

## HI 375 A2 - Renaissance and Reformation - Summer 2018

### Essay Assignment #1: The Renaissance

#### **Directions**

For the first half of the course this summer you will write a well-developed essay using the primary source documents about the Renaissance available on Canvas. Your essay assignment will be divided into two sections:

#### **1) Topic and Outline**

You will submit a Topic/Outline of your writing project a few days before your final paper. This assignment will require you to identify the topic you are working on and to present a detailed plan of your essay, and its basic organization. Include a section for the introduction with a possible thesis, body paragraphs with arguments you plan to make, and concluding points. (See Canvas for examples)

Requirements for Topic and Outline: 2-5 pages, 1-inch margins, double-spaced, 11 or 12 font size

**Due Date: Monday, July 16 by 11:59PM**

#### **2) Essay**

Choose one of the topics below to develop a well-written argumentative essay using the primary sources from the Renaissance. You may also choose to use your Merriman textbook and/or different passages from the primary sources. Make sure you have a clear thesis statement, relevant supporting evidence from the documents, and a strong conclusion. Cite all your sources as footnotes or parenthetical citations, and make sure to answer the topic question thoroughly. Don't forget to come up with a creative title for our essay that embodies the argument of your paper.

Requirements for Essay: 7-10 pages, 1-inch margins, double-spaced, 11 or 12 font size.

**Due Date: Friday, June 20 by 11:59PM**

#### **Essay Topic Options (Choose ONE)**

- Option 1

Sources: Boccaccio's *The Decameron*

Pick one of the following topics: gender, religion, honor, nobility in Boccaccio's *The Decameron*. Trace one of these topics through at least 3 of the novellae (stories) and explain how Boccaccio and his contemporaries would have understood one of these ideas during the early Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> - early 15<sup>th</sup> century). What do these stories tell us about the importance/meaning of your chosen topic? Does this topic seem to have different meanings or components in the early Renaissance? Explain in your conclusion how Boccaccio's understanding of your chosen topic is different from our modern understanding. Feel free to use stories from *The Decameron* we did not discuss in class.

- Option 2

Sources: Machiavelli's *History of Florence*, Machiavelli's *Mandragola*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*

Machiavelli has been described by many scholars and academics as a "Renaissance Man". What do you think this means? Write a well-developed essay explaining and analyzing at least 3 characteristics of the Italian Renaissance you have learned about in class and/or from your readings that Machiavelli seems to embody as shown through his writings. Pay close attention to the topics he discusses, themes, and the manner of writing he uses to make your argument. Feel free to use passages from the sources we have not examined in class.

## Essay Format

Name  
Class  
Date

Page 1

### Title of Essay

#### Paragraph 1

Introduction that tells us about the topic you're discussing and the primary sources you will be using ...The last sentence of this section should be the thesis statement. This sentence should tell us what your argument is, and the briefly list the evidence you will use to argue your claim.

Page 2-6

#### Paragraphs 2, 3, 4...etc..

Body/Argument paragraphs after the introduction should show the evidence ("quotes") from the primary sources, and your analysis of them to make your arguments.

The first sentence of your body paragraphs should always be a topic sentence. This means a sentence that tells us what the paragraph will discuss. For example this could be the start of a paragraph: "In ancient Egypt, it seems that people considered kings to be very strong individuals". You must follow this topic sentences with evidence from the documents that supports that idea.

Pages 2-6

Each body paragraph should only focus on one idea. If you focus on too many things at once, the arguments become difficult to sustain and defend. Use as many body paragraphs as you need to discuss and analyze your evidence.

Page

7-8

#### Last Paragraph

The Conclusion should briefly tell the reader what your argument was and how your evidence showed this. You should also make an interesting commentary on the sources overall, and leave the reader thinking about the possibilities of studying the source. Leave the reader wanting to know more about the topic you just discussed.