

Directions for group research projects.

The pedagogical goals of the group research project are sixfold:

- a) To allow you, the student, to examine a topic in Russian history and culture in greater depth.
- b) To train you in the synthesis and analysis of new information
- c) To provide practice with using library research tools
- d) To provide practice in maximally effective organization and presentation of information.
- e) To provide practice in sustained and effective teamwork (something you'll have to do again and again in the "real world")
- f) To provide practice in oral presentations

The assignment is as follows: With your group-mates, prepare a ten minute presentation for the date assigned to your group. The presentation should answer the basic question – "what/who is the person/group/idea that our group is named after, and why is he/she/they/it important"?

More specifically, your presentation should include the following:

1. Summary of what the class as a whole already knows about the subject
2. Specifics that you have learned about your subject
3. Ways that the subject is important to Russian culture/history:
 - a. How did he/she/it/they change Russian culture/history at the time?
 - b. How are he/she/it/they important to Russian culture/history now?
 - c. What ideas/ideals/events did/do they represent?

d. Do future Russian writers/painters/architects/philosophers/historians/political figures/ etc. use this person/group/idea in their work? Give examples.

e. Pick ONE representative piece of art that has to do with your project and analyze it.

For research, use:

- the UWM libraries (including getting hardcover books from the stacks! Gasp!) <http://www4.uwm.edu/libraries/> (use books and media search; and articles search).
- The MLA bibliography search tool
- The History Reference Center
- Humanities International Complete
- Any other resource you're familiar with.
- CAREFUL use of Wikipedia AS A STARTING point is fine. NO MORE THAN 10% OF YOUR INFORMATION MAY COME FROM WIKIPEDIA.

In most cases, you'll find a lot of stuff. Your first task will be to focus your efforts so that the project and the group doesn't get out of control.

Although I do suggest that you guys divide up the tasks somehow, I don't suggest that only one person be delegated to do all the research/ reading and another to write the presentation. The reading/skimming should be done together, as should at least some aspects of the putting together of the presentation.

One way to divide it up is to divide up the basic questions above. I suggest at least 3 full-group meetings lasting about an hour while working on the presentation, and email contact in-between. It is a good idea to either come to office hours or email me after the first meeting and let me know how the presentation is shaping up and what sources you'll be using. I may have suggestions.

GRADING will occur as follows:

10% for a report on your first group meeting, emailed to me, listing a rough division of tasks among members and a rough timeline.

10% for sending me a completed draft of the presentation powerpoint 3 days before your presentation.

5% for incorporating suggestions from my draft review into your presentation.

5% for number and variety of sources (MUST include at least one hard-copy [i.e., NOT online) source

5% for the final bibliography

5% for group members' evaluation of group efficacy

30% for the final draft of the presentation powerpoint

Powerpoint will be graded on:

Clarity of organization

Ease of presentation (must be readable)

Depth of information (must not simply rehash stuff we've learned in class)

Correctness of information

30% for in-class presentation

In-class presentation will be graded on the above, AND on:

Presentation skills.

Ability to answer questions about your project.

Students with learning disabilities that prevent them from performing in front of the whole class should plan to work with their group on the research. In lieu of the in-class presentation, however, they will complete a short writing assignment about their project.