

Religions in America

Research Paper Guidelines

Due dates Nov 13, 18, 25, and Dec 9, 2019

Your 12-15 page research paper should consider a narrow problem, question, theme, or issue in a deep and thoughtful way. Your topic can be historical, contemporary, or a combination of the two. It should engage our course themes of religious diversity and pluralism in some way or address a scholarly debate in the field of religious studies. Just being “about religion” is not enough. The project includes several intermediate stages to help scaffold you towards a polished final work.



- Research Proposal (*printed*) is due **Nov 13**. I strongly advise a one-on-one meeting before that to discuss ideas. We will have a Library Research Instruction Session that day (location TBA; *bring laptops*).
- We'll have a Source Show & Tell on **Nov 18**, where you submit what I'm calling a “Source Plus” piece of writing (*printed*).
- Two copies of your draft due (*printed*) for a Peer Review Session on **Nov 25** (the Monday before Thanksgiving). I will provide feedback and revisions suggestions by Dec 2.
- The final paper is due on **Dec 9**, *electronic submission* through Blackboard portal.

Sources: Choose primary sources (original texts) and scholarly sources, i.e. published in peer-reviewed journals, reputable journalism outlets, or in books from academic presses, unless your topic is so immediate or unique that nothing has yet been published about it in such venues (even in that case, try to establish a scholarly context for your exploration). Steer away from purely internet sources like websites, social media, and open-access internet references. You need to make your own original contribution to the existing scholarly conversation with this paper – don't just recap/summarize what others have written or argued. *How many sources?* No magic number, but probably you'll need 5-10 to make a strong and persuasive argument.

Mechanics: The paper should be 12-15 double-spaced pages long, including footnotes and Works Cited pages. Title page is not part of the page count.

Number your pages. Give your paper a compelling title. Cite your sources using correctly formatted Chicago Style footnotes or MLA citations. Include a Bibliography or Works Cited of all sources included, with your entries correctly formatted and including all bibliographic information, especially if accessed online. Make sure your paper is thoroughly proofread: no sentence fragments, grammar mistakes, spelling errors, etc.

Submit as a single Word .doc or .docx, or PDF, by 11:59 pm on December 9 by uploading it to the Assignment portal on Blackboard.

Grading:

Proposal	4 points
Source +	5 points
Draft	A&P credit, feedback
Final Submission	20 points