



History of Ancient Religion

Fall 2022

Course Info

History of Ancient Religion • Fall 2022

HIA 306: History of Ancient Religion. *3 hours, 3 credits. Hybrid. Writing Intensive.* A survey of religious beliefs and practices of the Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds. Religious customs of the ancient Mesopotamian cultures; Mycenaean, Minoan and Classical Greek myth and ritual; Hellenistic religions and mystery religious cults; private household worship in the Roman Republic; and public religious faith in the Roman Empire.

Details HIA 306-H01 (58230), Fall 2022. Crosslisted with: HIA 706-H01 (58231). In-person meetings Tuesdays 1:30 to 2:45 4:15 p.m., room TBA, plus additional material online.

Instructor Dr. Mark B. Wilson, Adjunct Assistant Professor. Office: Carman 292. Email: mark.wilson@lehman.cuny.edu. Website: markbwilson.com.

Office hours Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:00 to 5:45 p.m.

Rationale

Religion is humanity's original and most durable method of making sense of the chaos and changeability of the forces of the natural world, with immense influence on every aspect of history and culture. In this course, we will explore religious customs of the ancient Mesopotamian cultures; Mycenaean, Minoan and Classical Greek myth and ritual; Hellenistic religions and mystery religious cults; private household worship in the Roman Republic; and public religious faith in the Roman Empire.

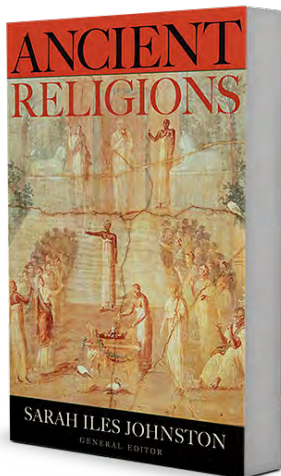
Specific Learning Objectives

- In this course we'll be pursuing a number of goals, including:
- Exploration of the emergence of religion and its implications for humanity
- Exposure to a diverse array of religions in the ancient Mediterranean and elsewhere
- Exploration of evolutionary changes and cultural conflicts related to religious beliefs, as well various kinds of impacts on political power; social norms; writing and literature practices; artistic expression; and science and philosophy
- Examination of the role of religion in understanding how the many interactions and transformations of ancient civilizations developed into a Western identity, part of the origin of the modern Western world
- Development of skills associated with study of history, including interpretation of primary sources and other evidence.

Books

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The following book is required. Some possible ways to get it are listed below.



1. *Ancient Religions*.

edited by Sarah Iles Johnston. Belknap Press, 2007. 9780674025486. \$31.50.

- Getting this book:
 - Available as a full-text ebook online via Leonard Lief Library.
 - Available new, used, or in Kindle format via Amazon.
 - Available new or used via Barnes & Noble.
 - Available new via Bookshop.org.
 - Available used via AbeBooks or Alibris.

Additional materials will be supplied via the course website.

The required book is available from Lehman College Bookstore and from Amazon and other online retailers (try searching aggregators such as Bookfinder for the best deals). Make sure you do so enough in advance that you'll receive the books in time for the assignments.

Grading

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Your overall grade for this hybrid course will be determined by your performance on weekly online quizzes, weekly online reading responses, three essays, and a final exam.

Your grade for the course will be determined from the following:

Weekly:	Online Quizzes	14%
	Online Ancient Excerpt Responses	14%
One-Time:	Ancient Excerpt Write-Up	7%
	Essay on Representations and Images	10%
	Research Essay on an Ancient Work	25%
	Final Exam	30%

Weekly Requirements

Online Quizzes

We'll have short online quizzes after each class that are due on the Friday after each Tuesday class. These are to help gauge our relationship with the material in the readings and our discussions of them. Quizzes are based on the material you've prepared for that class and our in-class discussions.

If you did your readings for the class and came to the class meeting, you should be prepared for the online quiz. Quizzes are always based on the materials assigned for that class meeting, even if I am slightly behind the syllabus in class. Make sure to always do the assigned readings.

Missed quizzes are not made up. If you do not take a quiz by the Friday due date, you'll get a zero for that quiz. Therefore, please make sure you come to class and do the readings.

Online Ancient Excerpt Responses

Each week there will be a brief primary source reading posted on the course website related to that week's topic.

You need to post in the online discussion board twice each week:

1. Your first post responds to the reading. For this you need to make a statement or an argument on some aspect of how the reading shows the subject culture's relationship with religion in light of our readings and in-class discussions, giving an example of what you mean from the text.
2. Your second post responds to the points made by other students, drawing attention to the interpretations that you think line up best with the reading and bringing up anything you think is significant that hasn't yet been mentioned.

The first post can be made anytime up through the Thursday after the class meeting; the second post is needs to be made by the following Sunday. Your posts need to be specific and substantive, and will be graded accordingly.

One-Time Requirements

Essays (3)

Essay on Representations and Images

You'll write an interpretive essay: a response to your choice of nonwritten artistic depictions of gender concepts in the ancient world, including sculpture, painting, performance, or film, comparing the history that's come down to us with how it has been represented. Details are on the Essays page.

Research Essay on an Ancient Work

You'll write a 4-to-5-page research essay in which you choose a work of ancient literature and discuss three ways it shows its author's and his or her culture's relationship with religion, as supported by the work itself and ancient or scholarly commentary on the work. Details are on the Essays page.

Proposal. You will submit a proposal for the paper partway through the semester, so I can give you feedback on your plans.

Ancient Excerpt Write-Up

You will sign up for one of the weekly excerpts and write up a 3-page essay describing the elements of religion shown in the excerpt as discussed by members of the class in the online responses.

Sign up for the excerpt you want to respond to on the sign-up sheet. This will be due one week after the online responses close. Details are on the Essays page.

Final Exam

The exam will be an in-class two-hour final exam. Details will be posted on the Exam page as the end of the semester approaches.

Expectations

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Attendance and Participation

- **Participation in class discussion is a required part of the course.** Missing classes will damage your grade.
 - Textbooks are designed to give you the basics; in our class meetings we try to make sense of things, and sift out what's important. Missing classes means you miss out on a key part of our trying to put things together.
 - If you miss quizzes, it will put a big crimp in your grade for the course. Quizzes are not made up, so the quizzes you miss will count against you.
- Religious observances that affect your class attendance should be discussed in advance.
- **If you are not feeling well**, please stay home.
- **If you have tested positive for COVID-19**, please contact the Health Center at med.requirements@lehman.cuny.edu as soon as possible after your positive test result to initiate contact tracing and to get connected to support services.

Submitting Assignments

- **All written assignments must be submitted via BlackBoard** using the upload links there. [BlackBoard](#) is accessed through CUNY Login. If you have trouble with BlackBoard, please call the IT helpdesk at (718) 960-1111 or go to the Lehman College [BlackBoard support page](#). I won't accept written assignments by email. If BlackBoard itself is down, I'll announce alternative arrangements to the class.
- **Late assignments will be marked down.** I'll still accept late submissions, but there will be a penalty that will hurt your grade.
 - Written assignments will be marked down one letter grade per class meeting after the assignment due date, up to a maximum of 30 points. That means you're still better off turning in your paper late, and having it be marked down, than not turning it in at all.
 - I do not give extra credit opportunities except to the entire class. I do not grade on a curve.
 - I do not give incompletes unless we've discussed and agreed on the grounds for giving one prior to the final exam.
 - Make-up assignments or exams are given only in cases of documented medical emergency or comparable life disruption.
 - I do not accept rewritten essays after an assignment has been submitted, graded, and returned; but some deductions are reversible (see the sample grading sheet on the Requirements page).
- Any instances of plagiarism, whether on essays, papers, quizzes, or exams, will have dire consequences. See [the policies page](#) for what counts as plagiarism and the penalties involved in presenting the work of others as your own.

Guidelines

Don't waste this opportunity! Make the most out of this class.

- **Please use me as a resource.** Interact with me in class meetings online or send me emails with any questions you have—whether they relate to the requirements of the course, or to ideas we're reading about or discussing in class.
- **Come to the class meetings prepared.** By prepared, I mean you should have done the readings and videos for that day—and thought about them. Come in ready to talk about your reactions to the readings and the videos, and the questions they raised in your mind.
- **Take notes in class.** You are responsible for the material discussed in class meetings, and will be expected to discuss this material on exams and in assigned essays. Taking notes in class gives you a resource to review what was discussed.
- **Check your email.** Make sure I have a good email address for you and check it, as I occasionally send information and updates by email. If you have not gotten an email from me within the first week after school begins, check your spam folders. If you can't find an email from me, send me an email to let me know how best to reach you.
- **Talk to me if you're struggling.** Reach out to me via email, and the sooner the better. Don't wait until it's too late to turn things around.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

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For each meeting, please come into class having read and thought about the readings assigned for that class.

Readings listed with the book icon (📖) are from the assigned textbook, Johnston, Ancient Religions.

Everything listed under each meeting, including the textbook readings and the ancient excerpts, is fair game for the weekly online quizzes.

August 2022							September 2022							October 2022							November 2022							December 2022							
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3						1																
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

Week 1: Introduction and Evidence

In-person meeting: Tuesday, August 30

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "Introduction" (pp. vii-xii)

📖 "Maps" (pp. xvi-xvii)

Sign up for your excerpt write-up for the semester

Week 2: Sumerians

In-person meeting: Tuesday, September 6

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "What Is Ancient Mediterranean Religion?" (pp. 3-16)

📖 "Sumer" (pp. 165-78)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 3: Assyrians and Babylonians

In-person meeting: Tuesday, September 13

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "What Is Polytheism?" (pp. 17-24)

📖 "Babylon and Assyria" (pp. 168-72)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 4: Hittites and proto-Indo-Europeans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, September 20

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "Religions in Contact" (pp. 112-26)

📖 "Anatolia: Hittites" (pp. 189-96)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 5: Zoroastrians

In-person meeting: Tuesday, October 11

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "Magic" (pp. 139-52)

📖 "Iran" (pp. 197-205)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 6: Syrians and Canaanites

In-person meeting: Tuesday, October 18

Before the class meeting, read:

📖 "Pollution, Sin, Atonement, Salvation" (pp. 71-83)

📖 "Syria and Canaan" (pp. 173-80)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 7: Israelites and Judeans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, October 25

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "What Is Monotheism?" (pp. 24-31)

■ "Israel" (pp. 181-88)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 8: Egyptians

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 1

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Cosmology: Time and History" (pp. 59-70)

■ "Egypt" (pp. 155-64)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 9: Minoans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 8

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Ritual" (pp. 32-44)

■ "Minoans" (pp. 206-08)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 10: Mycenaeans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 15

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Myth" (pp. 45-58)

■ "Mycenaeans" (pp. 208-09)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 11: Hellenes

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 22

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Mysteries" (pp. 98-111)

■ "Greece" (pp. 210-19)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 12: Etruscans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 29

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Writing and Religion" (pp. 127-138)

■ "Etruria" (pp. 220-24)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 13: Romans

In-person meeting: Tuesday, December 6

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Law and Ethics" (pp. 84-97)

■ "Rome" (pp. 225-232)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Week 14: Early Christians

In-person meeting: Tuesday, November 13

Before the class meeting, read:

■ "Epilogue" (pp. 241-52)

■ "Early Christianity" (pp. 233-39)

"Excerpt"

After the class meeting:

Respond to this week's reading by Thursday

Respond to the discussion of this week's reading by Sunday

Take the online quiz on this week's topic by Sunday

Final Exam

In-person: Tuesday, December 20

Written Assignments

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For this course, you'll write a research essay on an ancient work (due at the end of the semester) and an essay on images of the ancient world.

In addition, you'll also turn in a write-up of the responses to one of the readings and a proposal for your position paper.

Before uploading, make sure your essays meet the Requirements for All Papers. All written assignments must be submitted via BlackBoard.

	Upload by
1. Images Essay	Monday, October 10
2a. Research Essay Proposal	Monday, October 24
2b. Research Essay	Monday, December 12
3. Reading Responses Write-Up	1 week after responses close

IMPORTANT

Watch the video. The overview video explains what I want you to cover in the essay and what I'm expecting in terms of arguments, evidence, and structure.

Before you upload, make sure your essay meets the Requirements for All Papers, including formatting, structure, and citations. You will be marked down drastically if your paper is not properly cited. For how to do citations and bibliographies, see the Citations handout.

Essay on Representations and Images

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The assignment: Write a 3- to 4-page essay using depictions of religion the ancient world to take a position on the representations of ancient cultural ideas and beliefs, following one of the following two options.

OPTION 1

Two pieces in a museum

How a culture sees abstract ideas (masculinity, virtue, old age, divinity, and so on) is often reflected in its artwork. What can two different works of art depicting the same idea, but from different times or places, tell us about how the cultures that produced them?

For this option, you need to choose two works of art from the ancient world having to do with religion that (a) represent the same idea or concept but (b) come either from different periods or from different places in the ancient world.

In your essay, compare three things that these works have in common, using those comparisons to make an argument about what these two artists believed in and the insights this gives us into the cultures they came from.

Choosing your subjects

- Your two works of art must represent the same idea or concept. For example, you can choose two priestesses, two demigod heroes, two fertility goddesses, etc. The idea is to look for how similarities and differences in representations of the same idea tell us about the cultural beliefs and expectations that shaped the artists and their own culturally-conditioned visions of that idea.
- Your works of art must be from the ancient era (before 500 CE), and they must be from either two different places or two different periods. This allows you to talk about two separate societies and how they represent the same concepts differently. The two pieces can be in any visual medium: sculpture, painting, relief, etc. They do not have to be in the same medium as long as they are depictions of the same idea or concept.
- Ideally, you should experience the artwork face-to-face by attending a museum in person. Possible venues include: Metropolitan Museum's Egypt Collection; Metropolitan Museum's Greek and Roman Art Collection; Brooklyn Museum of Art's Ancient Egyptian Art Collection; and Fordham Museum of Greek, Etruscan and Roman Art. You are, of course, not limited to these venues, and you are not limited to New York. If you are not able to attend a museum in person because of ongoing restrictions, you may find imagery of artworks that meet the requirements on museum websites instead.

Writing your paper

- Choose three aspects of the works you can discuss for both pieces that seem to reflect how the artist felt about the subject and what the subject stood for.
 - Some possibilities include facial expression, dress, use of technique or medium, stiffness/fluidity, apparent strength/weakness, idealism/realism, or any other elements offering some kind of insight into what the artist was trying to convey. Describe and discuss your subjective impressions of these three aspects in the two works.

- For each aspect, compare how it manifests in the first piece; then talk about how the second piece is similar or different and in what way; and finally talk about what these similarities or differences tell us about what each artist believed about their subject and what that might tell us about the cultural beliefs they came from in relation to the subject being depicted.
- For example: say the works you’ve chosen are two sculptures depicting a goddess of love from different cultures, and one has a crafty expression while the other has an innocent expression. The different facial expressions can be used to talk about how each artist, and the cultures they came from, might have thought about things like the gods’ attitudes toward their roles in creating relationships between mortals; the nature of love; the motivations of the gods, etc.
- Make an argument about how consistently the same core idea was seen in the two times or places that produced these two works. If art is an expression of cultural values, what do the differences between these works tell you about the respective cultures they come from? What do their similarities tell you about what these ancient cultures have in common?
- You do not need to preface your essay with background about the periods, the media used, etc. This essay is about your subjective reactions to these two specific works and what you believe they are telling you about the beliefs and social expectations of the cultures they came from.
- On a separate “Works Discussed” page after your essay:
 - List the title of each work, the artist, the approximate date it was created, the city or region it came from originally, and the name of the museum gallery where the work can be found.
 - Paste in photographs of the items. If it’s permitted at the museum, take a picture of the items while you’re there. If it’s not, find pictures of those specific items on the museum’s web site.

OPTION 2

The ancient world on film

Every depiction of an historical event, whether in prose, poetry, painting, theater, or film, involves an artist using history to convey his or her own beliefs. What do the creators of the film and the authors of the source material it was based on want you to believe?

For this option, you need to choose a film that is set in the ancient world that relates to religion and that is based on an ancient primary source. In your essay, compare the agenda of the filmmakers with the agenda of the authors of the primary source. Describe and discuss the similarities and differences in how these creators reshaped this event for their own purposes. Use these similarities and differences to make an argument about the ways in which this particular event is leveraged to impose ideas on audiences and about what this event means to the people who create art about it.

Choosing your subjects

- First, choose and watch any feature-length film set in the ancient era (3500 BCE to 500 CE). You can also choose two episodes of a television series set in the ancient world.
- Then find the ancient primary source material it was based on and read it. For example, if you chose the movie *300*, which is about Spartans fighting Persian invaders at the Battle of Thermopylae, the primary source you’d need would be the main ancient account of that battle, which is in Book 7 of *The Histories* by the famous historian Herodotus. Your primary source(s) must come from the ancient world (before 500 CE).

- Some suggestions for possible films or series and their corresponding sources are below. The list is not exhaustive, and you are not limited to this list as long as the film you choose is set in the ancient world and is based on ancient primary sources.

Writing your paper

- Choose three moments or depictions from the film and find the corresponding events or depictions in the primary source.
 - For each moment or depiction, describe and discuss how it appears in the film and how it is presented similarly or differently in the primary source material.
- Use these similarities or differences to make an argument about (a) the agenda of the primary source author and how it compares to the agenda of the filmmakers, and (b) the ways this historical event is used by others to present their own ideas, and what this tells us about the shape and meaning of this event's impact and legacy on history.
 - Please take note: This essay is about the agenda of the primary source author as much as the filmmakers'. Do not use the source to "fact check" the film and list what it got "wrong". You must consider the primary source to be at least as skewed, manipulative, and agenda-driven as the film.
- On a separate "Works Discussed" page after your essay, list the title of film, year, director, stars and studio. Then list the book or books you drew your written evidence from, using standard citation style. The references to the primary source must also be properly cited in the text as usual.

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Some possibilities for the film and sources option are listed on the course website. Note that is a general list of films depicting the ancient world and some may not have much bearing on religion. Links to most of these primary sources can be found on the ancient texts page on my website.

Research Essay

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The assignment: Write a 5- to 6-page researched essay, due at the end of the semester, that takes a position on the depiction of religion within a major literary work from the ancient world.

A. Choose a work

For this assignment, you need to choose a literary work from the ancient world (before 500 CE) one of the themes of which relates to religion. For example, in *Antigone*, the conflict is driven in part by Antigone's need to respect the gods by burying her brother, despite having been forbidden to do so by the king.

Your goal will be to make an argument about how this work deals with religion—both religious custom between mortals and the relationship between mortals and the divine—and what this tells us about the particular culture this work came from.

Some possible subjects are listed at the bottom of this page, along with links to online versions of the text.

EXAMPLES

What do I mean by "religion" in this context? The idea of "religion" can encompass a lot of different things, so you have some leeway in the kinds of things you can discuss as part of showing how your work relates to religion.

Consider all of the different ways in which concepts of religion affect society; including: the actions of gods and of nature, often inexplicable or capricious; expectations of morality and behavior external to the bonds between mortals; religious iconography and monuments; sacred texts; rituals and sacrifices; magic; legends and myths that explain the way the world works; ideas of time and cosmos beyond the mundane experience of mortals; pollution and sin; death and the afterlife; salvation; the soul as distinct from the mortal body; ideological conflict with other gods or the religious beliefs of other cultures.

What you'll be doing is looking for these kinds of things in the work you're exploring and picking out three moments from the work to discuss and interpret in your essay, with the overall goal of using these interpretations to gain insight into the culture that produced the work you're writing about. This means you will be making an argument concerning what you believe this work tells us about the culture it came from. That brings us to the Proposal, in which you identify which work you're going to be exploring and sketch out what you think might be the position you'll be taking.

B. Write a one-page proposal

The assignment: The proposal is just a brief one-page preview of your essay. It should include:

- The topic you think you'll want to write about and the problem you're interested in addressing. You should be able to delineate the problem by describing the opposing views people might take. To make sure you have two clear opposing opinions, you might want to express them in the form "Some say.... Others say...."
- Your preliminary thesis statement—in other words, what you think you might be arguing in your paper.
 - Your thesis statement, both here and in the final paper, should be a statement of opinion that someone could disagree with. It can take the form of following up the description of the opposing opinions with your own: "I believe...."

Remember that your thesis is provisional. You can change anything about your approach and interpretation after the proposal; in fact, uncovering information as you do your research makes refining or changing your initial assessments very likely.

Your proposal is structured like the introduction (see the example on the course website or in the Elephant Pamphlet), and may serve as the basis for it.

The proposal is not graded, but whether you submitted a proposal on time will be factored into the final grade for the position paper. I will give you feedback on things like the feasibility of researching your topic, whether the scope is too big or too narrow for a paper like this, and some possible sources you might want to look at.

Note: The one-page proposal described here is what's due in Week 7.

C. Research additional perspectives

The bulk of your essay will involve describing, analyzing, and drawing conclusions about three moments from the work that you think most clearly reveal the author's understanding of religion. We'll call the work you've chosen to write about the *main text*.

To support your analysis, I want you to find at least two other additional sources that provide perspective on the work you are studying.

These *additional sources* can be either

- (a) primary sources—sources also from the ancient world—that comment on the subject of the main text, or on the main text itself; or
- (b) secondary sources by modern scholars that focus on interpreting your main text.

You can have two primary sources, two secondary sources, or one of each. In your paper, you'll use these additional sources to support the arguments you make about the main text.

EXAMPLES

An example from the first category: Suppose your main text is *Bacchae*, a tragedy that Dionysos, the Greek god of wine and ritual madness, as its antagonist. To get a handle on Euripides's take on this strange and anomalous god, you could take a look at another ancient work featuring the same god to use as a contrast—*Frogs*, for example, a comedy by Aristophanes in which Dionysos interacts with some famous playwrights (including Euripides). Looking at how differently Aristophanes handles Dionysos will help you gain insight into how Euripides saw Dionysos and the role he had in human society.

An example from the second category might be a scholarly discussion of the main text—for example, a book of essays about the themes that surface in *Bacchae*. Or it might be about a specific topic you're focusing on in the main text—for example, a scholarly article about the way Dionysos was viewed by the Greeks.

My response to your proposal will include some suggestions as to useful additional sources for your essay.

Tertiary sources are not allowed. These include textbooks, encyclopedias, and most websites. See the Research and Citation Center for more on sources.

For guidance on finding full-text online primary and secondary sources, see the Research and Citation Center.

D. Write your essay

- In your introduction, briefly describe the problem and state the position you will argue as a thesis statement. Your introduction should follow the format of the proposal (see above).
- In the body of your paper, make three assertions as to why your thesis statement is valid. For each assertion, describe and discuss the evidence from the primary and secondary sources.

EXAMPLE

For example, if you were writing the Hannibal/elephants paper described in the website, you could start one section with an assertion that elephants were not a bad idea inherently, then discuss evidence showing the effective use of elephants in war.

Then begin the next section with an assertion that Romans were adaptable in war, and discuss evidence showing how Romans changed their military tactics and strategies to meet new kinds of war and new enemies.

Your third section could begin with an assertion that it was Roman adaptability that trumped the effectiveness of Hannibal's evidence, and discuss the evidence that showed how the Romans overcame the use of elephants in the fight with Hannibal.

- Each section starts with an assertion followed by evidence, and each section builds on the previous sections to make an overall argument. Your evidence should come primarily from your main text, with support for your analysis coming from the two additional sources you've chosen.
- End with a conclusion that shows how your three assertions came together to support your thesis.

Your essay must have citations for all quotes, paraphrases, and ideas from both your main text and your additional sources. There must also be a bibliography that lists your main text and all additional sources. We'll talk about this in class, and see the Research and Citation Center for more.

Optional Draft. You may submit an optional draft two weeks before the final due date. It should include most of your paper (at least two thirds of the final content, with sections to be written described in square brackets). I'll give feedback, but not a grade, to help you refine your final paper. To make sure I see it soonest, please email me your optional draft rather than uploading it to BlackBoard.

Possible subjects and links

Possible subjects for this assignment include the following. Links may be found on the web page.

Plays

- *Antigone* by Sophocles (Athens, 5th century BCE). Antigone fights to bury her treasonous brother despite having been forbidden to do so by the grudge-bearing king.
- *Bacchae* by Euripides (Athens, 5th century BCE). Spurned by Thebes, Dionysos tricks its queen into rending her own son to pieces.
- *Eumenides* by Aeschylus (Athens, 5th century BCE). Tormented by the Furies for murdering his faithless mother at Apollo's behest, Orestes appeals to the justice of Athena.
- *The Birds* by Aristophanes (Athens, 5th century BCE). Pisthetaerus convinces the birds to create a great city in the sky, and thus regain their status as the original gods.

Epic Poetry

- *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Sumer, Bronze Age BCE). The king of Uruk, saved from abusive rule by his god-given friend Enkidu, seeks to defeat the forest guardian and defy his own mortality.
- *Theogony* by Hesiod (Greece, 8th century BCE). The origins of the Greek gods and the personalities and intentions.
- "The Death of Patroklos": books 16–18 of *Iliad* by Homer (Greece, 8th century BCE). Seeking glory on behalf of his mentor, Achilles, Patroklos is lured to his death in battle thanks to conflicts among the gods.
- "Aeneas in the Underworld": book 6 of *Aeneid* by Virgil (Rome, 1st century BCE). Required to obtain a bough of gold as a gift for the wife of Pluto, Aeneas descends to the underworld, where he witnesses the fates of the just and the unjust.
- "Gods and Mortals": books 1-2 of *Metamorphoses* by Ovid (Rome, 1st century CE). Stories of creation and the ages of humanity, plus mortal encounters with the gods by Io, Daphne, Europa, and others.

Dialog

- *Babylonian Theodicy* by Šaggil-kīnam-ubbib (Babylon, 11th century BCE). A dialog between an individual experiencing suffering as a result of acts of evil done by people in the society around him, and a friend who urges a positive perspective on morality and fate.
- *Euthyphro* by Plato (Athens, 4th century BCE). Socrates, soon to be put on trial for his life, discusses the meaning of piety and justice.
- *On Divination* by Cicero (Rome, 1st century BCE). A philosophical exploration on the role and purpose of divination in Roman religious ritual and culture.

Sacred Text

- *The Book of Job* (Judea, 4th century BCE). Satan receives God's permission to test the faith a wealthy man by removing his blessings.

Satire

- *The Pumpkinification of Claudius* by Seneca (Rome, 1st century CE). The recently deceased emperor Claudius is depicted ascending to heaven, where the gods are not sure what to do with him.

Prose Fiction

- "Tale of Cupid and Psyche": books 4.27–6 of *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius (Rome, 2nd century CE). The god of love and his beloved overcome various obstacles before finally being able to wed.

Prose Nonfiction

- *Numa* by Plutarch (Rome, 2nd century CE). Biography of the legendary second king of Rome, to whom was attributed the religious traditions and institutions of later Rome.
- *Isis and Osiris* by Plutarch (Egypt, 2nd century CE). A survey of Egyptian religious rites and myths from a Greek perspective.

I'm happy to discuss other possibilities, but alternative choices should be approved by me first before the due date for the proposal.

Responses Write-Up

History of Ancient Religion • Fall 2022

The assignment: For one of the the assigned primary source readings, write a 3-page essay that summarizes what the reading tells us.

Your write-up should do the following:

- Briefly summarize what the document says and, more importantly, analyze what the author is trying to say about the subject at hand. In other words, you need to identify and discuss what you believe is the author's interpretation, bias, and point of view and how it affected the author's treatment of the topic. Give examples from the document that illustrate your assessment of the author's spin.
- Using the online responses to that reading by yourself and your classmates, discuss three interpretations or significant features of this reading as it relates to religion that tell us something about the culture that it comes from.

The main point of the presentation and the write-up is NOT to summarize the reading. Summary should be less than 25% of your presentation and your write-up. The main goal here is to use the points raised in the online discussion to analyze the reading and talk about what it means and what it tells us about that place and time in ancient history.

Your write-up needs to be posted to BlackBoard one week after the discussion on that reading closes. For example, if you chose the reading for Week 2, that discussion closes the Sunday after our Week 2 meeting; your write-up is due one week later, on the Sunday after that.

IMPORTANT

You need to sign up for which reading you'll be doing the write-up on. You only need to do one of these for the whole semester. The sign-up page is on the course website.

Requirements for All Papers

Fall 2022

All written assignments for this course **MUST** adhere to these requirements or be subject to a reduced grade. Check all of the following before submitting any paper.

If you are uncertain how to do any of this, *ask me before* submitting your paper.

Formatting musts

All papers submitted to me must:

- Be typed, double-spaced, in 12 pt. standard font, with one-inch margins. Do not add extra blank lines between paragraphs; instead, indent the first line of each paragraph to show a new paragraph has begun.
- Have a cover page with the title, your name, my name, and the date.
- Have page numbers on each page after the cover. The cover should not have a page number.
- Include both citations and a bibliography. (See Evidence musts.)
- Run at least the required length specified in the assignment.
- Have titles of books, films, and plays italicized and capitalized.
- Be submitted via BlackBoard as a Word or compatible file attachment or as a PDF attachment.

Evidence musts

All papers submitted to me must:

- Support all assertions with evidence from your sources.
- Use only primary and secondary sources. Tertiary sources are not allowed, ever.
- Provide a footnote or a parenthetical citation for all direct quotations, descriptions, paraphrases, and ideas from sources.
- Include a bibliography listing all sources used.

Structure musts

All papers submitted to me must:

- Have an introduction paragraph that states the problem or question being addressed; discusses possible opinions on this problem; and ends with a thesis statement—a statement of opinion that someone could disagree with.
- Cover three reasons why your thesis is true. Each should have an assertion (what your reason is), a description of supporting evidence (some moment in your evidence that's an example of your assertion), and a discussion of how your evidence demonstrates the point you're making.
- Have a conclusion that summarizes your three reasons and why they support your thesis.

Tips on Meeting the Requirements

Formatting musts

Use the template. Save the trouble of setting up the cover and page numbers—use the MS Word template file I created.

Page counts. Page counts are for full pages not counting the cover page and bibliography. If the requirement is “3-4 pages”, what I am looking for is at least 3 full pages of text, not counting the cover and not counting the bibliography.

BlackBoard notes. You may only submit via BlackBoard. Do not submit written assignments as submission text—they must be file attachments. If you need help with BlackBoard, go to the Lehman IT BlackBoard support page or call the IT helpdesk at (718) 960-1111.

Evidence musts

You may not use tertiary sources for any assignment. Tertiary sources include textbooks, encyclopedias, study guides, dictionaries, my lectures, and almost everything on the internet except online scholarly journals and transcribed primary sources. If you’re not sure, ask me.

Citing direct quotes is not enough. This common mistake will lose you points. Paraphrases and ideas must also be cited.

Citation styles. You can use Chicago, MLA, or any other citation style. What matters to me is that anything that’s not your analysis must have a footnote or a parenthetical citation that points to an item in your bibliography. See the Elephant Pamphlet for more on citations and bibliographies.

The number of sources you need to use varies from assignment to assignment.

Structure musts

See the Elephant Pamphlet for more on how to do all of this, including thesis statements, essay structure, and citations.

You can submit an optional draft for any paper, no later than one class meeting before the due date. I won’t grade it, but I’ll give you feedback about how well you’re addressing your topic and thesis. To make sure I see it soonest, please email me your optional draft rather than uploading it to BlackBoard.

I will not mark down for grammar, but clarity is important. Please spell-check and, if you’re not sure about your writing, have a friend read it.

See me for guidance. I am available anytime, by email or in office hours, to discuss any aspect of your paper.

Grading Criteria

Each paper will be graded according to the following criteria. A copy of the grading form I use is shown at right.

The image shows a sample 'ESSAY GRADING SHEET' form. It is divided into several sections for grading different parts of an essay. Each section has a list of criteria and a corresponding score box. The sections are: Introduction (20%), Organization (25%), Analysis (25%), Evidence (15%), and Conclusion (15%). Below these are sections for 'Reversible Deductions' and 'Nonreversible Deductions'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Score' box and a 'Comments' area.

- Introduction (20%) • States a topic and problem within the assignment • Ends with a definite thesis statement (a specific opinion that can be disagreed with) • Thesis gives insight into the assignment prompt
- Organization (25%) • Main body organized in 3 sections, each addressing a different aspect of the thesis and building support for it • Each section is driven by a specific, concrete assertion • Each section is self-contained and focused on its topic
- Analysis (25%) • Interpretation dominates over description (why over what) • Analysis prefers the specific to the general • Analysis provides insight on the relevant time and culture • Analysis supports the section assertions and overall thesis • Analysis provides in-depth answers to questions in prompt
- Evidence (15%) • Evidence used is relevant and well-chosen • Assertions are consistently supported by evidence • Independent voice retained with judicious use of quotes
- Conclusion (15%) • Paper ends with an appropriate concluding paragraph • Conclusion draws together the arguments made in each section and reinforces the thesis • Conclusion answers questions from assignment prompt

Grading Deductions

There are two kinds of deductions relating to formatting, citations, and other technical requirements (see above for the requirements for all papers). Some deductions are reversible and can be gotten back by resubmitting the assignment with the issues corrected. Other deductions are not reversible.

Reversible deductions. If you have one of these deductions, you may resubmit your paper with these problems fixed, and I will modify or remove the deductions. Only these deductions can be reversed.

No cover sheet	-3
No page numbers	-2
Work titles not italicized/capitalized	-2
Missing items in bibliography	-4
No bibliography	-8
Some citations missing	-5
Many citations missing	-10
All citations missing	-30

Nonreversible deductions. These deductions reflect problems inherent to the paper as it was submitted. They cannot be reversed.

Submitted late (1 meeting)	-10
Submitted late (2 meetings)	-20
Submitted late (3+ meetings)	-30
Too short	-10
Fewer sources than required	-20
Tertiary sources used	-10
Heavy use of tertiary sources	-25
Plagiarism	-100

Course Citations

History of Ancient Religion • Fall 2022

For guidance on formatting footnotes and bibliographies, see the Research and Citation Center.

Note: The cites given below are in Chicago citation style. You may use any citation style as long as the necessary information—author, title, year, publisher, plus journal and page range for articles—is included.

Assigned Texts

Note: the source information for the ancient excerpts is provided on each excerpt page.

Bibliography Johnston, Sarah Iles. 2007. *Ancient Religions*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press.

Footnote Johnston, [page number]

Academic Policies

Fall 2022

A variety of accommodations are available to students with disabilities, and tutoring is available to students seeking help.

Listed below are various official school policies included in all Lehman College syllabi, with clarifications relating to this course as required. You are responsible for this information and for all information in this syllabus.

Attendance Policy

Student handbook notes that “Students are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled, and are responsible for all class work missed as a result of late registration or absence. Excessive absences in any course may result in a lower final grade.”

- Participation in online discussion is a required part of the course. Missing classes will damage your grade.
 - Textbooks are designed to give you the basics; in our class meetings we try to make sense of things, and sift out what’s important. Missing classes means you miss out on a key part of our trying to put things together.
 - If you miss quizzes, it will put a big crimp in your grade for the course. Quizzes are not made up, so the quizzes you miss will count against you.
- Religious observances that affect your class attendance should be discussed in advance.

Accommodating Disabilities

Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may require any special considerations should register with the Office of Student Disability Services in order to submit official paperwork to instructor.

- Office of Student Disability Services: Shuster Hall, Room 238, 718-960-8441.
- Student Disability Services: <http://www.lehman.edu/student-disability-services/>
- Email: disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu.

Technology and Blackboard Information

You are required to use Blackboard to access course materials and to post assignments to Safe Assign.

You are required to provide your best email address to me; if not provided I will use the one given by the school. Either way you must sign into that email account for course messages—and check it! Blackboard will only allow me to send individual and mass messages to Lehman accounts. If there is an issue, this is the only account to which I can send and if I email the class something, the fact that you didn’t know about an assignment or course change because you don’t check your email will never be accepted for not knowing the information.

- Blackboard Links and Support: <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/blackboard.php>
- For Information Technology: <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/>

Instructional Support Services (ISSP)

Lehman College's Instructional Support Services Program (ISSP) is home of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and Science Learning Center (SLC). Both offer students an array of activities and services designed to support classroom learning. Open to students at any level, there are individual, small group, and/or workshop sessions designed to improve "proficiency in writing, reading, research, and particular academic subject areas. Computer-assisted writing/language tutorial programs are also available," as well as individual tutors, workshops and tutors.

Regular tutoring hours for fall and spring semesters are: M–T 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Sat. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

- Lehman College Tutoring Center (LTC): Humanities, Social Sciences, and Writing Tutoring: <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/instructional-support-services/humanities-tutoring.php>
- Or visit the offices in the Old Gym, Room 205; or call ACE at 718-960-8175, and SLC at 718-960-7707.

Library Tutors are also available in the Library. These tutors offer help with Library resources and computers.

Writing-Intensive Course Requirements

Lehman Students must complete four writing-intensive courses. In a WI Course, "students should be expected to write approximately 15-20 pages of proofread, typed work that is turned in to the instructor for grading." Various courses stipulate various requirements designed to meet this requisite over the course of the semester. WI courses focus on revision, short and long assignments, graded and ungraded writing, journals, etc, and each will have "a class-size limit of twenty-two. Under no circumstances will more than twenty-five students be admitted to any writing-intensive section."

- Writing Intensive FAQs: <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/general-education/writing-faqs.php>

Student Handbook

Students are strongly encouraged to download and become familiar with the Student Handbook.

- Student handbook link: <http://www.lehman.edu/campus-life/support-services.php>

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

Fall 2022

Assignments that include any plagiarism will receive a zero. Students engaging in repeated instances of plagiarism will fail the course outright and will be remanded to the College for disciplinary action.

What Is Plagiarism?

Here is CUNY's official definition of plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:
 - Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
 - Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without noting the source.
 - Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
 - Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers; paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source; and "cutting & pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

Key Points

- **Use of writing or ideas.** The key phrase is right up front in the definition: "another person's ideas". Copying and pasting from another source without attribution is plagiarism, but so is using someone's ideas even if they're reworded. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work and presenting it as your own, under your name.
- **What is an essay?** When you present an academic essay, it's an act that says, "This is what I think. These are the conclusions I have drawn from studying this issue." An essay is your assessment of a subject, and the ideas in it are presented as your ideas, with any ideas not your own carefully footnoted and clearly segregated so it's clear what is your analysis and what is evidence drawn from primary or secondary sources.
- **Paraphrasing.** Paraphrasing or putting things into your own words does not alter the use of someone else's ideas as your own. Here's why. If the phrase appearing in an essay written by someone else is, for example, "To apply this type of painting to residential interiors was a Roman idea", and in your essay it's reworded as "it was the Romans who applied this type of painting method to home walls", it doesn't change the fact that someone else's ideas are being presented as if they were your own, as if those ideas originated in your own mind. It's still intellectual dishonesty.
- **Citations.** All information from any source you use must have a citation, period. This is true whether it's a direct quote, a paraphrase, or just an idea you're talking about that came from the source you used. For more on citations, please see the section on citations and bibliographies in the Elephant Pamphlet (pp 13-19).
- **Self-plagiarism.** Reusing writing you've previously submitted for credit, in order to get credit for it a second time, is a form of academic dishonesty known as "self-plagiarism." For example, if you retake a course, you may not submit a paper, or parts of that paper, that you previously submitted for credit the first time you took the course for the same assignment the second time you take that course. You must write a different paper consisting of new material for the submission the second time around. Similarly, if you wrote a paper for course A, and course B has a similar assignment, you may not submit that paper, or parts of that paper, for the similar assignment for course B. You must write a different paper consisting of new material for course B.

CUNY Plagiarism Policy

“Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.” All violations are reported to the Department and Lehman College’s Academic Integrity Officer.

Policy for this Course

Lehman College is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty.

Acts of academic dishonesty include—but are not limited to—plagiarism (in drafts, outlines, and examinations, as well as final papers), cheating, bribery, academic fraud, sabotage of research materials, the sale of academic papers, and the falsification of records. An individual who engages in these or related activities or who knowingly aids another who engages in them is acting in an academically dishonest manner and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Plagiarism includes the incorporation of any material that is not original with you without attribution, whether from a book, article, web site, or fellow student, in any paper or assignment.

Assignments that include any plagiarism will receive a zero and the offending student will be subject to additional action by the College. Students engaging in repeated instances of plagiarism will fail the course outright and will be remanded to the College for disciplinary action.

For detailed information on definitions and examples of Academic Dishonesty, including Cheating, Plagiarism, Obtaining Unfair Advantage and Falsification of Records and Documents, please refer to the student handbook or visit: <http://lehman.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2019/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Services-and-Policies/Academic-Integrity>