

Course paper.

There two main options for satisfying the course paper requirement.

1) Use existing academic literature, academic studies, available data, etc. to evaluate the argument presented by Morris Fiorina in, "Culture War?: The Myth of a Polarized America." This should include an analysis of the author's main question (is there polarization?), while also addressing questions such as: What is polarization? What role does it play in party politics? Does it exist among the mass public? Partisan voters? Elected officials? Among some of these elements, or all? What sort of evidence is out there that helps us understand the question you focus on?

2) Develop your own research question that applies to a subject we have covered in class (as you know, I regularly suggest ideas for course papers). The same standard applies here as with option 1. First, present a question (i.e.; why are there more women elected in some places?; Why does turnout vary at elections?; What are the effects of various campaign finance rules? How did frontloading effect the 2008 election? How unusual was the 2008 election when forecasting models are considered?, etc. Use existing academic literature, academic studies, available data, etc. to evaluate the question. What sort of evidence is out there that helps us understand the question you focus on?

The paper should be no longer than approximately 7 pages, with full referencing of all sources and material used to in the paper. Only original work will be accepted.

The paper is worth 30% of your grade, and shall be due at the end of the 9th week of class.

Students who are interested in doing a more extensive paper may discuss having the paper worth more than 30% (and the final worth less).