

ENVS / HIST / PS 395Q – Sustainability and Collapse in the Middle East

Final Paper instructions

Paper Due: 2 Nov 2016 at 5:00pm – please submit by email to your professor (Prof. Fatkin or Adelsberger, depending on your course section) and email it to the students in your group (groups TBA).

Revised Paper Due: 20 Nov 2016 by 10:00pm.

Task

Write a 15-20 page research paper on a topic related to the materials presented in this class. The final paper topic is entirely up to you, though you should review the topic and get approval for it from your professor (either Professor Adelsberger or Fatkin). The paper also must be interdisciplinary, i.e., it needs to incorporate at least two of the three disciplinary perspectives driving this class (Environmental Studies, History / Archaeology, Political Science).

Expected paper length: 15-20 pages plus bibliography and figures

ENVS 395 Students

Citational style: APA style. Your bibliography should list all the sources cited in your paper.

Minimum number of peer-reviewed journal (“primary” for science writing) sources:

5. Designate these peer-reviewed sources in your annotated bibliography.

HIST 395 Students

Citational style: Chicago footnote-bibliography style. Please remember – your bibliography should list all sources that you read for this paper, regardless of whether you cited them or not. Also, please separate your bibliography into primary and secondary sources.

Minimum number of secondary sources: 10 (you may include books and articles that we read for class).

Steps toward a successful research paper:

1. Formulate a **research question**, then a **thesis** and **argument** based on your readings.
2. Your annotated bibliography should provide some important raw material for assembling your final paper. Review Turabian et al. chapters 5, 6, 7, and 9 for advice on this process.
3. **Research question:** some part of your paper should include an attempt to answer a big question about sustainability and / or collapse (in general) and one particular “wicked problem” related to sustainability in the Middle East.
4. Identify and delimit your **primary sources** – what is the body of evidence from which you will make your argument? You will need to have a significant portion of your paper dedicated to an overview of these and a justification of why these and not others.
5. Identify your **tertiary sources** – what background information do you need to know? These are vital for setting the stage, connecting to the larger field of scholarship, and arguing for a particular interpretation of your primary sources. How does your interpretation relate to the larger conversation on this topic?
6. Research and make use of **secondary sources** as appropriate – to situate your thesis vis-à-vis other scholars, to provide you with background and others’ interpretations of the primary source(s) which you are using. This includes:
 - a. Talking about where and how you agree with other scholars

- b. Talking about where and how you disagree with other scholars
 - c. Highlighting your thesis / contribution to the discussion of this matter / question (most likely adding nuance to other scholars' arguments rather than overturning conventional wisdom).
7. Each paragraph should move your argument forward by supporting your thesis and explaining why your answer is the most compelling, based on the evidence. It should be introduced by an argumentative topic sentence.
 8. Beware of trying to make your evidence say too much. Ambiguity is inevitable in research – don't shy away from it. Tell your reader about it, and let your reader know the possible implications of the ambiguity, as well as the explanation that you find most compelling for making sense of the evidence.