

Robert Self, T.A.

HSTAA 432, Spring 1996

Office: Smith 204-E; Mailbox: Smith 315

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30 - 12:30

Wednesday 9:30 - 10:30 (and by appointment)

Discussion Section

In discussion section we work on analyzing the readings assigned in the course and learning to compose historical arguments. These small-group meetings are your opportunity to participate actively in the process of interpreting the past and to discuss and evaluate the course material. The major part of each week's section meeting will be an exploration of questions and issues **raised in the reading**. In order to participate effectively, you must complete the reading assignment before coming to the section meeting. To help you with the reading each week I will provide either a set of questions about the material or a study guide. Memorizing facts will not be as important in this course as learning critical thinking.

As a T.A., my role in the course is to assist you in developing communication and comprehension skills. I am available for help with writing, for example: I happily except rough drafts for the assigned research paper and will devote some section time to working through exam- and paper-writing techniques. I am available to answer questions about lecture and the readings as well, and we will devote *some* section time to answering general questions. My office hours are an opportunity for you to meet individually with me to discuss writing assignments, exams, and any general questions.

Grades and Evaluations

In this course, the T.A.s grade your exams and papers and evaluate your discussion section participation. All questions, comments, or problems regarding grades should come to me first. Your grade in section works out to 25% of the course grade. The section grade will be determined by class participation, performance on quizzes and written assignments, and attendance. Two absences will result in a drop of one letter grade on your section grade. **There may be written assignments in section.**

Writing Center

The History department offers one-on-one writing instruction and assistance through the Writing Center, located in Smith 210-C. Students can meet individually with a writing tutor and receive help on assigned papers from the planning stage through the completed final draft. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this service. Taking the time to write a first draft, followed by revisions, in consultation with a writing tutor, can improve your grade by as much as one full letter (i.e., from a C to a B or from a B to an A).