Introduction: Welcome to History 3C! The discussion section is here to give us a chance to dive into the readings together, and to explore and challenge the major themes of the class. It is a place for you to ask questions, express your views, and engage with your classmates and their ideas.

Readings: In this course, we will be reading primary sources, secondary sources, and some works which lie on the boundary between “fact” and “fiction.” What we want to get from the readings is two-fold. First is to simply understand their content. Second is to critically analyze them. For primary sources, this includes contextualizing these works in their times. For secondary sources, this includes analyzing the argument the author makes. (Secondary sources are works of interpretation. You should ask yourself: what is the author’s interpretation of these events? Do I agree with this interpretation?) Reading as a historian is a skill much like any other – and it takes practice to learn how to do it. Please bring your readings to section!

Also, a friendly caveat: there is a substantial amount of reading (and writing) required in this course. Remember to portion out enough time each week to get it done before section.

Grading: The course syllabus from Prof. Porter provides the grading breakdown. Section accounts for 25% of your course grade – and is based on your section participation, your weekly responses, and any small projects or presentations that may be assigned. I will also be grading your essay and midterm exam. If you have any concerns about the grading system, please let me know.

Written Assignments: A discussion question is on the syllabus for each week. You should bring a 1-page (double-spaced) response to section each week. I want this course to hone your writing skills, so spend some time crafting a well-defined thesis statement for each of these. No late responses will be accepted. If you are going to miss class, please email me your responses.

Your essay (5 pages, double spaced) is due on March 10. We will discuss this in more detail as the quarter continues.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Be careful to document and attribute all quotations and ideas that are not your own – and if you have questions, please ask.

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance is required in this section. If you are unable to attend, let me know ahead of time, and be ready to explain why. The weekly assignment should be turned in even if you are absent.

Remember that this is a discussion section, not a lecture, so participation from every member is expected. Make comments, ask questions, join debates, whatever, but be involved! You will not receive a lower grade just for having a bad week, which happens to everyone, but if you continually add a little to the discussion, it will have a real effect on your final grade.

Lastly: If you have any questions, I am more than happy to meet with you during office hours or through appointment.