

San José State University, Humanities Department, Religious Studies Program

RELS/WOMS 131: Gender, Sexuality & Religion

Fall Semester 2012

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Cultural, Religious, and Gendered Location Essay (10%)

This paper provides an opportunity for you to reflect on the intersections of your own gendered, cultural, and religious background(s), incorporating insights from the reading thus far. This paper should be 3-5 pages long.

Some specific questions to ask yourself (and address in your paper) include:

- What have been your own life experiences with regards to religion? How do you define “religion” and why?
- How have your cultural and social backgrounds shaped your concepts about religion?
- How might those experiences and concepts have contributed to your notions of gender and sexuality (and vice versa)?
- Can you identify describe some of the specific beliefs and practices of your religious tradition(s), especially with regards to gender?
- If you were not raised in, or do not adhere to, a particular religious tradition (or traditions), how has this affected your perspectives on religion (and gender) in general?
- In thinking through the intersections between culture, religion, and gender, can you begin to identify how the “personal is political” in your own circumstances? (i.e., how your own experiences, opinions, and identities are connected to and shaped by broader social forces, particularly with regards to gender and religion?)
- Finally, why are you enrolled in this class and what do you expect to get out of it?
- ALSO: I want to see direct references to the readings thus far, including citations (see below for preferred style).

Criteria and Guidelines for Written Assignments:

- Organization: *follow basic directions and guidelines accurately* and always include a clear, succinct introductory paragraph and thesis statement that spells out your argument and provides a roadmap for the content of your essay, as well as a concluding paragraph that summarizes the essay & your key conclusions.
- Demonstrate your accurate understanding of the material, as well as your ability to think independently, analytically, and critically (i.e., explain *what you think and why, make connections, and provide evidence for your assertions*).
- Writing must be clear and grammatically correct, as well as descriptive and thorough.
- Use specific and relevant references to the assigned readings that support your analyses, using citations and quotations correctly and appropriately.
- For these short papers, you do not need formal citations or a works cited list. Simply cite the author’s last name and page number. i.e.: (Gross, 13) or (Myhre, 8), or (Shaw and Lee, 19).
- Proofread and run spell check: one or two small errors may be acceptable, but sloppy essays riddled with misspellings and other errors will reduce your grade.
- Don’t forget to upload your paper to turnitin.com. The class ID is **5301903** and the enrollment password is “**sophia**.” See https://turnitin.com/static/training/student_quickstart_guide.php if you need help registering.