

HST100 The History of Kazakhstan

Midterm Essay Study Guide

Final Essay Question

On October 2nd, at 12:00pm, you will receive TWO essay prompts. You should submit your response to ONE of them by 18:00 via a Turnitin link on the Moodle page of your seminar section. It will be evaluated according to its clarity (formulation of a clear thesis) and to the amount of detail you can provide. The essay should be no longer than 1500 words, and no less than 1200.

To support your answer, you should use specific examples and evidence from the course materials. You can use information in the lectures for background information and for specific examples. You can also use information from any of the assigned readings and the course bibliography ('Bibliography of Recommended Background Readings' on Moodle). **But, your main focus should be on the historical documents (primary sources) that we discussed in seminar.** The best essays will support their answers by offering their own interpretation of the historical evidence, based on a good understanding of the historical context.

Guidelines for a Successful Essay-Question Response

Exam questions will never be worded in such a way as to have a single correct answer. Rather, the questions will prompt you to take a stand on an issue about which professional historians disagree. While it is possible to respond to a question "incorrectly," the real challenge will be to craft as sophisticated a response to the question as you can.

A "sophisticated" essay-question response should:

1. Be organized around a thesis statement that makes a clear and decisive point, which requires the support of evidence.
2. Cite specific examples from lectures and readings to support the thesis.
3. Create an organized answer that consistently supports the thesis.
4. Make connections between different seminar topics, demonstrating breadth of knowledge.
5. The best responses could address possible counter-arguments.

Use of Course Material

Direct quotations should be kept to a minimum, as your own interpretation and analysis of the material is preferable. You may quote short passages from readings to serve as evidence for your argument, but **long blocks of quoted text will result in the deduction of points**.

Where you use a direct quote from any source, it must always be “in quotation marks”, and you must include a brief but clear reference. **Failure to indicate and cite direct quotations will be considered plagiarism.** In most cases, the author’s name and a page number are all you need. For example:

Amir Wali castigated the "evil works" of Abu'l-Khayr's "hypocritical relatives", whom he called "oath breakers" (Wali, p. 1). Dughlat, in stark contrast, reported that Abu'l-Khayr "harassed the Jochid princes", causing them to flee (Dughlat, p. 3).

If you want to mention a specific example from a lecture, you can give a reference, as follows: (Lecture: Qazaq Khanate, Part 2).

Do not use unauthorized source. Avoid searching online for other sources – everything you need to answer the questions is in the course materials. Above all, you may not copy something someone else has written and present it as your own work (that is plagiarism, which is a form of cheating). That means you may not copy text from websites, books, articles, or anywhere else. **Do not copy and paste from the “History of Kazakhstan notes” document that is shared between students.** That would also be taking someone else’s writing and presenting it as your own work. (You can use information from the lectures, but you should watch them yourself and summarize the information in your own words). Whenever you use someone else’s words, they must be marked as a quotation (in “quotation marks”), with a reference. Your answer must be your own work, so you may not collaborate with other students. Do not ask other students to share their work, and do not show yours to anyone.

If you need more information about plagiarism and how to avoid it, read the very useful guidance provided by NU library here:

https://nu.kz.libguides.com/avoiding_plagiarism/plagiarism

Plagiarism and any other forms of cheating (including helping another student to cheat) carry serious penalties – as described in the NU Student Code of Conduct.

Grade	Argument	Structure	Knowledge of Historical Context	Use of Sources	Clarity, Grammar, and Style
A	Argument is clearly stated and developed over the course of the essay; each paragraph makes a link to the main question and contributes to the development of the argument	Structure is clear and adhered to throughout the essay; effective use of transitions; coherent topic evident for each paragraph; a proper conclusion with a summary of the argument is provided	Displays impressive knowledge of material, drawing from both readings and lectures; author is able to clearly synthesize and explain material	Rich use of relevant evidence from both primary and secondary sources; evidence is used to effectively support and illustrate arguments; the essay demonstrates understanding of the limits and values of the sources used	Essay is well-written and easy to follow; vocabulary is appropriate and discipline- specific
B	Argument is clearly stated but may lack development, some paragraphs are not connected to the main argument	Structure is generally logical but not explicit; transitions may be used inconsistently; some paragraphs may lack a clear focus; there is a conclusion but does not provide a proper summary or introduces new arguments	Displays an adequate knowledge of material, drawn from both readings and lectures, but does not synthesize the material fully	Use of relevant evidence is adequate but could be improved by further references; arguments are occasionally not supported by evidence; critical approach to sources is insufficient	Essay is generally well-written but may be occasionally unclear; adequate vocabulary
C	Argument is not clearly presented or developed; weak connection between the paragraphs and the argument	Structure is not clear and relationship between paragraphs is not always logical; weak use of transitions; weak conclusion	Displays significant gaps in knowledge and does not synthesize material from readings and lectures	Arguments are inconsistently supported; evidence used is not relevant to the argument; significant gaps in use of sources; overly reliant on secondary sources; uncritical treatment of sources	Essay is difficult to follow in certain parts; vocabulary is occasionally unclear or employed incorrectly
D	Argument is unclear and poorly explained	Poorly-defined structure and organization; little or no logical flow to essay; little or no use of transitions, no conclusion is provided	Demonstrates weak knowledge of material, little or no evidence of synthesis	Arguments are weakly supported by evidence; significant gaps in sources; entirely reliant upon secondary sources; sources are taken at face value	Essay is poorly written and generally difficult to follow
F	Essay provides no clear argument	No clear structure or organization to essay	Lacks basic knowledge of material	Little or no use of evidence or supporting references	Essay is very poorly written

