***Bias Paper 2***

Due May 4th by 11:59 pm. Late papers—without documentation of an NAU institutional excuse—will be docked 10% for each 24-hour period thereafter that it is late. Please turn in on BbLearn. Bringing in a physical copy to turn in to class the next day is optional.

**Recommended Paper Structure:** (Note: depending on the particular topic you pick and your own organizational/writing style, another structure may work as good or better, but it will most likely still have these elements below, albeit in a different order)

Introduction: State the problem and how it is important.

Articulate thesis (usually last sentence of the introduction), asserting in summary what the other side of the coin is that we should understand, i.e. what facts/perspective makes the bias in fact a bias.

Body Paragraph 1: Explain how or why the stereotype is partially correct.

Body Paragraph 2: Explain evidence 1 on how the stereotype is also incorrect.

Body Paragraph 3: Explain evidence 2 on how the stereotype is also incorrect.

Conclusion: Summarize the evidence and importance of what you just argued about the bias.

**Format:**

* Heading: no more than two lines (no spacing) – 1) your name & section/class-time; 2) title of your paper
* 12 font, Double spaced, default 1-inch borders, 2.5-3.5 pages (800-1200 words) + citations page.
* Cite all your sources of information clearly, even lecture notes. Use in-text or footnoted MLA/APA/Chicago citation style. Also include last page bibliography. Be sure to cite the page #. Be sure you use our textbooks and/or lecture as class sources; if you substitute one of these with a different source, make sure it is scholarly.
* Explain well key concepts of the religion that is being discussed.
* Define terms you are using. For example, if you are talking about “gods,” what does this mean? If you are talking about “idolatry,” what is this? Our textbook and online dictionaries may help.
* No long quotes (more than two lines). No block quotes. If your paper is less than three pages, I would not want to see more than two such long quotes. (If you believe that your paper topic requires a special exception to this, please discuss with me before hand). Rely on paraphrasing (in your own words) more than quoting. If you do quote, be sure to also give strong explanation in your own words as well of how this is important to explaining your topic.

**Characteristics of Strong Essay** -- CCCU:

Thesis – Clear statement of thesis in Introduction & Conclusion

Coherence – it is easy to follow how each sentence follows the next and how each paragraph follows the next; uses transition words to unite different sections.

Clarity – your messages are easy to grasp because they are carefully explained, grammatically accurate, and have zero/almost-zero misspelled words.

Completeness – each paragraph feels like you sufficiently explained your idea for clarity and convincing; by the end of the essay it is evident that you have fully explained your thesis or central idea and provided well-enough evidence for it.

Unity – it’s clear how the different parts of your essay are mutually reinforcing.

Editing – Close to zero typos, spelling errors, or grammatical errors.

Sources – Integrates at-least 2 diverse (textbook, lecture/discussion notes, extra scholarly book or [scholarly journal article](http://www.umuc.edu/library/libhow/scholarlyjournals.cfm), not from Wikipedia or a random web-page [although such sources might refer you to find a good scholarly source]) required sources well.

Insightfulness – Students makes connections between distinct concepts related to the religion, integrates two or three sources well, and applies critical thinking to challenge the bias/stereotype and apply a distinct perspective.

**‘A’ paper** – goes above and beyond completing each characteristic.

**‘B’ paper** – performs each element above strongly.

**‘C’ paper** – satisfactorily completes each element or completely some elements strongly while others poorly.

**‘D’ paper** – has some elements of a satisfactory paper missing, although must still accurately cite sources

**‘F’ paper** – missing most of the elements of a satisfactory paper and/or does not cite sources.

**Rubric**

**Bias Paper 2**  Student \_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5 | 4 | | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Thesis:** In the introduction, student states clearly and insightfully in summary what the other side of the coin is that we should understand, i.e. what facts/perspective makes the bias in fact a bias. | |  |  |  | Student does not have a thesis in the introduction or it is quite unclear what it is he/she is actually arguing |
| **Partially Correct:** Student explains with some strong details and examples how the stereotype or bias is also somewhat correct. | |  |  |  | Student does not explain how the stereotype or bias is also somewhat correct. |
| **Generally Wrong:** Student explains with at least two strong paragraphs of details/evidence how the stereotype is biased or an oversimplification | |  |  |  | Student does not explain how the stereotype or bias is also somewhat correct. |
| **Format:** \*Close to three full pages of explication, 12 font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch borders, 1-line heading  \*No long block quotes | |  |  |  | Elements missing: Close to three full pages of explication, 12 font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch borders  \*No long block quotes |
| **Content:** Explains well key concepts of the religion being discussed and defines important terms being discussed | |  |  |  | Takes it for granted or leaves ambiguous and confusing key terms or concepts being discussed |
| **Citation:** Uses at least two class sources and cites them clearly using MLA, APA, or Chicago. Cites accurately any other scholarly (or other) sources being used. | |  |  |  | Does not cite sources, does not use sources, or does not use scholarly sources. |
| **Editing** – Close to zero typos, spelling errors, or grammatical errors. | |  |  |  | Many typos, spelling errors, or grammatical errors. |
| **Structure** – Essay flows well, student uses sufficient transitions, and we can see how the many ideas explored are unified and connect well with each other. | |  |  |  | Essay’s parts feels disjointed and/or does not flow well from one statement and paragraph to the next. |
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Other Comments:

**Questions/Topics for 2nd Bias Paper (Choose one of the questions below):**

1. Christians have traditionally interpreted the story of Adam and Eve to explain how all humanity fell from paradise/Eden and became stained by moral corruption (sin), passed on from one generation to the next. However, this is not really how Jewish teachers have traditionally interpreted this story. Explain how this story has been understood in Judaism, then explain why Christian teachers probably came to an interpretation of “original sin” to contextualize the importance of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Be sure to incorporate explanations of the nature of human beings as well as sacrifice/*qorbanat* and *teshuva* (similarities and differences between Jews and Christians) into your essay.
2. Jewish people have been criticized for centuries for not accepting Yehoshua (Jesus) ben Miriam/Yosef as the Messiah. Why do Christians believe Jesus is the Messiah? Then explain, based on Judaic traditional visions of who/what is the Messiah, it is very understandable why they would not see Jesus as being of this station.
3. Some denigrate Mormonism as a non-Christian cult while others include the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as a denomination of Christianity. Explain how “cult” is meant derogatorily but also what interpretations and practices of Mormons do indeed make this Church unique from most other forms of Christianity. Then explain how the Latter Day Saints share important basics in common with other forms of Christianity.
4. “I’m Christian (not Catholic).” Explain what this bias of American common parlance means, how and why it is used. Then analyze how it is indeed a bias and what language/demarcators would be more appropriate to use. In your answers, be sure to incorporate discussion of the various forms of orthodox Christianity, the legacy of the Protestant Reformation, and what commonalities unite most all forms of Christianity.
5. Americans who believe in an afterlife typically envision an alternate geographical or metaphysical location in which one’s soul passes into. If we had faith and/or lived well, this location is joyous, pleasurable, and beautiful (heaven); if not then it is full of pain, torture, and suffering (hell).
   1. First option: research in scholarly books and online surveys -- Do Americans really believe in hell? Or do they believe that heaven is the normal destiny for most everyone?  How do folk beliefs about heaven/hell seem to differ from traditional Christianity.?
   2. Second option: research from academic books in the Cline library on traditional Christian beliefs in the afterlife. Explain how the soul passing to a new place without a physical body is actually a novel understanding compared to classical Christian views of the resurrection and the afterlife."
6. Media images and news pundits often present Islam as a religion of violence and Muslims a people disposed to vicious acts of terrorism. How is this representation partially true but, when looking at Muslims and Islam (or Judaism or Christianity) as a whole, more of a gross overgeneralization?
7. Media images and news pundits often present Islam and Muslim men as oppressive to women. How is this representation partially true but when looking at Muslims and Islam ((or Judaism or Christianity) as a whole, generally wrong? Be sure to define our biases about how we define oppression, empowerment, and an actualized/liberated woman in answering this question.
8. Jewish and Christian interpreters have for hundreds of years often interpreted Islam as nothing more than a heretical deviation of Judaism and Christianity. Meanwhile, Muslims do not see Islam as a novel religion but the eternal religion of God (Abraham, Moses, and Jesus also taught “Islam”) that was renewed, purified, and perfected for perpetuity through the prophet Muhammad. How is it partially correct that Islam repeats many of the ideas, language, and cultural heritage of Judaism and Christianity? Then let us know what is distinctive/original about Islam that is not really found in these two other religions.
9. Some say that Sikhism is just a combination of Hinduism and Islam. Indeed, Sikhism developed in a context in which there was a lot of cross-fertilization between members of these two religions. Explain how Sikhism does use religious ideas, language, and practices from these two other religions. However, how is calling Sikhism just a synthesis/hybrid of these two religions also a neglect of that which is unique and original within Sikhism?
10. People sometimes ask others of different religion than themselves, “What God do you worship?” Analyze how this bias is partially true, looking at how some of the various religions of our class have defined the divine. Then detail how Bahá’ís see all these Gods as really just referring to a/the one universal God that has revealed himself in the various ages across the planet through various individuals.
11. One race, many races, one species with many races? In our common speech and views of each other we continue to identify people as black, white, Asian, Indian, Latino, Arab, etc. How is this racial view of each other partially correct? Then explain how according to the Bahá’í view of human nature, the oneness of humanity, and the beauty of diversity that the racial perspective is also incorrect and should not be a cause of divisions or prejudice between people.
12. Identify your own biases and predispositions as you explain what attracts you to one of these other religions: If you were to choose a religion other than what you are committed to right now, would you choose Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, or Bahá’í? Note: you will still be explaining biases as well as details about these individual religions but the structure of your essay will probably differ from the “Partially Correct, Generally Wrong” format of other essays.
13. Is there another bias about one of these religions that you would look into? I want these papers to be an interesting and helpful learning exercise for you. Email me [Daniel.Pschaida@nau.edu](mailto:Daniel.Pschaida@nau.edu) to get permission to explore a different bias.