

**Paper – Op-Ed  
POLS335 – Autumn 2015**

**DUE DATE: Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm**  
**DRAFTS ACCEPTED (via email) UNTIL: Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at NOON**

The “op-ed”, or opinion piece “opposite the editorial page,” is a classic form of essay by which members of the public engage wide audiences on important matters. Op-eds appear in virtually all leading newspapers, and their form is a precursor to the now common blog entry. Op-eds, as their name implies, are meant to express well-informed, well-articulated opinions for publication in the editorial pages of newspapers, alongside the newspaper staff’s editorials and letters to the editor.

For the op-ed assignment, students are to write their own HISTORICAL op-ed on a topic of U.S. foreign policy, following standard conventions of leading news publications. The topic in U.S. foreign policy and the position taken are left to the student’s choice, but the topic should be from **1945 or earlier**.

The basics of a good op-ed are the following: Indicate your issue and position, historicize the issue, identify approximately three reasons why your position is valid, provide a brief summary of why opposing positions are not viable, make a recommendation about what policy should be pursued and how. Be thoughtful and provoking, yet retain a professional and engaging style.

**DIRECTIONS**

- First, select the time period and the issue about which you will be writing. **This should be immediately evident to the reader (i.e., me).**
- Make sure you do not treat the issue in isolation, as foreign policy is affected and directed by historical development and experience.
- You can make policy suggestions that go against or coincide with what actually happened, but you need to show evidence of your own analysis. You aren’t just reporting facts (what happened), but rather, you’re making a compelling argument as someone at the time would have.

**INSTRUCTIONS & REQUIREMENTS**

- Between 750-900 words, submitted online in either .doc or .docx format
- You must use SPECIFIC examples from readings, and class lectures
  - You must CITE these examples using footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations. Citations do not count toward the word limit.
  - You must cite **at least three different sources**. This is the minimum requirement, as this assignment is meant to show your ability to synthesize material from different places.
  - You are NOT to use external secondary sources