

Attendance, preparation, and *quality* class participation (15% of your overall semester grade)

These are extraordinary times, which may necessitate adjustments to the assignments. I will provide as much advance warning as possible when changes are necessary, and will be flexible as needed with your response to these changes. I will also make sure that no change has a negative impact on any student's grade for the semester.

Quality participation involves comments and questions that advance our collective understanding of concepts discussed in this course. The same definition applies to synchronous zoom meetings and online discussion forums.

ASSIGNMENT GOALS: MC 492 is a research seminar. The practice of assessing and conducting research is inherently an interactive process that requires feedback from multiple directions and backgrounds. Therefore, it is essential that we continuously engage in discussion about the scholarly materials that are prepared by classmates and outside authors. These conversations will improve our individual research efforts, as well as enriching the field of environmental governance as a whole. Everyone's participation is necessary to achieve this goal! Moreover, discussion participation is also an important method for internalizing concepts and lessons we confront in this course. Much of our learning emerges as we attempt to explain and support our position to others. This semester, we will engage in discussions both synchronously (Tuesday/Thursday zoom meetings) and asynchronously (discussions kicked off by responses to the team presentations on *Microsoft Teams*).

ASSESSMENT: Since you are all experienced college students, I expect that everyone will remain current with all course readings without requiring you to submit your reading notes. That said, in small class discussions, it becomes quite clear when some students are not spending the necessary time to prepare for class sessions. Your preparation, whether weak or strong, will be clearly reflected in your participation grade. If there is evidence that the class as a whole is not keeping up with the readings, all students may be required to submit weekly reading notes as part of this participation grade.

I will assess preparation and participation for each class period and each online discussion forum, in order to establish your semester participation grade.

For each zoom meeting:

3.6-4.0 indicates that you attended the meeting, prepared well, participated actively, and contributed important insights to the discussion based on sound preparation for class [Please note that insightful questions often count more towards this level than answers, because questions often do advance our collective discussion and group understanding];

2.7-3.5 indicates that you attended class, prepared well, listened attentively, and made an occasional contribution;

2.0-2.6 indicates that you attended class but declined to participate or arrived unprepared;

0.1-1.0 indicates that you attended class without paying attention to class activities (e.g., you did not respond when a question was directed to you);

0.0 normally indicates that you consistently did not attend zoom sessions or provide a reasonable warning in advance for your absence (excused absences are simply dropped from the calculation to ensure that you are not harmed by your

absence...given our unique situation this semester, I will be more lenient with excused absences, but still very much appreciate you letting me know in advance if you need to miss class).

For each asynchronous class discussion forum:

3.9-4.0 indicates that you logged in, viewed the presentation and colleagues' responses, and contributed important insights to the discussion, drawing on evidence from assigned readings and/or other sources. 4.0 performance indicates that you played a leadership role in helping the class understand, apply and build upon key concepts to develop new ideas [As in synchronous meetings, please note that insightful questions often count more towards this level than answers, because questions often do advance our collective discussion and group understanding];

3.3-3.8 indicates that you logged in, viewed the presentation and colleagues' responses, and contributed important insights to the discussion, drawing on evidence from assigned readings and/or other sources [again, questions are often most important];

2.6-3.2 indicates that you logged in, viewed the presentation and colleagues' responses, and contributed to the discussion by connecting ideas to the readings or other examples. The distinction between 3.0 and 4.0 is not related only to the quantity of your contribution(s), but more to how well you helped the class open up our discussions and develop our ideas on the topic in question;

2.0-2.5 indicates that you logged in and viewed the presentation and colleagues' responses, but without contributing to the discussion;

Below 2.0 normally indicates that you did not log in to view the presentation and colleagues' responses before class, or at least provide a reasonable warning as to why you would not be available to do so.

At the end of the semester, the average of your daily participation/discussion grades will account for 15% of your overall semester grade. In addition, I will recalculate all grades in a few different ways to ensure that our remote learning context does not unfairly harm anyone's grade.

When I calculate the overall final grades at the end of the semester, averages of 3.75+ = 4.0 reported grade; 3.25-3.75 = 3.5 reported grade; 2.75-3.25 = 3.0 reported grade; 2.25-2.75=2.5 reported grade; 1.75-2.25=2.0 reported grade.

Assignment Details for Class Discussion Leadership and Advance Preparation
MC 492 (Section 002 – Governance, Rights, and Resources) – Fall 2020

2 Sessions of Class Discussion Leadership and Advance Preparation (20% of the overall semester grade, 10% for each session)

These are extraordinary times, which may necessitate adjustments to the assignments. I will provide as much advance warning as possible when changes are necessary, and will be flexible as needed with your response to these changes. I will also make sure that no change has a negative impact on any student's grade for the semester.

ASSIGNMENT GOALS: For most class sessions before mid-November, 1-3 students will work with Professor Axelrod to organize and lead part of our synchronous zoom discussion and advance asynchronous discussion. Your presentation and discussion preparation and leadership will help you think more deeply about the day's readings and the research process in a particular area of inquiry. It will also prepare you for synthesizing and leading discussions on other topics.

ASSIGNMENT TIMING: You will rank your top 3 session choices for each half of the semester, and Professor Axelrod will then develop a schedule. This assignment is divided into two parts: 1) a short presentation shared with classmates at least 36 hours before class (i.e., by 10:20pm Sunday or Tuesday), but preferably earlier; and 2) preparation (particularly discussion questions) before, and leadership during, the synchronous zoom session.

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS:

1. **2 presentations (10-15 minutes) reacting to the week's readings, along with discussion prompts,** to be shared with classmates in advance *via Microsoft Teams* (choice of app is subject to change, based on accessibility). Please make sure to address the readings from a *critical angle, not merely a summary*, though you may want to start with a brief summary. Some possible approaches to consider: 1) the current state of scholarly debate in the area, and whether there are other questions that should be considered, 2) whether the theories/hypotheses in the readings make logical sense, 3) application of the scholarship to other case studies and whether other case studies or evidence call the existing findings into question; and/or 4) whether the empirical research findings actually achieve what they claim to accomplish (and how they could be improved). Your reaction paper should serve as a lead-in to our class online forum and zoom discussions, so you are encouraged to include discussion questions for classmates to ponder.
2. You will then be responsible for working with Professor Axelrod to organize and lead **discussion for the same 2 class sessions.** I expect these discussions will be approximately 1 hour long. You are welcome, but not required, to lead part of the session itself, as determined by the team and Professor Axelrod in preparation. This portion of class *should not summarize the readings*, but can highlight their strengths, weaknesses, and gaps. You will work with Professor Axelrod in identifying the most important topics to discuss, as well as discussion questions and activities for the class period. This effort will involve unpacking concepts discussed in the readings, and leading classmates to advance their understanding of debates in the scholarly literature. We will meet sometime before the class session to plan out the session agenda.

ASSESSMENT [Please note that the percentages may shift – with full class consultation – to reflect how these components are counted; this shift will only be able to enhance – not reduce – your overall grade] A more detailed feedback structure is pasted at the bottom of this document to further indicate how I evaluate your role in both components:

1. Presentations (5% each – 10% total – of final semester grade) should assess – and demonstrate the value of – the research in the area we are discussing, as well as individual pieces of assigned research. Ideally, they will trigger thoughtful discussion in the online forum and subsequent class meeting. The ultimate goal is leading the group to better understand and apply relevant concepts, evaluate existing scholarship, and identify directions in which the field of research could and should expand. Each presentation will be graded on the following scale:

4.0 is reserved for presentations that raise new research ideas, synthesize and apply important concepts, critique the state of existing scholarship, and lead classmates to ask nuanced questions about research in the area we are studying;

3.5 indicates excellent nuanced synthesis and application of ideas, and a clear direction that prepares classmates to evaluate and build upon existing scholarship;

3.0 indicates reasonable general synthesis of ideas and concepts in the scholarship we are reading;

2.5 indicates a basic summary of the readings, without clear synthesis or ideas for future research;

2.0 indicates limited discussion of the readings;

Any grade below 2.0 indicates limited understanding of the concepts to be discussed, and/or a clear failure to carefully read the assigned materials.

Most grades will fall between these categories, but this summary outlines expectations.

2. Discussion organization and leadership (5% each – 10% total – of final semester grade), much like the presentation, should help the class develop a deeper understanding of key concepts and existing research, as well as pushing the class to go beyond those existing findings. Each presentation will be graded on the following scale:

4.0 is reserved for sessions that prepare classmates to raise new research ideas, synthesize important concepts and ask nuanced questions about research in the area we are studying. The strongest sessions will also involve clear critique of the existing scholarship, creative activities, and an ability to engage other students' ideas and experiences;

3.5 indicates excellent nuanced synthesis and application of ideas, and a clear direction that prepares classmates to evaluate and build upon existing scholarship, while actively engaging classmates in the discussion;

3.0 indicates reasonable general synthesis and application of key concepts in the scholarship we are reading, while engaging classmates in the discussion;

2.5 indicates basic synthesis of key concepts, without building on them to develop ideas for future research;

2.0 indicates limited discussion of the course materials and/or limited engagement of classmates in the discussion;

Any grade below 2.0 indicates limited understanding of the concepts to be discussed, and/or a clear failure to carefully read the assigned materials.

Reminder: When I calculate the overall final grades at the end of the semester, averages of 3.75+ = 4.0 reported grade; 3.25-3.75 = 3.5 reported grade; 2.75-3.25 = 3.0 reported grade; 2.25-2.75=2.5 reported grade; 1.75-2.25=2.0 reported grade.

Feedback sheet for presentations and discussion leadership, MC 492 (Fall 2020)

[please note that these categories may evolve as we see how things go during the first set of presentations]

Student/date:

Presentation and online forum

Synthesis:

Identification of shortcomings and gaps (or demonstration of strengths) in existing scholarship:

Clarity of communication:

Creativity:

Use of assignment to spur class discussion (including discussion questions, if relevant):

Overall:

Grade:

Synchronous Session Leadership

Preparation (including collaboration with colleagues if relevant):

Grasp of concepts:

Integrating/synthesizing concepts and applying to new situations:

Critique of existing scholarship and leading others to build a critique:

Organization and presentation of class session itself:

Creativity:

Leadership and ability to involve/engage other students:

Overall:

Grade:

Please remember:

- You are strongly encouraged to discuss your research with Professor Masten or Professor Axelrod during office hours or other times.
- **For all assignments, late papers (unless accompanied by doctor's note or other verified excuse) will receive a reduction of one grade point for every two days late (i.e., 1 minute to 48 hours late reduces grade by 1.0; 48-96 hours late reduces grade by 2.0). If you have some extenuating circumstance that requires an extension for an assignment, you must request such an extension at least 72 hours prior to the deadline.**

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THAT THIS COURSE WILL BE CONDUCTED IN LINE WITH MADISON COLLEGE AND MSU POLICIES ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. Among other requirements, that means that you must cite the source of any and all facts or ideas in your written assignments. Please also remember that the internet is a powerful source of information. While it may ease your research efforts, it can also lead you to non-reputable resources and help to identify your use of other people's work.

Violations of academic dishonesty principles will result in punishments up to and including a 0.0 grade for the course.

IF IN DOUBT, WE WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THE PROPER COURSE OF ACTION. Past experience has shown that most errors are easily avoidable with a short discussion.

ASSIGNMENT GOALS:

This collaborative assignment builds on our understanding of how decision-makers go about their environmental policy and management choices. These decisions involve constituent interests related to economics, health and environment, and cultural factors. These interests influence people's preferences, as well as their likelihood of following rules once established. Decision makers then have to weigh these interests in making policy choices, based on constituent interests and their own perspectives. *This assignment prepares you to identify policy needs, develop policy proposals, and communicate those recommendations to decision makers who can use them.*

The assignment centers around recent concerns (linked news articles) regarding increased use of consumer-grade fireworks, especially surrounding holiday celebrations. Some organizations have suggested legislation or regulatory interventions to control their use. However, there is also significant opposition to these changes. You have been "hired" by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to provide "the best science and engineering" to inform legislators and/or agency staff.

READING AND VIEWING MATERIALS:

News Reporting

- Michigan: <https://www.wunderground.com/cat6/july-4-fireworks-create-unhealthy-levels-air-pollution>
- **Background levels for PM2.5 and ozone:** <https://www.epa.gov/outdoor-air-quality-data/air-data-daily-air-quality-tracker> Select geographical area to get a plot of data. At the bottom of the page, you can download the AQI data as a spreadsheet. Note: the data provided is the 24-hr average values. Use that data to determine the 95% Confidence limits for PM2.5 and ozone levels

- China <https://www.caixinglobal.com/2019-02-08/firework-ban-clears-the-air-for-chinese-new-year-101377975.html> and <https://www.careourearth.com/fireworks-exacerbated-air-pollution-across-china-in-lunar-new-years-eve/>
- Delhi, India: https://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/diwali-2019-air-pollution-delhi-india_in_5db655bae4b05df62ec1b6b4 and <https://www.dw.com/en/diwali-fireworks-worsen-delhis-hazardous-air-pollution/a-51013069#:~:text=Diwali%20fireworks%20worsen%20Delhi's%20hazardous,in%20the%20city's%20cool%20air.>

Air Quality Data

- Focus on those times of the year when the use of consumer-grade fireworks is most predominant and then another time (with consistent weather patterns) when their use is low (background level).
- Delhi data – US Embassy (<https://in.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/new-delhi/air-quality-data/>) and government (<https://aqicn.org/city/delhi/>)
- Locations in China: <https://aqicn.org/city/beijing/> and <https://china.usembassy-china.org.cn/embassy-consulates/guangzhou/u-s-consulate-air-quality-monitor-stateair/>
- MI AirNow – <https://www.airnow.gov/state/?name=michigan> (students can obtain data on PM25, NOX, SO2 levels on July 4th for several MI locations and over several years)

Current Regulations and Rulings – Michigan, India/Delhi

- Michigan: https://www.michigan.gov/som/0,4669,7-192-29943_34759-500873--,00.html
- India (summaries of Supreme Court 2018 judgement): <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/23/health/india-firecracker-ban-pollution-intl/index.html> and <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/supreme-court-allows-sale-use-of-safer-firecrackers-with-conditions-live-updates-1936014>

Academic research on health effects of fireworks (helpful background for groups in making arguments):

- Lin, Chi-Chi. 2016. "A review of the impact of fireworks on particulate matter in ambient air." *Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association* 66 (12):1171-82. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10962247.2016.1219280>
- Tandon, R., K. Agrawal, R. P. Narayan, V. K. Tiwari, V. Prakash, S. Kumar, and S. Sharma. 2012. "Firecracker injuries during Diwali festival: The epidemiology and impact of legislation in Delhi." *Indian Journal of Plastic Surgery* 45 (01):097-101. <https://www.thieme-connect.de/products/ejournals/abstract/10.4103/0970-0358.96595>
- Gouder, Caroline, and Stephen Montefort. 2014. "Potential impact of fireworks on respiratory health." *Lung India: official organ of Indian Chest Society* 31 (4):375-9. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4220320/>
- Hickey, Christina, Christopher Gordon, et al. 2020. "Toxicity of particles emitted by fireworks." *Particle and Fibre Toxicology* 17 (1):28. <https://particleandfibretoxicology.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12989-020-00360-4>
- Greven, Frans E., Judith M. Vonk, Paul Fischer, Frans Duijm, Nienke M. Vink, and Bert Brunekreef. 2019. "Air pollution during New Year's fireworks and daily mortality in the Netherlands." *Scientific reports* 9 (1):5735 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6450968/>

ASSIGNMENT TIMING AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Panel on use of scientific information for decision making ([zoom link and password here](#)), filmed with live viewing available *October 8, 10:30-11:30am* and available for viewing after (please

submit questions in advance to either professor, no later than October 8, 9:30am); video will be posted as soon as possible after the panel discussion

Panelists include:

State Representative Julie Brixie (whose district includes MSU campus)
Travis Boeskool (Michigan Dept of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy)
Jenifer Dixon (Michigan Dept of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy)
Samantha Davis (Michigan Dept of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy)
Ben Miyamoto (Scholars Strategy Network)

- View Short asynchronous lectures on decision-making and government motivations (Axelrod) and air quality assessment (Masten) – posted by Tuesday, October 6
- Meet with groups to discuss and develop policy briefs – October 8-22
- Prepare written proposal or oral presentation – due October 22, 11:59pm

Your group will be comprised of 2-4 students (a single lab group) from ENE 480 and one student from MC 492. Together, you will be responsible for writing a 3-4 page (no more than 1200 words) policy brief that proposes future directions for fireworks policy in Michigan and/or Delhi, India. For examples and ideas about writing policy briefs, see handouts from [Univ. of North Carolina](#) & [Washington Univ.](#)

Your policy brief will:

- 1) Briefly identify the audience to which it is addressed (Michigan legislature? EGLE office? Federal government in India or US? Other option?) and what that decision-making body is empowered to address in this context;
- 2) Summarize the air quality concern that persists under current policy conditions, using data to support your assertions, and why the audience should care about this problem;
- 3) Propose a new policy approach for that audience to adopt, including evidence to support this option as a solution to the problem you identified;
- 4) Consider alternatives to your proposal, and why they are inferior to the option you propose;
- 5) And briefly summarize.

ASSESSMENT:

The following questions will be used to assess the assignment (some questions obviously are not relevant for the first stage of the research):

- **Clear position statement and recommendation** – Have you explicitly noted your policy recommendation?
- **Clarity/organization/structure** – Is the policy brief organized in a logical manner? Is the writing clear and easy to follow?
- **Accurate representation of theories/concepts** – Does your analysis draw on appropriate concepts discussed in class and/or other sources? Have you fully addressed existing scholarship on this topic? Did you correctly apply those concepts to your situation?
- **Analysis/logic** – Do your recommendations make logical sense, and have you explained why? Have you addressed relevant alternatives? Have you supported your recommendation with sufficient evidence?
- **Clear understanding and interpretation of the evidence** – Have you clearly supported your policy recommendation using a wide range of evidence related to relevant social, economic, and scientific factors? Have you properly interpreted and applied those findings, and their implications for this policy decision? Have you identified the limitations of your recommendation and alternatives?
- **Questions answered completely** – Does your proposal fully answer the stated policy needs? Have you addressed all required parts of the assignment?

A **4.0** grade indicates that you have answered all of the above questions successfully, with an original policy proposal that is persuasive and addresses decision maker interests;

3.5 indicates mostly successful response to the above questions, with a persuasive proposal that is perhaps not as unique;

3.0 indicates mostly successful response to the above questions, but less persuasive in terms of its likely influence on policy makers;

2.5 indicates some positive and negative responses to the above questions;

2.0 indicates incomplete work, unclear arguments, and/or insufficient evidence to support your arguments;

And any lower grades indicate that you have not properly completed the assignment. Most grades will fall between these categories, but please use these ranges as a guide for expectations.

For MC492, When I (Professor Axelrod) calculate the overall final grades at the end of the semester, averages of $3.75+ = 4.0$ reported grade; $3.25-3.75 = 3.5$ reported grade; $2.75-3.25 = 3.0$ reported grade; $2.25-2.75=2.5$ reported grade; $1.75-2.25=2.0$ reported grade.

Assignment Details for Research Paper (multiple stages) and Presentation
 MC 492 (Section 002 – Governance, Rights, and Resources) – Fall 2020

Assignment	Timeline	Portion of Final Semester Grade
Preliminary Research Question, Literature Review, and Hypotheses	September 29, beginning of class	5%
First Draft of Research Paper	October 29, beginning of class	10%
Final Research Paper	Thursday, December 17, 12:00noon (error in original syllabus)	20%
Research Presentation	Sign-up sheet circulated early November	10%

Please remember:

- You are strongly encouraged to discuss your research with Professor Axelrod during office hours or other times.
- **For all assignments, late papers (unless accompanied by doctor’s note or other verified excuse) will receive a reduction of one grade point for every two days late (i.e., 1 minute to 48 hours late reduces grade by 1.0; 48-96 hours late reduces grade by 2.0). If you have some extenuating circumstance that requires an extension for an assignment, you must request such an extension at least 72 hours prior to the deadline. Please recall that you may use one “life happened” extension this semester for an additional three days, no questions asked. It is helpful, but not mandatory, if you can warn me in advance of the deadline. The “life happened” extension may not be used to reschedule presentations, but you may try to trade times well in advance of your assigned slot.**

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THAT THIS COURSE WILL BE CONDUCTED IN LINE WITH MADISON COLLEGE AND MSU POLICIES ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. Among other requirements, that means that you must cite the source of any and all facts or ideas in your written assignments. The Student Handbook states:
“Academic Honesty: [Article 2.III.B.2](#) of the Academic Freedom Report states: “The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, James Madison College adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, [Protection of Scholarship and Grades](#); the all-University Policy on [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#); and [Ordinance 17.00](#), Examinations. Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course unless explicitly authorized by the professor. Students who violate MSU regulations on Protection of Scholarship and Grades may receive a failing grade in the course or on the assignment and be reported for academic integrity violations.”
Please also remember that the internet is a powerful source of information. While it may ease your research efforts, it can also lead you to non-reputable resources and help to identify your use of other people’s work.
Violations of academic dishonesty principles will result in punishments up to and including a 0.0 grade for the course. Under MSU guidelines, I must report all such incidents to the University. IF IN DOUBT, I WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THE PROPER COURSE OF ACTION. Past experience has shown that most errors are easily avoidable with a short discussion.

ASSIGNMENT GOALS: Your research paper and presentation are intended to provide an opportunity to practice the research and communication skills you have developed throughout your James Madison College experience. In addition to conducting the research itself, it is essential to communicate your results to peers and policy makers, both in writing and through presentations.

Your original piece of research will be designed to answer a “why” question about the emergence of particular outcomes related to the development or impact of environmental governance around the world. In other words, why does that outcome vary (or what factors lead to its variation) in different conditions. The research should compare your outcome of interest for at least two observations (countries, cities, time periods, topic areas, etc.). This study should demonstrate how it builds upon and advances existing scholarship in your area of interest.

ASSIGNMENT TIMING AND REQUIREMENTS:

We will discuss this project throughout the semester to ensure that you are making progress towards the final paper. You are strongly encouraged to meet frequently with Professor Axelrod and to share ideas with classmates and others. This assignment will be completed in multiple steps:

- During our second class period (**September 8**), you described the outcome(s) that your research will explain. For example, what range of experiences do people face when exposed to changing climates? Or how do countries compare in terms of their levels of biodiversity? This discussion centered around a broad preliminary idea, allowing you to develop this interest into a clear research question at the next phase. This stage of the assignment is not graded, but will help you delve into your research.
- Building on that description of varied outcomes, you will develop a research question (i.e., Why did that outcome vary/change across different conditions?) and short (1-2 paragraphs) explanation of why that question is important to answer. *Make sure to clearly define any concepts that appear in the question!*

Next, please review and summarize other scholars’ answers to similar questions (as well as any gaps, conflicts, and shortcomings in their scholarship). It is important to come up with a clear understanding of what specific arguments would follow from other scholars’ findings. In other words, given each author’s findings, how would that author expect your question to be answered? This section constitutes your targeted literature review. Finally, based on existing research and your own thought processes, please summarize the main arguments/hypotheses to be assessed in your research. For each hypothesized answer, you should summarize the logic underlying existing scholarship and/or your own thought process. Later, in the full research paper, you will assess the validity of these arguments (your own and others’) based on the evidence you collect. **Please make sure to cite the source of each idea when you introduce it in the paper.**

You are also welcome – though not required – to include your research design and/or preliminary findings at this stage, if you would like feedback.

This preliminary research effort, approximately 1700-2000 words, is due at the **beginning of class September 29**. I anticipate that the literature review will require at least 10, mostly academic (i.e., journal articles or books), sources, though there is no specific requirement in terms of the number of sources. I will make sure you receive prompt comments to inform next stages of your work.

- A complete first draft of the paper is due **October 29 at the beginning of class**. This stage of your research will build upon the previous assignment, and add to it a description of your research methods (i.e., how you sought and analyzed evidence to support or refute the

hypotheses), as well as your actual research results using those methods. This evidence should be drawn mainly from primary sources, but may also rely on reputable secondary sources. You may want to acknowledge the ideal pieces of evidence, along with what is actually possible for you to collect (e.g., You are unlikely to be able to visit the British Library archives to complete research on colonialism this semester, but it is still valuable to note the existence of particular collections that you would like to add if expanding the research in future.). The MSU Library – including electronic resources, books delivered via mail, and consultation with librarians – is an excellent starting point for your research. However, please do not limit yourself to MSU Library resources if you think there are other valuable original options such as phone interviews or email questionnaires with key informants. *Be creative* in thinking about the type of information you plan to collect, and please describe your research process *as precisely as possible within reason*. Finally, your paper should include a conclusion that explains how your findings support or revise the existing scholarly knowledge in this area, as well as any ideas for extending the study in the future. This full draft should be approximately 5000-6000 words (including any tables, figures, and references).

While this phase of the assignment is not expected to be the final, polished research paper, it should contain all the same portions as your eventual paper. The more detail you provide at this stage, the better feedback you will receive from classmates and Professor Axelrod, and the less work you will have for the final research stage.

- Following your first draft, you will present your research to the rest of the class (**dates to be determined in early November**). At least 24 hours in advance of the presentation, please share a brief abstract of your project (no more than one page double-spaced) with the class via Microsoft Teams. In addition to a brief overview of your project and findings, your presentation should also include a self-assessment of remaining holes in the study. The presentation should be approximately 15-20 minutes, followed by peer commentary and response to questions and suggestions from your classmates. Remember that the clearer your draft and presentation, the more useful feedback you will receive.
- A final draft is due by **Thursday, December 17, 12:00noon**. This version of the paper should be 6000-7500 words (including any tables, figures, and references). That length equates to approximately 25-30 pages double-spaced in 12-point font. It should incorporate the peer and professor feedback you received on your first draft. Along with the final draft, please include at least a 1-2 paragraph summary of the changes you have made since the previous version. That summary is useful for practicing your response to constructive feedback (a valuable skill in any workplace!), and will help me assess your response to constructive criticism from colleagues.

<p><u>There is no minimum number of sources, but every fact or idea drawn from external sources must be identified with a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical documentation immediately after it is presented.</u> You may use any citation format, as long as it is consistent and provides sufficient detail for your sources to be checked. The library provides a number of well-known formats at: http://www2.lib.msu.edu/research/cite-resources.jsp Any final paper that does not follow this standard will receive zero credit.</p>
--

ASSESSMENT:

FOR ALL STAGES OF YOUR RESEARCH PAPER AND PRESENTATION (preliminary ideas 5%; first draft 10%; presentation 10%; final draft 20% of the overall semester grade), the following questions will be used to assess the assignment (some questions obviously are not relevant for the first stage of the research):

- **Clearly defined research question and hypotheses** – Have you explicitly noted your research question and expected findings? Do your question and hypotheses guide the actual research conducted?
- **Clarity/organization/structure** – Is the paper organized in a logical manner (with hypotheses that would answer the question, research methods that can assess the hypotheses, and research that follows the stated methods)? Is the writing clear and easy to follow?
- **Accurate representation of theories/concepts** – Does your analysis draw on appropriate concepts discussed in class and/or other sources? Have you fully addressed existing scholarship on this topic? Did you correctly apply those concepts to your situation?
- **Analysis/logic** – Do your hypotheses make logical sense, and have you explained why? Have you addressed relevant alternative explanations? Is the research design appropriate for testing hypotheses?
- **Clear understanding of the evidence** – Have you selected appropriate cases for analysis? Have you clearly identified appropriate data/evidence from each of those cases? Have you clearly explained why this research design is the best way to test hypotheses? Have you properly interpreted the results of your research, and their implications for the relevant area of scholarship? Have you identified the limitations of your research?
- **Answered question completely** – Does your research fully answer the question? Have you addressed all required parts of the assignment?

A **4.0** grade indicates positive responses to all of these questions and an innovative research idea that advances scholarly efforts. **3.0** indicates mostly positive responses to these questions, while **2.0** indicates mixed responses, and any lower grades indicate that you have not properly completed the assignment. Most grades will fall between these categories, but please use these ranges as a guide for expectations.

When I calculate the overall final grades at the end of the semester, averages of 3.75+ = 4.0 reported grade; 3.25-3.75 = 3.5 reported grade; 2.75-3.25 = 3.0 reported grade; 2.25-2.75=2.5 reported grade; 1.75-2.25=2.0 reported grade.

Assignment Details for Peer Commentary
 MC 492 (Section 002 – Governance, Rights, and Resources) – Fall 2020

Assignment	Timeline	Portion of Final Semester Grade
Commentary on Classmate’s 1 st Draft and Presentation	Verbal – date of partner’s presentation; Written – one week after presentation	10%

You will be responsible for providing constructive commentary on one classmate’s first draft. This feedback will be presented **in up to 5 minutes speaking at the time of that student’s research presentation and in writing within the following week**. Your commentary should respond to the presenter’s own concerns, other remaining theoretical and empirical challenges, *and suggestions for overcoming these limitations*. I provide (next page) one possible framework for such commentary, and would be willing to share examples of my own peer reviews, but you are free to use any format that you find most useful. Additional materials, including a video discussion about the peer commentary process, are posted on D2L.

You should at least consider all components listed on the next page, though you do not necessarily need to comment on every single category. There is no specific length requirement for the written commentary, though I anticipate most commentaries will be approximately 2-3 pages.

Please keep in mind that you are providing feedback to your partner, not evaluating the paper’s value. **Your constructive feedback should help the author improve the paper for the final draft.**

FOR THIS PEER COMMENTARY ASSIGNMENT (10% of the overall semester grade), the following criteria will be considered:

- Is your feedback clear and easy to follow? Is it written in a constructive way?
- Does it clearly and reasonably summarize the paper’s topic, main arguments, and supporting evidence?
- Does it highlight the draft’s strengths so that the author will make sure to retain those in the final draft?
- Does it pick up on any obvious limitations in the author’s first draft?
- Have you responded to the author’s self-assessment of limitations in the first draft?
- Have you provided concrete recommendations that the author can use to improve the final draft of the paper?

A **4.0** grade indicates clear, insightful and constructive feedback to the draft’s author, with concrete recommendations that can be implemented to improve subsequent drafts. A **3.0** grade indicates clear identification of shortcomings in the first draft, without identifying strengths to be retained or clear recommendations for how limitations can be addressed. A **2.0** grade indicates limited assessment of the draft, without clear recommendations for improvement. Any lower grade indicates that you did not complete the full scope of this assignment.

When I calculate the overall final grades at the end of the semester, averages of 3.75+ = 4.0 reported grade; 3.25-3.75 = 3.5 reported grade; 2.75-3.25 = 3.0 reported grade; 2.25-2.75=2.5 reported grade; 1.75-2.25=2.0 reported grade.

Possible structure for peer feedback:

- 1) Briefly summarize the research findings, and contribution(s) to scholarly work in this area.
- 2) What are the strongest aspects of the current draft, and why are those components effective?
- 3) Reading critically/skeptically, consider:
 - a. Is the research question presented and structured in a way that best brings out the need for this research to be conducted?
 - b. Does the literature review clearly connect with existing scholarship?
 - c. Are the arguments/explanations/hypotheses logical and easy to understand? Are they derived from clear reasoning and/or the cited existing literature? Does the paper consider reasonable alternative/conflicting arguments?
 - d. Are the research methods appropriate for assessing the arguments?
 - e. Does the evidence fully support the conclusions? If not, what additional evidence is needed to evaluate these arguments?
- 4) Is the paper clear and easy to follow?
 - a. Is it organized in a way that best helps the reader understand and evaluate arguments?
 - b. Are there smooth transitions between sections of the paper?
 - c. Does the grammar, as well as sentence and paragraph structure, make the paper easy to read and understand?
 - d. Are there any aspects that require further explanation for a knowledgeable audience (i.e., the reader) that is not expert on the specific topic?
- 5) What do you think are the most important steps to take for the next draft?