In each of the papers you write for this course, there are some general guidelines I would like you to follow:

- In all papers, your goal will be to construct an essay that contains a clear position, or argument. This position should be apparent to any reader by the end of your introductory paragraph. In further paragraphs you will present evidence to support your position, and in the closing paragraph you will both summarize your argument and discuss some of its broader implications.

- Whether you expect me (the instructor) to agree or disagree with your position should have no bearing on your choice of argument, because there are no correct or incorrect “answers” to the kinds of questions we’ll be addressing. What’s important is that you make a persuasive, evidence-based argument.

- The evidence that I will expect you present in your essays will be examples from the course readings or elsewhere. You can cite examples by quoting directly, such as,

  *Haycox states that “Alaska has been a powerful force in American cultural imagination throughout the twentieth century” (Haycox, 2002, p.1).*

Alternatively, you can paraphrase an author’s words, but must still include a parenthetical reference, such as,

*Haycox believes that American culture has been captivated by Alaska since the beginning of the twentieth century* (Haycox, 2002).

- You are welcome to cite sources other than the assigned course readings, but this is *not required*. An outside source could improve your grade only if it strengthens your argument; your grade will not increase just because you included an outside source.

- A bibliography (or “words cited” page) is not required unless you cite outside sources. Full bibliographic information for outside sources is required, in the citation style of your choice.

- Your target audience for these papers is an everyday 21st century US citizen with a general interest in the history of Alaska. For example, your friends, your parents, or even your elected representative in Congress. The paper should be entirely comprehensible without knowing anything about our course. Although the subject of the paper will be a prompt from the instructor, your target audience is someone who *has not read* the prompt. That is, you can't jump right in and say “I believe the answer is XYZ.” Instead, you need to provide all of the necessary context for an unfamiliar reader.

- Many of the statements you make in your papers will be hypothetical or speculative. This is entirely appropriate; your task is to convince your readers that such speculations are valid.

- **Formatting specifics**: two pages maximum, one-inch margins, 12-point font, double-spaced. I won’t read past the end of the second page. This may seem like an easy assignment because it’s short, but you will likely find that making a good argument in only two pages can be challenging.
Prompt for Paper 1:

Most historians of Alaska would agree that World War II and the beginning of the Cold War provided Alaska with the necessary economic boost to push the territory toward eventual statehood in 1959. In addition, Peter Coates suggests that military development played an important role in inspiring a nascent conservation movement in the state, writing that in her 1958 book *Arctic Wild*, Lois Crisler

“... drew attention to the struggle for between human greed and the emerging ecological conscience, which she called ‘the cold war we do not talk about,’ but which was ‘perhaps more important in the long run than the well-known cold war,’ both of which the DEWline symbolized.”

(Coates, p. 80.)

This “conservation call to arms stands” in stark contrast to Stephen Haycox's portrayal of Alaska’s leading politicians in their push for statehood. He states:

“Governor Ernest Gruening and Congressional Delegate "Bob" Bartlett shared [Chief Forester] Heintzleman's perception that economic development was critical to Alaska’s future, particularly for statehood; it was the foremost principle that drove their thinking about Alaska's future.”

(Haycox, p. 72)

and later,

“Conservation of those resources was not on [Alaska territorial delegate] Bartlett's agenda. Alaska neither needed nor wanted, he lectured the delegates, a resource policy which 'will prevent the orderly development of the great treasures' which were theirs.”

(Haycox, p. 78.)

In the context of Haycox's theme of “absentee investment capital” (p. 7), which we have already considered, the aim of Alaskan leaders to develop the region’s natural resources for their own economic benefit could be seen as an attempt to move the state away from absentee investment and toward economic self-sufficiency. This could perhaps be viewed as a more noble goal than Haycox’s theme of “greed,” for example: “They had not come to Alaska to subsist; they had come to prosper” (p. 59).

In light of these observations, please address the following questions in your Paper 1:

- Was the mid-20th century development of Alaska's natural resources (in large part blind to environmental impacts) a required element for the region's residents to attain statehood and escape from the tyranny of both absentee investment and non-representative government?
  - If so, was this a required element that Alaska residents placed upon themselves, or did it come from the nature of American capitalism and government? Or is this requirement even more universal?
  - If you don’t view natural resource development as a required element, what would have been an appropriate substitute? How could Alaska’s leaders, if following a different mindset, have approached their future in a way that would have not had the same economic goals and environmental results?

- If Russia had sold Alaska to the US in 2009 instead of 1867, but in the same largely “unaltered” state, would the first non-Native US citizens of Alaska have approached the state's future differently?