

History 124B: Twentieth Century Russia Peer Review Instructions

If you took first-year composition or the Humanities Core Course at UCI, you will be familiar with peer reviewing. The purpose is to give you the opportunity to see how other students are approaching the writing assignment, to see your own writing through the eyes of another student, and to practice reading and responding to others' writing.

Tuesday, May 6:

1. Exchange names and email addresses with the other members of your group.
2. By Tuesday, May 13, send a **complete draft** of your essay to each member of your group. If you wish, write a brief note at the top of each draft to ask for specific feedback on some aspect of your writing. (Make sure the drafts all have names and titles on them.)
3. Before class on Thursday, May 15, read the two drafts carefully and write responses on the Peer Review Worksheet (handout). Begin by rereading the assignment. You may write comments on the draft, but be sure to respond carefully and specifically to the questions posed on the worksheet. (If you need more room, use extra sheets of paper.)
4. Do not comment on technical features of the text: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. These matters should be handled by the writer in the final editing stage. Instead, you should concentrate on the **use of primary sources, thesis and focus of the paper, and the use of evidence to support the argument of the paper.**

Thursday, May 15: **Bring a draft of your own paper to mark on as your reviewers discuss it with you.**

1. Reconvene your groups. Spend 15 minutes discussing each paper, making reference to the comments on the review sheets. Be sure to keep time carefully so everyone gets an equal amount of feedback.
2. For reviewers:
 - make specific rather than vague or general comments:
 - praising ("This was good because...")
 - summarizing ("Here you are saying...")
 - challenging ("I don't agree with you when you say...")
 - questioning ("Why do you write...?")
 - requesting more information ("Here you could add...")
 - suggesting reorganization ("This would be better in the first section...")
 - ask the writer questions to draw out information that may not have made it into the paper or to create a conversation about the writing process

3. For writers:

- don't apologize for your work! it's only a draft
- take notes while others are talking about your writing; jot down even suggestions that don't appeal to you right now; they may seem more helpful as you reflect on them later as you rewrite
- ask your readers questions
- when you revise, you don't have to use every suggestion; just take what seems right to you and ignore the rest

4. After you've discussed each paper, return the drafts and worksheets to the writer. (Turn these in with your revised, final paper.)