

## Current Events Essay

This assignment gives you an opportunity to independently apply the concepts we cover in class with tangible examples in the real world. This also gives you an opportunity to identify and reflect on articles that are interesting to you.

You will be asked to write a current events essays in this class (no more than 2 **single spaced** pages). If you have any reservations about the article you select, **please email me or stop by my office hours**. I will also post links to relevant articles that can be used when we get closer to the due date.

### Criteria for the article you select

- From a major U.S. daily newspaper (e.g. *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, *Los Angeles Times* etc.) or a major politics blog (*Politico*, *NPR Politics*, *The Post's Monkey Cage Blog*, *FiveThirtyEight*).
- Avoid sources with a strong editorial slant (*Salon*, *Daily Kos*, *Huffington Post*, *Breitbart*, *Daily Caller*, etc.).
- Please consult with me If you want to use an article in a less known source or from television websites (e.g. *CNN*, *MSNBC*, *Fox News*, *CBS*, *ABC*, regional newspapers).
- The article you review must be written in the last year (since January 2019)

### When are the reviews due?

– The first review is due on February 26 at 11:59 PM (submit to Dropbox). The second review is due on April 8 at 11:59 PM (submit to Dropbox).

### What do you write?

In this essay, you are asked to *briefly* summarize the article and *quickly* transition to connecting the particulars in the article to broader concepts that we have discussed in the class. You may cite the textbook, additional articles (cited in the text or used in lecture), or lecture notes. The review should follow the format on the next page.

## Format for Current Events Essay

**Font and Spacing: 12 point, Times New Roman, Single-spaced**

**Maximum Length: 2 pages**

### 1) Heading

Your Name:

Today's Date:

Article Title:

Publication:

Article Publication Date:

Article Author:

Article Link:

### 2) Summary

Write a short summary of the article (1-2 paragraphs). Why was this article written? Does the article make an argument or have a point of view?

### 3) Analysis

Analyze the article and explain how the article connects with a topic of study in American politics. The following questions are just a starting point. You don't need to specifically answer each of these questions, they are a guideline for the analysis I want you to bring to each article.

- Why is the article important? What is the key issue that they are addressing?
- How do the issues brought up in the article relate to our current study of the American politics? Specifically, how is the article relevant to course content (a dilemma about federal/state boundaries, a court case that could redefine a civil right or civil liberty, a debate in Congress about the Constitutional merits of some action, etc.)
- If the author makes any predictions, what are they? Do you agree or disagree? Why? Does the course material support or oppose the author's predictions?
- What broader trends or concepts does the article reveal?
- What questions does the article raise for you?

## Rubric - Point Breakdown

Professionalism	25 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-superior mechanics</li> <li>-no use of slang</li> <li>-information is appropriate</li> <li>-no typos</li> <li>-format is correct</li> </ul>	
Transitions	15 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-review has a comfortable flow, topic changes are completed with effective transitions.</li> </ul>	
Background Information	20 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-any events leading to this article are <i>briefly</i> explained.</li> </ul>	
Connection	<b>40 points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-article connects to the topic of study.</li> <li>-student makes connection in review.</li> <li>-student asks interesting questions about the article and how it may speak to broader topics in the course.</li> </ul>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Tips for writing an excellent journal review:

- Look at book reviews in professional journals to see how writers effectively summarize a book in a concise format.
- Read the entire article before writing your review, you do not have much space so extract three or four main ideas.
- Pay attention to the rubric when you write (especially with background information and **connection** to the class).
- Revise your work to avoid careless grammatical errors and typos.
- Write enough of a summary that I would not have to go back and read the entire document, however avoid going into so much detail that you lack the room to connect it to our class (summary should be no more than 3 paragraphs)
- Look at editorials to see some examples of how people may respond to a certain article.
- Find something that is interesting to you. More than likely your review will come effortlessly if you are responding to something that you care about.

- Take advantage of the resources available to you (my office hours, Writing Center - <https://www.wright.edu/student-success/academic-support/university-writing-center> )