

## Midterm Essay Exam

The three primary purposes of this assignment are (1) to assess your ability to communicate effectively in formal essay writing, (2) to gauge your knowledge of the material covered in the textbook, lectures, and class discussions, and (3) to invite you to demonstrate critical and creative thought by weighing in on the subject matter.

Use Modern Language Association (MLA) citation style for all writing assignments in this course. For assistance with MLA style, you may consult the library or the web. Here is a good online reference guide: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct and will not be tolerated. On your paper include your name, Panther ID number, course number, and the name of the professor. It must be double spaced, have 1 inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) and be typed in 12-point font, Times New Roman or Calibri. Include a Work Cited.

All writing will be submitted through Canvas and subject to turnitin.com anti-plagiarism verification.

**Due October 25, 2020, 11:59 p.m.**

Answer **two** of the three questions below. Minimum word count for this **entire** exam is 1,000 words of essay writing, excluding the heading, works cited, etc. You may distribute the 1,000-word minimum between the two answers in whatever way you deem necessary to answer the questions thoughtfully. For example, you could write 600 words answering one of the questions and 400 words answering another. Both essay answers which you provide must be included in one overall written document which you will upload to Canvas. You must include one works cited at the end of the document which itemizes the sources you cite in either essay. For **each** essay, cite your textbook plus at least one other academic source. Therefore the total minimum amount of sources required for the exam is three: the textbook (which you must use for both essay answers) as well as two other academic sources (one for each essay answer). There is no maximum on sources. Please do not exceed 3000 words of essay writing for this entire exam.

1. Some people claim to be spiritual but not religious. In your educated opinion, is it possible to be religious but not spiritual? Use the six dimensions of religion to justify your answer.
2. Compare and contrast a particular religious rite of passage with a particular secular rite of passage.

3. How are animism and polytheism different? Use specific examples to explain your answer.

NOTE: For the purpose of this assignment, “academic source” refers to a work of scholarship such as a peer-reviewed journal article or monograph. Students are invited to consult the instructor or a librarian if they need further clarification. In the field of Religious Studies, it is important to identify when sources are providing an insider perspective such as the faith-based theological interpretation from a religious adherent. These are allowed and valuable sources for reporting how religious persons understand their own beliefs, practices, etc., but they are not considered “academic sources” for the purpose of this assignment. Academic sources aid analysis by providing an outsider perspective, treating religious beliefs, practices, etc., as objects of history and scientific inquiry.

### Grading Criteria

5%	Includes proper works cited with textbook plus at least 2 other academic sources (1 for each essay)
5%	Uses MLA style correctly to cite sources
10%	Demonstrates adequate use of grammar, sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, spelling, organization, and other style guidelines mentioned here or in the syllabus
20%	For the first essay, demonstrates knowledge of material in order to provide informed answers to all questions asked
20%	For the first essay, demonstrates critical and original thought: weighs in on the issues
20%	For the second essay, demonstrates knowledge of material in order to provide informed answers to all questions asked
20%	For the second essay, demonstrates critical and original thought: weighs in on the issues