

COS 490 Spring 2009 Paper 1

Write a paper that is at least 1,500 words long on one of the following topics.

1. Consider the actions and statements of Barack Obama over the course of his candidacy and through the early days of his administration. To what extent is he following the principles laid out in *The Prince*?
2. Discuss the war in Iraq from a Machiavellian point of view. Would it have been possible for the US to follow Machiavelli's advice? Would Machiavelli have predicted the developments that followed the initial invasion?
3. Discuss outsourcing from Machiavelli's point of view. In particular, show how his analysis of mercenaries and auxiliaries applies to the question of outsourcing. What advice would Machiavelli have for companies that outsource?
4. Machiavelli discusses lying by rulers. To what extent do US leaders lie? To what extent are the candidates for President lying? To what extent is President Obama lying? Discuss whether this is a necessary evil or something that should be avoided.
5. A big theme in this year's election is change. To what extent is this a novel idea? Discuss what Machiavelli would say about the current crop of candidates claiming to represent change.
6. According to Machiavelli, the proper occupation for a prince is to prepare for war. Discuss how this applies to republics and to the US in particular. What would a war policy for the US be?

Your papers will be graded on the criteria on the following page. Each criterion will receive a grade of 0-50 and the final result will be computed using the 6-way harmonic mean ($6/(1/a_1 + 1/a_2 + 1/a_3 + 1/a_4 + 1/a_5 + 1/a_6)$). This mean will give a good value as long as criteria are well addressed.

Be sure to write an interesting paper and put forward original ideas. Of course, your paper should be your own personal work. Be sure to provide adequate references for material that you use in your paper. Organize the paper and make it look good. The paper must be typed. You will lose points for typos and grammatical errors.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST & EVALUATION FEEDBACK

Score (Harmonic Mean) _____

<p><i>FOCUS (0-50)</i> The ideas and details in the paper are focused to fulfill the writer's purpose, to respond to the assignment.</p>	
<p><i>DEVELOPMENT (0-50)</i> The paper is developed with specific, concrete details that clearly and adequately fulfill the writer's purpose.</p>	
<p><i>STRUCTURE (0-50)</i> The organization of the paper is logical in light of the writer's audience and purpose and shows the writer's understanding of effective introductions, paragraphing, and conclusions.</p>	
<p><i>FLOW (0-50)</i> The flow of text within and between paragraphs is coherent and smooth.</p>	
<p><i>STYLE & CREATIVITY (0-50)</i> The sentences and diction demonstrate the writer's ability to use language clearly, vividly, and appropriately.</p>	
<p><i>MECHANICS (0-50)</i> The text reflects the writer's understanding of generally accepted conventions of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics.</p>	

Comments: