FIQWS: AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATER
FINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Topic: Your final paper will examine a musical and consider the social, historical and political themes within the context of the year that the work premiered.

Final Research Paper I: Getting Started

Use the ‘Credo Reference’ Encyclopedia to gather an overview about your year. For Dr. Robb, answer the following questions:

1. Describe two artistic accomplishments. One of these descriptions must provide information on musical theater.
2. Who were the two most important people in your year and why?
3. Note the two most important historical events and provide an explanation.

For each entry write about two concise, informative sentences explaining its importance and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Additionally, using ‘Credo Reference’ and / or ‘Oxford Music Online’ databases, search for your musical and write one paragraph summarizing the synopsis and main characters. ‘Credo Reference’ and ‘Oxford Music Online’ can be found on the CCNY databases, available online through the CCNY library website. Ask a librarian if you need assistance with access.

Watch your musical. What themes are explored? For Meg Wise-Lawrence, you will hand in a one page plot synopsis that focuses on themes you have identified in your musical.

All formal writing is expected to be in 12- point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, paginated, with citations and Works Cited page in MLA format. For Meg Wise-Lawrence’s class, you will also submit three essays and three drafts on Blackboard and without the header.

See class schedule and syllabus for details and due dates. Late work will receive a penalty. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated.

After Dr. Robb has returned this assignment to you, you will bring it to Meg Wise-Lawrence’s class for workshopping.
Final Research Paper II: Preparatory Research Assignment
Gathering Information

The research for the final paper is scaffolded in phases, each with specific research goals. Each phase expands and builds upon the historical research beginning with an examination of *The New York Times*. As you see themes emerging in your year, how do they connect to the themes from your musical? Find a book relating to your musical and use the library databases to find three peer-reviewed articles relating to your musical. This research will provide you with source materials, which you will use as support and evidence for your argument in your final paper. Meg Wise-Lawrence will collect an Annotated Bibliography of the above sources.

**NOTE:** You have at least a couple of weeks to complete each of the *New York Times* assignments. Begin your research early as this type of assignment is substantial and cannot be completed satisfactorily at the last minute.

For Dr. Robb, you will locate *New York Times* articles for your research and to present 3-5 themes that you found to be relevant to your year. **Answer the following questions for Dr. Robb:**

1. Chose four dates and four months from your year to research.
2. Read and locate articles for that day’s newspaper for four months in your year. For example:
   - January, 10
   - April, 15
   - November, 21
   - December, 9
   **Hint:** it is best to read the entire newspaper to gain the fullest information

3. Find articles that relate to the following topics for each of the four month of research:
   a. Read the Arts pages: theatre, music, dance, and museums. Locate as many relevant examples of articles that relate to entertainment related news as you can. Include events, shows, and reviews.
   b. What was the headline on that day? (There may be more than one)
   c. What is another notable event for that day?
   d. Read and find articles in the job page.
   e. Read and find relevant articles the advertising and fashion pages.
   f. Read and find articles from the real estate page.

Remember that you will locate articles for all of these for EACH month of research – (four months in total).

4. **Save electronic versions** (you will need it for citations for your final paper)
5. **Print off hard copies** of all *New York Times* articles. Highlight the areas of the articles that are relevant and bring them to class.
6. **Identify 3-5 themes** that are relevant to your year and be prepared to discuss them in class.

*After Dr. Robb has returned this assignment to you, you will bring it to Meg Wise-Lawrence’s class for workshopping.*
Final Research Paper III: Building a Theme

Re-read the articles that you located in the preparatory assignment, ‘Gathering Information’ and answer the following questions for Dr. Robb in list form (providing full and detailed information for each):

1. Provide details of the entertainment related news such as theater, music, dance and museums
2. Detail a short description of the headline.
3. Write the caption and a short summary of the notable event.
4. What were the salaries for the jobs descriptions?
5. What was the fashion and what did items cost?
6. What was rent like in different areas of NYC? (Provide locations)

You must answer the questions for each of the four months that you chose, organized in a clear and logical way.

NOTE: Only information from your New York Times research should be used here. Do not supplement your answer from any other source, including from the Internet. Your New York Times articles should be stapled to the front of your data in this order:

1. NYT articles for month 1
2. Written Explanations for month 1
3. NYT articles for month 2
4. Written explanations for month 2 etc.

After Dr. Robb has returned this assignment to you, you will bring it to Meg Wise-Lawrence’s class for workshopping. Draft one of your research paper is due to be submitted online.

Final Research Paper IV: Processing Information

See the description for Essay Four: Summary and Response Essay.

Final Research Paper V: Midterm
Expanding Sources

At midterm you will bring to class one academic print book and one academic (peer-reviewed) article that you will use for your final research paper. You must bring the actual book, checked out from the library and a hard copy of an academic article. Ensure that you are familiar with what constitutes a peer-reviewed article and an academic book.

An in depth understanding of this source material builds a spectrum of source material for your final paper. You must ensure that you can explain in detail how both of these
academic sources relate to your final research paper and how it will impact and contribute to your thesis, musical and/or year.

**Final Research Paper VI: Synthesis**

Search for newspaper articles in the *New York Times* online that directly relate to your musical. Do this by creating an Advanced Search and narrowing the search by your entire year. View, read and search through these important articles (especially the reviews) and assess their relevance. Print off hard copies of the articles, identify 3-5 articles that are relevant to your musical and be prepared to discuss them in class.

**Final Research Paper: Presentation on your Musical**

*Consult the class schedule for the day of your presentation.*

Once during the semester you will have an opportunity to give a presentation on your musical for your final paper. This will take place in reverse chronological order, by unit, as we move backwards through the decades of the 20th century. Your presentation will last 5 minutes and will be followed by a 2-3 minute Q & A session involving the entire class and receive feedback from Dr. Robb. Additionally, on the day of your presentation you will hand in a hard copy of your presentation (print off two copies).

In your presentation you must assess your musical with close attention to the following:

1. A brief synopsis of your musical
2. The main themes of your musical
3. A lyrical / music analysis of a song from your musical.

For your analysis, you must play an example from a song in your musical (CD or mp3) or show a DVD, as an example of a scene from your musical. Avoid summary and description; rather explain why this example is significant to your thesis. Prepare handouts that illustrate your findings.

You must write out and read your paper. Time your presentation and make sure that it fits into the slot, including your musical example and lyrical analysis. Proof-read your work and practice it by reading it aloud at home several times with a clear voice at a steady pace. Use the feedback from your presentation to improve and develop your final paper. **Presentation slots cannot be made up except in case of illness accompanied with a doctor’s note or other extenuating circumstance, which I consider exceptional.**

**Final Paper: Research Checklist**

You must submit your final research paper to both instructors (two copies) on the last day of each class. While you will be looking at 10+ sources, all final papers must analyze and use for support at least 5 sources including in depth analysis of at least one NYT article, one print book, and one academic (peer reviewed) article. Your annotated bibliography,
literary reviews and other writing will help you to build your final paper, and will influence your final grade. All final papers must include an in-depth examination of musical(s) including a song / lyrics / scene analysis and a clear thesis, with supporting evidence from *The New York Times*.

**LIST OF MUSICALS (Year) and DISCUSSION LEADING GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of premiere on Broadway</th>
<th>Musical</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Group Discussion Leading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>THE PRODUCERS</td>
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<td>Group 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>FOOTLOOSE</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>BLOOD BROTHERS</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>MISS SAIGON</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA</td>
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<td>Group 7</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>LES MISÉRABLES</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>42nd STREET</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>EVITA</td>
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<td>Group 6</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>CHICAGO</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>GREASE</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>HAIR</td>
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<td>Group 5</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>FIDDLER ON THE ROOF</td>
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<td>1962</td>
<td>A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM</td>
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<td>1959</td>
<td>THE SOUND OF MUSIC</td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td>MY FAIR LADY</td>
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<td>Group 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>THE KING AND I</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>GUYS AND DOLLS</td>
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<td>1949</td>
<td>SOUTH PACIFIC</td>
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<td>Group 3</td>
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<td>1947</td>
<td>BRIGADOON</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td>PAL JOEY</td>
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<td>Group 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>THE CRADLE WILL ROCK</td>
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<td>1931</td>
<td>OF THEE I SING</td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>SHUFFLE ALONG</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>IRENE</td>
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