. The author concluded that data showed a widespread public perception that race relations had worsened rather than improved under the Obama administration”.

Third, your paper should follow a general flow. Give consideration to writing an introduction with a clear thesis statement stating your opinion, body and conclusion. However, keep in mind that you may have subtopics within each. Be sure you stay on topic when stating your position. Grammar, spelling, clarity of thought, and logical coherence will factor into your overall grade. Make sure when quoting from the text, handouts or any other scholarly source that your citations and references follow the APA style in accord with



departmental policy. Since you will have to employ outside sources for this assignment, you have to include a reference page.

As with the international scenes and reality check write-ups, you must adhere to the following guidelines:

- 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- Double spaced throughout the paper
- 1 inch margins (top, bottom and both sides)
- No extra lines between paragraphs
- Reference page is titled "References" to reflect APA style **not** Works Cited.

The position paper is due at the start of class on May 1st, along with your two final international scene write-ups. The position paper should have its own separate cover page. It must be a minimum of two pages. Late papers face an automatic 10% deduction. I will accept no papers by email. The position paper will be worth a total of 30 points. Once more, consult the grading rubric on page 6 of the syllabus concerning how your paper will be graded. There is an APA format template on the course website you can consult when writing your paper.