**World Religions Spring 2018**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**VALENCIA COLLEGE**

**PROFESSOR JULIANNA MORING**

**Professor: Julianna Moring**

**Office: 5-120 X 1137**

**Office Hours in 5-120: M 12:30-1, T&Th 1-4, Tu 5:30-6**

**Virtual Office Hours M&W 4-6 and F 11:30-12:30**

**Email: Contact me through Atlas email** [**jmoring@valenciacollege.edu**](mailto:jmoring@valenciacollege.edu)

**Your Valencia email is the official means of communication, so emails should be sent through that address. Please check your email every day.**

**Required Texts:** The following texts are required and must be purchased by each student for successful completion of the course**:**

*Invitation to World Religions 2nd edition.*  Jeffrey Brood

Supplementary reading materials will be provided via Blackboard or in class. You are always welcome to buy a print/book version of our additional readings if you prefer. You are expected to bring your materials to class EVERY day.

**No. Credit Hours:** 3.0

**Prerequisite** ENC 1101 or Equivalent

**Course Description:** WORLD RELIGIONS Prerequisite: [ENC 1101](http://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/search/?P=ENC%201101) or [ENC 1101H](http://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/search/?P=ENC%201101H) or [IDH 1110](http://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/search/?P=IDH%201110) Basic introduction to the world's religions. Explores practices and beliefs of major religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism. Gordon Rule course which requires demonstration of college level writing skills through multiple assignments. Minimum grade of C required if used to satisfy Gordon Rule requirement.

**Credit:** Satisfactory completion of this course will satisfy three of the hours required in Area 2 (humanities) of the General Education Requirements for all degree programs. It is a Gordon Rule writing course and therefore will satisfy the Gordon Rule requirements of the State Board of Education, Rule 6A-10.30.

**Week 1**: 1/9: Introduction, syllabus, and course overview.

**Week 2**: 1/16: Hinduism

Read Chapter 4 from Brood text.

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions and post on Blackboard**

**Week 3**: 1/23: Buddhism

Read Chapter 5

**Week 4**: 1/30: Buddhism continued

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions on Blackboard**

**Week 5:** 2/6**:** Confucianism, and Daoism

Read Chapter 8

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions on Blackboard**

**Week 6**: 2/13: Midterm

**Week 7**: Judaism

Read Chapter 11

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions on Blackboard**

**Week 8**: 2/27 Judaism continued

**Week 9:** 3/6 Christianity

Read Chapter 12

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions on Blackboard**

**Week 10**: SPRING BREAK

**Week 11**: 3/20: Christianity continued

**Week 12**: 3/27 Islam

**Assignment due before class: Answer questions on Blackboard**

Read Chapter 13

**Week 13**: 4/3: Islam continued

**Assignment due: Final paper (100 points).**

**Week 14**: 4/10: Final projects

**Week 15**: 4/17: Final projects continued

**Week 16**: Finals: 4/24 **7:30 NOTE THE TIME IS DIFFERENT**

**Field report (100 points).**

**All Homework assignments are worth 30 points. Your midterm, final project, field report, and paper are worth 100 points.**

**I realize the syllabus is not the most exciting reading we will do in the course, and some students have a tendency to skip it, but you are responsible for this information. By staying in the course, you agree to abide by the policies on the syllabus. The college also expects your professor to abide by the policies on the syllabus and avoid making exceptions. The course policies are designed to foster a learning environment that is fair to everyone, free of distraction, encourages you to be successful, and empowers every student to know what is expected of them up front. The due dates for your tests, assignments, and papers are being given to you on day one, as well as the attendance policies and course expectations. Refer to your syllabus for all due dates, not Blackboard, or a classmate. Please read this document carefully before you call or email to ask about policies or due dates. This schedule of the material we cover from day to day is a guideline, and changes may be made at any time at the discretion of the professor, but you will be notified of any changes. However, you will never be asked to turn in any work EARLIER than stated on the syllabus. Clemency for absences, late work, and tardiness is already built into the syllabus. In fairness to all students, please do not ask to have additional exceptions to the policies made for you due to absences, tardies, unforeseen personal events, vacations, illness, work conflicts, technology difficulties, etc. Read the syllabus and plan your schedule accordingly.**

**Course Time:**

For every course hour you spend in a class, you should expect to spend 2 or 3 hours, or maybe more, outside of class reading, preparing, writing, and doing homework. You may also want to plan for tutoring, time in the writing lab, office hours with your professor, or other assistance. If you attend a class for three credit hours, plan for 6-9 hours of study a week outside of class, depending upon your aptitude for the material, and the nature of the assignments. Time management is the key to success, so spread out your study time. Give yourself time to read the material carefully and reflect on it. Use your syllabus to help you plan ahead for major assignments. Review your notes after class. Create a study group. There is a reason that full time attendance at college is called full time. It’s just like the expectations you would have for a full time job.

**Attendance /Tardiness Policy:**

**ATTENDANCE** to class is part of the learning experience, it is directly linked to your success, and is part of your grade. Because we meet only once a week, missing one class causes you to miss a significant amount of information. Students who do not attend class miss out on the material, participation, and discussion. Absences AND tardies will lower your grade, as will leaving early. You are expected to be on time and to stay for the entire class. I will pass around an attendance sheet at the beginning of every class, and you will be marked absent by the time the attendance sheet reaches my desk. If you leave early, without notifying me, you will be marked absent. Do not sign in and then leave. Do not leave after the break. I do not differentiate between absences which are excused or unexcused. The first 2 absences/tardies are excused, no questions asked, and I do not need you to show me any documentation—Doctor’s notes, letters from your boss, etc. Upon the 3rd absence, you will drop A LETTER grade. Remember tardies count as absences. The next absence will result in your grade being lowered by half a letter again, and so on. Contact YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS for notes and information. Do not call or email to ask me what you missed. If regular attendance will be a problem, consider taking the course online, or at a different time.

**Hint: Get a phone number or email from two other students ASAP, in case you are absent. Do not rely on the textbook or PowerPoints to catch up, as we will cover information that you can only get in class.**

**Notice: The Attendance sheet is an official school record. Do not tamper with it, sign in when you were not here, or sign in for your classmates. Signing in for another student who is absent will be treated as academic dishonesty, and the same procedures will apply.**

**TARDINESS** is disruptive to the class, as well as your own learning experience. If you are not in class by the time the attendance sheet goes around, you will be marked absent. If you sign in and then leave early, you will be marked absent. And, please do not sign in and then leave to attend to personal business. If you find that are unable to get to class on time, and stay for the entire class, consider rearranging your schedule so that you can stay in class for the entire time.

**WITHDRAWAL**:

Students may withdraw themselves from class until the drop date of 3/30. If you find yourself in academic peril, do not wait until it is too late to salvage your grade. I urge you to look at the consequences of withdrawal and weigh them against failing the course. Your first step should be to come and speak with me, so that we can work together to help you pass the course.

If you are performing poorly in class and think that by not showing up you will receive a “W,” think again. Due to the attendance policy, you will fail the course if you are excessively absent. It is your responsibility to drop the course if you are not doing well. I will not drop you.

*“A student who withdraws from class before the* ***withdrawal deadline of 3/30*** *will receive a grade of “W.” A student is not permitted to withdraw from this class after the withdrawal deadline; if you remain in the class after the withdrawal deadline, you can only receive a grade of A, B, C, D, F or I. An I grade will only be assigned under extraordinary circumstances that occur near the end of the semester. If you receive an I, the work missed must be made up during the following semester, at which time you will get an A, B,C,D or F. Failure to make up the work during the following semester will result in you getting a grade of F in the course. Any student who withdraws from this class during a third or subsequent attempt in this course will be assigned a grade of “F.”*

**NOTE ON FINANCIAL AID: Students on financial aid should consult an advisor or counselor before withdrawing from a course; there may be financial implications to the student which he or she must know about to make an informed decision before withdrawing from a course. Students with some scholarships who withdraw or are withdrawn from a class must pay the college for the cost of the class. Other scholarship sponsors may also require repayment.**

**COMMUNICATION:**

If you have concerns about the course material, your grade, or other matters, please talk to me, send an email, [jmoring@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:jmoring@valenciacollege.edu), visit me during office hours, or speak to me after class about any private concerns, or for academic assistance. I will return my emails within 48 business hours. Get in the habit of checking your Valencia email once a day for important information. If you have a concern about the course, your first step should be to go to the professor. If you are still dissatisfied, you may make an appointment with the Dean, and we will work together to resolve any issues you may have.

**HELP**:

Often students need help, but they don’t know where to do to find it, they think it will cost money, or they simply don’t want to ask for help for various reasons. Valencia offers many ways of assisting you in your academic success, but you have to be proactive. Take advantage of the resources you have available to you. All of this assistance is free.

Your first step is to speak to your professor for questions concerning the course material. If you feel lost or need clarification let me know.

The Library: http://valenciacollege.edu/library/

Technology support: go to 6-101, or contact the OIT desk at [askatlas@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:askatlas@valenciacollege.edu) or 407-582-5444

Writing help: Communications center in 5-155

Tutoring services: 7-240 (extension 1633) You get five hours of free tutoring each semester. http://valenciacollege.edu/learning-support/tutoring/

Skill workshops: <http://valenciacollege.edu/studentservices/skillshops.cfm>

**Baycare Behavioral Health’s Student Assistance Program**

“*Valencia is committed to making sure all our students have a rewarding and successful college experience. To that purpose, Valencia students can get immediate help that may assist them with psychological issues dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, time management as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. Students have 24 hour unlimited access to the* ***Baycare Behavioral Health’s confidential student assistance program*** *phone counseling services by calling* ***(800) 878-5470****. Three free confidential face-to-face counseling sessions are also available to students.”*

**Method of Instruction:**

This course will be taught through a combination of lecture, films, hands-on classroom exercises, discussions, and homework assignments. THIS COURSE IS BLACKBOARD ENHANCED. You will turn in the majority of work on Blackboard. Alternative means, such as email or paper copies will not be accepted. Internet access is available on campus. **If for any reason you cannot regularly access the Internet for your course work, you will encounter problems fulfilling class requirements.**

**Technology Use:**

**You may not record this course, or share any recordings from the course, or recordings of other students without the permission of the professor. This includes social media or the Internet.**

The ability to use technology is integral to success in the job market of the 21st century. You must learn to adapt to new technologies, use them correctly, and learn where to go for help. If you have problems with Blackboard, the Internet, your personal computer, programs, browser problems, or other technology issues, please contact the help desk before the due date. You can also find personal assistance in 6-101. If you are unable to turn in an assignment, due to technology problems, you must provide evidence that you have attempted to address the problem. Before I accept late work due to a technology problem, you must provide me with a screen shot, or a copy of the trouble ticket the IT department will send you once you have contacted them. “I didn’t know how to use Blackboard,”“My computer is broken,” “My internet went out,” etc. will not be considered acceptable excuses for failing to complete an assignment. I suggest that you get in the habit of turning your work into Blackboard early enough to give yourself wiggle room for any last minute problems that may arise. Valencia provides many ways to get assistance with technology matters.

**GET A DROPBOX ACCOUNT, or some kind of cloud storage!!!! Before you do anything this semester, you should create a Dropbox account. I cannot tell you how many students have lost their work because they did not back it up. This has even happened to me many times. Dropbox is a free application that allows you to save your work and access it on any device, just by logging into Dropbox.com. Even if your computer at home crashes, you can retrieve your work on another computer. Get in the habit of saving your work, and saving it often. Avoid the blue screen of death.**

Technology problems will not be considered a valid excuse for failure to turn in your work, or turning your work in incorrectly or in the wrong format. Again, I suggest that you turn in your work early, in case you have a problem. If you are struggling with technology problems from your home computer, you may want to turn in your work from the computer lab on campus.

[askatlas@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:askatlas@valenciacollege.edu) or 407-582-5444

**Participation:**

Discussion is very important in this class, and will help you to be successful. You will be assigned readings every week, and should be prepared to share your feedback with the class. EVERYONE is expected to participate by contributing to our conversations. We will have an open minded and respectful forum where the ideas of everyone are valued. Often, information from our discussions may turn up as questions on the exams.

**Hint: If participation makes you nervous, print out the answers to the homework and share those with the class, or write down a couple of comments or questions before each class.**

**Exam and Grading Policy:**

90 – 100% = A

80 – 89% = B

70 – 79% = C

60 – 69% = D

Below 60% = F

**Please do not ask to have your grades rounded up to the next letter. Grades will be posted on Blackboard frequently, and is your responsibility to keep up with them. If you want an A, you must earn it AND make sure that attendance does not cause your grade to drop. Due dates are listed on the syllabus. Turn all of your work in on time. Even if you do well on your tests and papers, failure to do your homework, and do it correctly, will drastically lower your grade. Some assignments may be completed in class and cannot be made up.**

**How to submit homework**:

Your homework is based on the readings for the class. If you do not do the homework assignments, you will not pass the course. Your homework will be turned in on Blackboard. It will be run through SafeAssign and checked for plagiarism. Under the assignment page, there is a link to submit your homework. I ONLY accept documents that are written in Word. Do not use Wordpad, Pages, or write answers on a mobile device. Valencia provides a free copy of Microsoft Office on Atlas, if you do not have one. Write your homework in a Word document, save the document, and upload your homework where it says ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION. Do not put your work in the COMMENT box. That is for comments. Do not try to type your work into the assignment box, because your work could become lost, and you will not have a backup copy. I will not give extra time to complete work that I cannot read due to a “corrupted file” or format other than Word.

**HOW ARE MY HOMEWORK GRADES CALCULATED?**

**All answers must demonstrate the following 4 skills of college level writing: Answer the questions in 4-8 sentences each + Demonstrate critical thinking beyond just answering the question + Refer to specific passages from the text + Use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.**

1. All homework answers should be 4-8 complete, well written sentences minimum for EVERY question. Separate your answers. For example: If I ask you three questions, give three answers, not one long one. Do not cut and paste long passages of text, or paraphrase from the Internet. Short answers, or cut and pasted answers will not receive full credit.
2. I want to see your ORIGINAL ideas and the thought process you used to arrive at your answers. Don’t worry about getting the answers wrong. I am challenging you to exercise critical thinking skills and express your ideas clearly. We will discuss critical thinking and how to demonstrate it. You may receive credit for your answers, even if they are incorrect, as long as you are able to defend your ideas with the text. Sometimes, the questions you are asked don’t have right or wrong answers. You will receive partial or zero credit for short, or badly written, answers that do not demonstrate analysis of the text.
3. Use correct grammar and spelling. Use spell check and Grammarly.com, if you need to. Points will be taken off for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors or incomplete sentences.
4. Refer to specific passages in the text to defend your argument. You can use quotes, page numbers, or line number.

The readings we are doing in this class are not easy. Your homework is not graded based on whether or not you understand the texts perfectly. I am grading you on the effort you put in to analyze the primary sources and improve your writing skills. You need to give yourself plenty of time to slowly read the material, take notes, and think about what the writers are saying to you.

**Safe Assign Report:** All assignments will be run through SafeAssign, our plagiarism checker. We will both see a report that shows how much of your submission is original material and what came from other sources. You should check your report before you submit your work, and make sure the percentage is not too high. It is normal to have a certain percentage of your work that shows up as coming from other sources. For example: If you are quoting a primary source, that text is probably going to be found in many places. However, if your SafeAssign report shows that over 50% has come from other sources, that is a red flag that you need more original content.

**Use of electronics during class:**

You may NOT use electronics unless specifically directed to do so. It is a distraction to you, to me, and your neighbors—no matter how discreet you think you are being. It interferes with your learning and retention of the material. Please turn off your phone when you get to class. I do not permit the use of cell phones, laptops, tablets, or any other electronic devices in class for personal use or note taking, unless you have paperwork from the OSD or special permission from me. Anyone who is texting, checking their phone, etc. will be asked to put their electronics away once. If you continue to disregard this policy, you will be asked to leave the class and be marked absent, which may affect your grade. Do not disrupt class by leaving the room to check your phone or talk. If you continue to use your devices, you will be sent to the Dean.

**Taking Notes:**

You may NOT use any recording devices in class without permission. Many studies have shown that taking notes by hand is much more effective for retention of the material than typing them out. You are not a court reporter, so you do not need to write out everything that is said in the class, or copy everything that is already in the PowerPoint. I provide the PowerPoints for you. Effective note taking is a skill every college student should master. Use your notes to capture key ideas and concepts, and add your own reflections in your own words. Do not just rely on reviewing the PowerPoints, or your own memory. Successful students do not simply sit in class and expect to absorb the material.

**Sleeping:**

This should go without saying, but students who are sleeping, or appear to be sleeping by having their eyes closed or their head on the desk, will be asked to leave the class. Students who disregard this policy will be asked to leave the room and will be marked absent. If this continues, you will be referred to the Dean.

**Acceptance of Late Work:**

ALL work is ALWAYS due at the start time of class (not at midnight on the day of class). Please refer to your **syllabus** for the due dates (not the dates on blackboard, or what a classmate said). Blackboard will time stamp your assignments when you upload them. Each student will be allowed to turn in only ONE late assignment per semester. You will receive a zero for any further work that is not submitted on time—this includes papers and tests. You must turn in late work before the start of class on the **following** meeting, and 10% will be deducted. No further late work will be accepted after the start of that class period. If the assignment is lacking in quality, additional points will be taken off. Remember, PLEASE make sure that you have uploaded your homework correctly.

**No Questions Asked Pass:**

I realize that you all have busy lives, and sometimes emergencies arise. Therefore, you will receive ONE, and only ONE, No Questions Asked Pass for a quiz or homework assignment **of 30 points or less**. You will receive credit for the assignment, and there is no need to provide any documentation or excuses. You may NOT use it on a test, project, field report, or the paper. Once you have used it, you will not be given another pass. Use it wisely…

**HOW TO USE THE PASS**: On the due date, where you are supposed to turn in your assignment, you may simply write on Blackboard, “I would like to use my NQA.” The same policies for late work apply. **You must use your pass when the homework is due**, not after the fact. You may not go back weeks later and ask to use the pass retroactively, use it for extra credit, or use it to have a lower grade replaced.

**Make-up Policy on Tests:**

All students must take exams on the scheduled dates. However, in the case of an absence under extenuating circumstances that can be documented, such as a death in family, severe illness, a make-up may be offered with no penalty, but at the **instructor’s discretion**. If you do not have documentation of extenuating circumstances, you will not be allowed to take a make-up. Only one make-up per student will be allowed during the semester. Make-up tests are administered in the Testing Center in Building 11. Please check with the testing center for their operating hours before you show up. (Caution: Cheating is treated very severely by Testing Center Staff!) If you know ahead of time that you will need to miss class on a test date, you may arrange with the instructor to take it in advance. Note: The Final must be taken on final exam date. Plan accordingly. (See course schedule for scheduled date and time.)

**Academic Honesty:**

You are expected to do your own, original work on all homework assignments, papers, and tests. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be cause for an automatic “F” on the pertinent assignment and possibly in the course. The first time is an automatic zero. The second time will result in a zero on the assignment and a referral to the Dean. Cheating includes turning in work that is identical to another student, recycling old papers you wrote for another class, using information from the internet or books WITHOUT crediting your source, paraphrasing without citing your source, and cutting and pasting (or paraphrasing) large portions of text. It also includes translating answers from another language. Colluding with other students is also considered cheating. In short…your work should represent your original ideas. We will discuss plagiarism and how to avoid it. Many students do not mean to plagiarize, and associate that with copying an entire paper, or having someone else write your paper. But, cutting and pasting parts of someone else’s work, or paraphrasing—even the source you are researching— without citing them properly in your paper is also plagiarism. Your papers always need a works cited page to avoid this. Although you need to quote from primary sources, cutting and pasting large sections of text from websites, blogs, work from scholars, or encyclopedias does not demonstrate your own writing skills and will lower your grade.

* All work submitted for credit in any class must be the product of the individual student's own original thoughts supported and informed by appropriately documented and credited sources.
* Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words, ideas, pictures, design, and/or intellectual property without the correct documentation and punctuation.
* Plagiarism takes many forms: for example, turning in the same essay for two different courses is considered self-plagiarism and will result in a zero for the paper. You may legitimately wonder how anyone would ever know; this is one of the purposes of the [SafeAssign](https://webmail.valenciacollege.edu/owa/redir.aspx?SURL=O7W_rkz8B5I0kFS97xuI-IZgpYdFjlWgHncnKQfbOjThY9-mZjnSCGgAdAB0AHAAOgAvAC8AawBiAC4AYgBsAGEAYwBrAGIAbwBhAHIAZAAuAGMAbwBtAC8AZABpAHMAcABsAGEAeQAvAFMAQQBGAEUALwBTAHUAYgBtAGkAdAArAGEAKwBQAGEAcABlAHIAKwB0AG8AKwBhACsAUwBhAGYAZQBBAHMAcwBpAGcAbgBtAGUAbgB0AA..&URL=http://kb.blackboard.com/display/SAFE/Submit%2ba%2bPaper%2bto%2ba%2bSafeAssignment) plagiarism scan.

Plagiarism is morally indefensible. Any assignment showing signs of plagiarism, either the:

1. Deliberate cut-and-paste of online or print sources
2. Recycling of essays from previous classes
3. Essays written on behalf of the student by family members or friends, or third parties, such as professional essay writing services
4. The result of inattention and incompetence
5. Paraphrasing large sections based on the ideas of another source...even if you put it into your own words **will be graded zero.** A second offense will result in an appointment with the dean of the Arts and Humanities Department.
6. Turning in work from another language that has been run through a translation program.

**How to Avoid Plagiarism**

* Here is a good rule: It is better to be safe than sorry in academic writing. Always cite your sources. A person's ideas are their intellectual property. You wouldn't go into another student's backpack and steal their property. Plagiarism is stealing the ideas of another person and passing them off as your own without giving them credit.
  + This includes paraphrasing or summarizing, as well as cut and paste.
  + Cutting and pasting large sections of text, even when you cite your sources, does not represent college level, original writing.
* If you have to look something up for your paper, cite your sources in text, and in your works cited page.
* Even if you summarize, give the author of the ideas credit.

**Food and Beverages in Classroom:**

There is no eating allowed in the classroom, except for small snacks in closed containers. Beverages will only be allowed if they are in a container with a screw-top cap. Containers with an open top should not be brought into the room, as they spill easily.

**A Note on Expectations of Civility in the Classroom:**

Be forewarned now, that we will be discussing material that some may find controversial, uncomfortable, and thought provoking. I welcome honest and open debate, disagreement, and a diversity of opinions and expression. Everyone is not always going to agree on everything, and that is what makes the class a good learning experience. Learning how to express your own ideas, and listen to differing ideas from others, with civility is part of academia. All students are expected to treat each other with maturity and respect-- both inside the classroom AND in any communication that takes place outside of the classroom for college purposes. This includes class discussions, emails, texts, or other communications that are part of our course. I have a zero tolerance policy for threatening language, bullying, or profanity directed toward another member of the class. This may result in a referral to the Dean of student conduct. Part of college is learning to communicate professionally. If you wouldn’t say something to your professor, or an employer, don’t say it to another student. It’s OK to disagree; just think before you speak.

**Valencia Policy Concerning Classroom Behavior:**

Valencia College is dedicated to promoting honorable personal and social conduct. By enrolling at Valencia, a student assumes the responsibility for knowing and abiding by the rules articulated in the Student Code of Conduct (6Hx28:10-03). The instructor reserves the right to refer students who engage in activities that are disruptive to the learning environment to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

In addition, Valencia College strives to provide a drug-free learning environment for all those involved in the academic experience. Our policy is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Policy: | In compliance with the provisions of the Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989, Valencia College will take such steps as are necessary in order to adopt and implement a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by Valencia College students or employees on college premises or as part of any college activity. |

Disciplinary action could include being withdrawn from class, disciplinary warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate and authorized actions. You will find the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook.

**Students with Disabilities**:

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a

notification from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific

needs with the instructor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office

for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate

documentation of disabilities. The West Campus Office is located in SSB 102.

**Disclaimer Statement:**

As many factors may affect the development and progress of a class, the instructor

reserves the right to alter the schedule as may be required to assure attainment of

course objectives.

**College Level Writing:**  All homework and papers must demonstrate “college level writing” for completion of a Gordon Rule course. This link to the Humanities homepage explains college level writing and gives samples of what is and what is NOT college level writing. It also links you to tips to help you with your writing and places to go if you need additional assistance, including our on campus communication center.

<http://valenciacollege.edu/west/arts-and-humanities/writing/>

For a student to meet the criteria for college level writing in Humanities, and achieve a grade of C or better, they must be able to demonstrate the following skills through multiple writing assignments:

1. Evaluate appropriate primary sources (visual arts, architecture, performing arts, literature, religious texts, philosophy, music) and make original observations, about  those sources.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of the connection between the primary sources, the historical period, and cultural movements occurring at the time the sources were produced.
3. Formulate an argument that uses primary sources as evidence to defend a central thesis statement.
4. Employ grammar, spelling, punctuation, writing mechanics, and format appropriate for a college student preparing for real world situations in a continuing academic or professional environment.

**Papers:** Papers must be in MLA format, or whatever format you are most comfortable with (APA, Chicago style), as long as you format it correctly and are consistent. All sources must be cited in the text, and you must also have a works cited page. Employ correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Refer to my writing guide at the end of the syllabus for my expectations. Valencia offers a writing center; please take advantage of their services.

For help with MLA Formatting and tips for avoiding plagiarism, a good site is <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

***For many students, writing for the humanities is a new skill. It is different from the type of creative writing, or research papers, you may have done in English class. Focus is on your analysis of the primary sources and their context. It is specific, not general. Although you may do some research, you will not be asked to write a “research paper” where you search for many secondary sources that have been written by other scholars to support your argument. YOU are the scholar, and you will use the primary sources to support your argument. The following information will help you to understand how to write for this course.***

**What are primary sources?**

Primary sources are specific materials created by the ORIGINAL individual(s), or by someone who has direct knowledge of that individual, during the time period you are examining. A good question to ask yourself is, “Was the person who made this actually present during the time I am exploring?” A primary source might be a letter, painting, poem, novel, autobiography, speech, document, song, building, diary, journal, symphony, birth record, newspaper article, etc. These pieces help us to understand what it was like to actually BE there. Viewing the original sources helps us remove some of the prejudices and misconceptions that may arise when more recent scholars try to interpret what happened in the past. It is important that you are able to do your OWN analysis of a primary source, and not simply look up and parrot the interpretation of others.

**Secondary sources:**

Imagine you have a conversation with a friend about a movie you saw. Then, your friend, who has never seen the movie, tries to describe it to another person, based on what THEY remembered of what YOU remembered. Of course, some details will be left out, information will be degraded, and some of the details will be incorrect. Think of the movie as the primary source. You, and your friend, are secondary sources. Secondary sources are when a SECOND (or another) person(s) has commented on the original work or analyzed it. They may, or may not, have been present during the time the work was made. Secondary sources can be valuable sources of information, but you should base your work on primary sources. You may wish to include secondary sources in your work, to help support your argument, but you should ALWAYS demonstrate that you are able to analyze a primary source. Sometimes, secondary sources can BECOME primary sources, depending upon the context.

**Primary sources are NOT:**

Encyclopedia articles, Wikipedia entries, dictionary definitions, textbooks (the exception would be an excerpt of a primary source contained in your textbook), Brainyquotes, hearsay (including what you thought you heard in class), or (usually) yourself.

**See if you can determine which of these examples are primary sources. Justify your reason:**

* Emperor Napoleon’s letters to Josephine
* The diary of a French soldier from 1812
* A novel about the French Revolution
* A Harvard professor’s 1982 journal article about the life of Napoleon
* *Star Wars*
* Composer Igor Stravinsky’s ballet *Rite of Spring*
* A newspaper article from a journalist who attended the first performance of *Rite of Spring*
* Leonardo da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa*
* A Wikipedia article about Beethoven
* Ms. Moring’s amazing and life changing PowerPoint about Greek mythology

**What is historical and cultural context?**

Context, in analysis of the humanities, refers to factors that surround a work of art or literature but may not be stated explicitly. This background information informs our deeper understanding of the work in question and allows us to analyze, rather than summarize, what we are studying. It is important to be aware of what the artist was experiencing in their time and reacting *to* or reacting *against*.

Possible context questions to ask…

***What key historical events occurred at the time the work was created?***

Example: How did the French Revolution influence the paintings of Jacques Louis David?

Example: How was Dadaism a reaction to World War I?

Example: How did the discovery of AIDS influence theatre and film in the 20th century?

***What scientific discoveries or technological innovations may have influenced the artist?***

Example: How did the invention of the printing press in Europe influence the spread of religion, ideas, and art?

Example: How did Freud’s theories on the unconscious and dreams influence the paintings of Salvador Dali?

***What are the other artistic influences on the work?***

Example: How is Picasso influenced by the paintings of Cezanne?

Example: What are the relationships between Ragtime, Jazz, Blues, Gospel, Country, and Rock and Roll music?

***What are the philosophical ideas of the time?***

Example: How is Baroque music a product of the Age of Reason?

Example: How does *The Matrix* reflect Post Modern Theory?

***What are the cultural influences?***

Example: Does the artist live in a society that is individualistic or collectivistic?

Example: How are women regarded in the culture that produced the work?

***Who is the intended audience?***

Example: Is this work personal, for the masses, or for other artists?

Example: Is the work a tool of propaganda?

***Is the artist identified with a particular movement, school, or “-ism”?***

Examples: Transcendentalism, Romanticism, Existentialism, Neo-Classicism, Surrealism, Anti-art, Rococo, High Renaissance, etc.?

***What is the original purpose of the work?***

Example: Was the piece designed to inform, to educate, to entertain, to shock, or to be functional?

**What context is NOT:**

***Lengthy summary of plot details***

While a SMALL amount of plot summary may be useful to the purposes of writing a paper it does not allow you to demonstrate critical thinking or analysis, and should not comprise the bulk of your writing. If you think of context as what is UNSAID, think of summary as what has OBVIOUSLY been said already, and does not need to be repeated.

***Irrelevant biographical or background information***

Example: When discussing the influence of Freud’s ideas on Dali’s art, it is not necessary to include information about Freud’s family, Dali’s childhood, the geography of Europe, etc.

***Your personal “context”***

Sometimes your professor may ask you to write a personal reflection that takes your own context into account. However, unless you are specifically asked to do otherwise, an academic paper is usually not the place to discuss your personal experiences, whether or not you “liked” the work, or difficulty you may have had writing the paper.

**PAPER GRADE**

**In general, your grade on papers will be based on the standards I have set forth in the writing guide below, as well as an ability to work with primary sources and discuss them in historical context. (Feel free to refer to the sections of the syllabus on context and primary sources.) Everyone starts out with an A. You will automatically drop a letter grade for the following:**

\*No thesis

\*Paper not based on your thesis

\*Poor construction, grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

\*Do not write in the first person, or say you (I, me, we, you—y’all if you are from the South).

\* Lack of historical and cultural context

\*Not explicitly building your paper around primary sources

\*Improper formatting.

\*Length of paper does not meet word count. Papers at 50% of the word count will start at 50%, even before other factors are taken into consideration.

\*Did not follow directions for paper content.

\*Lack of a BOTH a works cited page AND in-text citations.

\*Paraphrasing or cutting and pasting large sections of the ideas of someone else

\*You may NOT use your textbook as a source, unless you are referring to a primary source found in the textbook, such as a reading excerpt or a picture. I do not want you to paraphrase the commentary of the author of your textbook. Make original observations.

**Many students are terrified at the thought of writing papers. But it is not magic. Anyone can learn to write well. Writing is a skill that takes practice and time, just like anything else. The more you do it the better you get. And, there is a formula to it. There are tricks you can use to almost automatically make your papers better. There are also specific pitfalls to avoid. The biggest mistake students make is procrastinating. The second mistake they make is in not asking for help. Be kind to yourself, and leave enough time to write and re-write a good paper, instead of rushing to turn in something mediocre by the due date. A good paper is a marathon, not a sprint. Once you become comfortable with the formula, you will learn to write papers you can hand in with confidence. I am including this writing guide, to give you some advice on how to write a better Humanities paper. I realize it is looooong, but I hope it will act as a reference guide for you. Think of it as your personal writing tutor. Your professors don’t expect you to write like Shakespeare; they just want to see that you think critically, focus on primary sources, take pride in your work, follow directions, and write to the best of your ability.**

**BEFORE YOU START TO WRITE: READ THE DIRECTIONS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT CAREFULLY. MAKE SURE YOU ARE WRITING ABOUT THE TOPIC YOUR PROFESSOR HAS ASSIGNED. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, ASK FOR HELP. WE LOVE TO HELP OUR STUDENTS! THAT IS WHY WE BECAME TEACHERS.**

**MLA Format**

**Common mistakes in MLA format:**

Most of you learned MLA formatting, or some method of formatting, but here are a few reminders. Technology changes the way we access information. If you are unsure of how to cite your sources, look it up, or ask a librarian. (Don’t make up your own format.)

Italicize and capitalize titles of books, novels, works of art, magazine titles, films, newspapers, sculptures, paintings, and albums. Use “quotes” for songs, individual poems, chapters, etc. In general, italicize a title, if it is a stand-alone work, and use quotes if it is smaller part of a work, like a chapter, one poem from a collection, or one song from an album. Example:

“A Day in the Life” is from the Beatles album *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.*

Jan Vermeer painted *Girl with a Pearl Earring.*

*The New York Times* included an article about Billy Collins’ latest poem, "Forgetfulness” from his collection *Questions About Angels.*

June Cash, a writer for *The Orlando Sentinel* penned, “Lucas, What Were You Thinking?” a scathing critique about the latest appalling installment of the *Star Wars* franchise.

**In-text citations:**  One of the biggest mistakes students make is not to include in-text citations AND a works cited page. Technically, this is plagiarism—a serious academic offense that could result in an F on your paper, an F in the course, or other negative academic outcomes. When you mention an author, a source, or a specific work, put the source in parentheses within the paragraph where you mention them. If you paraphrase, or summarize from an outside source, you must cite your work. A good rule of thumb is, that if it is not common knowledge, if it did not come out of your head, or if you had to look it up, cite the source after you use it. Usually, you will use the last name of the author and a page number. If you aren’t using a book, refer to the MLA guide. Cite all of the sources you used in works cited page at the end of your paper. You must use in-text citations, as well as include a works cited page at the end, so that the reader knows where you got the information in your paper.

Example: Billy Collins, in his poem, “Forgetfulness” writes,

“The name of the author is the first to go

followed obediently by the title, the plot,

the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel

which suddenly becomes one you have never read, never even heard of” (Collins 43).

**Choosing a topic**

This is the hardest part for many students. Your professor may assign you a topic, or just tell you to write about something where you must choose the topic from a range. Choosing your own topic can be very rewarding, because you get to write about what you are interested in exploring. If you get to choose, pick something you enjoy and are passionate about. If you do not get to choose, find some aspect of the assigned topic that interests you. From the moment your paper is assigned, start thinking about what you would like to write. Think about the thing you most enjoyed, one moment in class that really clicked for you, or a topic you related to in the class, and would like to learn more about. Professors love a paper where the student is clearly passionate about their subject. My best advice to you is to NARROW IT DOWN. If you have to write about a subject, pick ONE or TWO artists, authors, sculptors, musicians, writers, philosophers, or architects. Choose a couple of works by that person, and go into depth. If you try to talk about 5 different paintings in one paper, you can’t go into depth. Better papers show deep analysis of a few topics—not shallow analysis of too many topics. Your topic should not summarize your professor’s lectures, or the textbook

**Formal Academic Essay Template**

Formal essays require a different style from creative or personal writing, and it may take a while to become comfortable with the change. Both of them require creativity, but humanities essays focus on the conclusions you make after researching primary sources and thinking about their implications. Creative writing encourages you to draw mainly from your own imagination, and the tone can be more conversational. However, formal essays—which you will write in this class—usually require you to conduct some research or analyze a particular work. The creativity comes from the way you draw your conclusions from the research. Formal papers should not be written in the first person or contain fanciful language and filler. Also, avoid casual language, slang, or texting type shorthand (IDK, LOL, WTF, ☹ etc.)

Before you do anything, START WITH PRIMARY SOURCES, and write your paper from them. Quotes from sources should not be inserted into your paper as an afterthought. Research reputable primary resources (not Wikipedia), and take the time to include multiple types of sources. Sources may include literature, visual art, music, film, architecture, performing arts, or philosophical works. Your paper should not be a collection of facts from an encyclopedia or website, or paraphrasing of your textbook.

This template is for a basic five-paragraph essay, but you may have a word count that requires more than five paragraphs. Take as many paragraphs as you need to get your point across clearly and thoroughly.

**Opening Paragraph (s)**

**The opening paragraph sets the tone for your entire paper. Think of it like going on a first date; you want to give a good impression. The opening paragraph gives you structure and guidelines and announces to your audience what the subject of your paper will be.**

5 Sentence Minimum

Attention grabber

Background information

Thesis Statement. The thesis statement does not have to be one sentence, but it generally should be in the first paragraph of a short essay.

**Don’ts**

* Don’t start with a question, such as “Have you ever wondered why…?” or “Imagine you are…”. You aren’t writing a sensational introduction for a TV show.
* Don’t jump right into your thesis in the first sentence.
* Don’t use the first person or refer to the audience as “you.” “I am going to show you, in my paper…” Just do it.
* Don’t write about whether you liked or disliked the work, how difficult it was to find a paper topic, or how it made you feel. Your paper is not the place to air complaints.
* Don’t say, “This paper/essay will…” Just do it.
* Don’t start your paper with, “This paper will compare and contrast…” OR “I am going to tell you the similarities and the differences between….” In General, avoid essays that ONLY compare and contrast. That belongs in a chart, not an essay. You need to come to some sort of original synthesis. Take a side of an argument and defend it.
* Avoid language that is casual, slangy, or fanciful. “These Roman Emperors like Nero were straight up trippin’. If it had been me, I would have been in my chariot and been like See ya!” (Yes, that came from a real paper.) You may think that professors will appreciate your sense of humor after reading dry essays—but this is not the proper place for jokes.
* Don’t put in opinion based, grand generalizations like, “Everyone since the dawn of the humanity all the way down to today has admired the work of Plato, the greatest philosopher of all time.” Really? Everyone? In general starting your paper with “Everyone knows, or anyone in the world will tell you,” is not a good idea, because you can’t prove it is true. It also keeps you from making an argument. Again, you’re not writing for a TV show.
* Don’t use filler to boost your word count. “Everyone in the whole world has mythology. Mythology is very important to everyone. Without mythology, we would not be able to have all of the benefits that mythology brings us, such as…” “The Greeks lived in Greece, which is in Europe.” No kidding.
* If any person in any humanities class could start their papers the same way, your introduction is too generic. Example: In every time period, since the dawn of man, people have a need to express themselves through the Humanities, whether it be through art, sculpture, music, philosophy, or writing. People just need to express how they think and feel and react to what is going on around them, so they make things to express how they feel and think. This paper is about how people expressed their feelings about the time they lived in.

**Do’s**

* Do start with a fact, quote (not a dictionary definition), statistic, or some kind of information that makes your audience take notice. However, use a primary source, not something like Brainyquotes, or Wikiquotes.
* Do watch your grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You want to give the reader a good first impression. Multiple errors in the first paragraph will set a bad tone for the restof your paper.
* Do give specific details, instead of general, vague statements like the ones mentioned above**.**

**Thesis**

**Your thesis needs to tell the audience what to expect from your paper. A good rule of thumb for a short paper is to start with a three-part thesis that lays out your argument. You should refer to your thesis throughout your paper.**

* If you are doing a comparison contrast essay, the third part of your thesis should demonstrate a compromise or synthesis. This is the “so what?” Part of your thesis.
* You can also look at several opposing sides of a topic, and come to a conclusion.
* Examine issues from different angles, cultures, or time periods.
* Formulate an argument like you would a math problem. Prove for A, and then prove for B, to argue C.
* You should not be able to answer your thesis statement with a simple yes/no, or a definition anyone can look up from the encyclopedia. “I am going to explain how they built the pyramids…” OR “Is there a difference between Greek gods and Roman gods? I am going to tell you the difference.” A better way to phrase that is, “Although the Greek and Roman gods are similar, their differences can reveal important aspects of the differences in their two cultures.” Do you see how that does more than just compare and contrast? That thesis statement comes to a conclusion you can prove in your paper.
* “Why” questions that require an answer, which you will provide, make good thesis statements. Imagine you are listening to a sportscaster on the news. Which is more interesting? A.) “Well, the Dolphins and the Jets played a good game, but the Dolphins won. Now…on to the weather.” OR B.) “The Dolphins and the Jets played a good game, but the Dolphins won BECAUSE…” The “BECUASE” part is what YOU as a writer should do. That is ANALYSIS, as opposed to summary. The fan wants to know the argument about why the Dolphins won.
* Your thesis needs to tell the audience that your subject is important, controversial, or worthy of argument.

**Body**

**Although a good rule of thumb is for a paragraph in the body to have around 8 to 12 sentences, there is no set formula for the number of sentences in a paragraph; use as many sentences as you need to get your idea across thoroughly. But, paragraphs with one or two sentences are not academically sound and will make your paper choppy. Also, paragraphs that take up a page and a half may be too long for a short essay. Each paragraph should build upon your thesis. Make sure you refer to your thesis at least once in each section of the body. Each paragraph should have one clear idea that is laid out in the topic sentence.**

* Don’t just start a new paragraph because it seems like you haven’t started one in a while. Start one when you complete the idea of the paragraph, and it is time to introduce a new idea.
* Don’t include too many unrelated ideas in one paragraph, so that your paragraphs are too long and choppy.

**The general structure of each paragraph in your body should contain these elements:**

Topic sentence to organize your paragraph like a mini thesis statement

Quote or reference to the primary source (painting, poem, musical work, etc.)

Explanation or description of source in a couple of sentences

Analysis of source in a couple of sentences

Relevance of source to thesis in a couple of sentences

Transition sentence.

(Citation)

**Repeat this for each point in your thesis. Better papers have multiple quotes or references to the primary source for each point.**

**Conclusion**

**Your conclusion should summarize your paper and restate, but not REPEAT your thesis, or opening paragraph, word for word. You have hopefully taken the reader on a journey into deeper understanding of your topic, so remind them in your conclusion.**

**Don’ts:**

* NEVER EVER end your paper with, “In conclusion…” OR “to summarize…” That goes without saying.
* Don’t say, “Well, I hope you learned something….” Or “Now that I have told you about….”
* Don’t just repeat your first paragraph.
* Don’t treat your conclusion like an orphaned paragraph dangling on the end of your paper. Sometimes, the first and last paragraphs can be the hardest ones to write, but don’t give up on an otherwise good paper, because the end is challenging.

**Do’s:**

* Do feel free to end with a quote or thought provoking statement.
* Do find a way to rephrase your original thesis and demonstrate that you proved what you set out to prove at the beginning of your paper**.**

**Proofreading: Some tips can improve all of your writing, whether it is an essay, an email to your employer, or a cover letter for your resume. Don’t ever turn in a first draft. Think about your paper, write an outline, and prepare BEFORE you start writing. Give yourself time to read your paper, walk away from it, and read it again with fresh eyes. Have someone else read your work and give their opinion. As a general rule, the secret to good writing is time, re-writing and practice, practice practice. Read your paper out loud, and you will be surprised at the mistakes you catch. If your teacher returns the rough draft, look at the comments and make changes. You should never just hand the same paper back in. Your writing always has room for improvement, no matter how good you think it is. When you turn in your final paper, make sure it is finished, fact checked, and proofread. Don’t turn in a rough draft as your final work.**

* Take a highlighter or pen and circle words or phrases you repeat. Find other ways to restate them. You may have to get out the dictionary or thesaurus, but it will improve your paper greatly.
* Do you just rephrase the same idea over and over in each paragraph?
* Does each paragraph help the paper grow? Does it analyze, or summarize?
* Ask yourself, “If I cut out this phrase or sentence, does the meaning of the paragraph or paper change?” If the answer is “no” you don’t need it in your paper. It is probably filler. Your professor is looking for quality, not just word count.
* Do you have a strong thesis with at least three parts? If not, you will quickly run out of things to write.
* PLEASE check your spelling, grammar, and formatting.
* If you have a choice to be specific or general, be specific. Instead of saying, “There are many Buddhists in the world…” give a specific number.
* You don’t have to use fancy language to impress your professor. Simple language, used correctly is more effective than using language you aren’t comfortable with incorrectly. Good writing is more about the way you use your words than the words you use.

**Here are some general phrases to avoid:**

“It is/was/will be…”

“which is/was/will be…”

“There are/were/will be…”

Any sentence beginning with a pronoun (He, she, it, they)

Contractions (can’t, don’t, won’t, didn’t, weren’t, isn’t, etc.)

The first person (I or we, my, our)

The second Person (you, yours)

The phrases “back then,” “now times,” or “nowadays”

The qualifiers, basically, really, very, a lot, mostly, every, all

Since the dawn of man…

Too many sentences that start with the word “The.”

**Finally, I am going to tell you the single, easiest trick I ever learned to improve my own writing. The phrases “It is…” and “There are…” and “It was…” make weak sentences that do not engage your reader. Those are lazy words. Everything already “is”. Choose a better verb that has more action. Find a way to reword those passive types of sentences, get rid of “it is” “he was,” and “there are,” etc., and your writing will improve to a degree that will amaze you. Your sentences will be longer and less choppy, and it forces you to choose your words more carefully. Of course, sometimes you have to use “is” but be sparing. The words you use are a CHOICE, not an accident.**

**EXAMPLE: Look at the way the following passage improves.** Picasso was a painter. He was from Spain. He lived in the 20th century. He is one of the best painters in the world.

Get rid of “Is and was” and replace it with something else like this:

“Many critics view the Spanish painter Picasso as one of the 20th century’s greatest artists.” **Three choppy, short sentences became one complex AND more impressive sounding sentence.**

**Let’s look at a sample of an introductory paragraph written two ways.**

**Example:** You know that since the dawn of time, people have been making paintings. They also use sculpture, architecture, and music. Everyone knows Caravaggio was a painter. I think he was probably the best painter of his time. He was from Italy. The Counter Reformation was happening at that time, which was hard on the Church. The Reformation had really hurt them a lot. The Catholic Church really wanted to bring people back, but they couldn’t. They didn’t want to lose any more people, and they knew people really like paintings, which can’t read, which is why they got Caravaggio to paint for them. There were a lot of artists painting for the Church way back then. The paintings of Caravaggio were so good they really helped them to bring a lot of people back to them. Caravaggio was kind of a criminal, but they didn’t care, because he was so good.

**Proofread the same paragraph. I have highlighted grammar errors, phrases to avoid, and passive voice in yellow. Blue shows vague words, or repetitive words that could be replaced with more specific language.**

You know that since the dawn of time, people have been making paintings. They also use sculpture, architecture, and music Everyone knows Caravaggio was a painter. I think he was probably the best painter of his time. He was from Italy. The Counter Reformation was happening at that time, which was hard on the Church. The Reformation had really hurt them a lot. The Catholic Church really wanted to bring people back, but they couldn’t. They didn’t want to lose any more people, and they knew people really like paintings, which can’t read, which is why they got Caravaggio to paint for them. There were a lot of artist’s painting and making sculpture for the Church way back then. The paintings of Caravaggio were so good they really helped them to bring a lot of people back to them. Caravaggio was kind of a criminal, but, they didn’t care because he was so good.

**Now, let’s look at another possible version of the same paragraph. You will notice that this paragraph uses words you probably already have in your vocabulary, and it has the same content. If you find yourself repeating a word, because you do not have an alternate word in mind, use a Thesaurus to look up synonyms. This is the way you improve your vocabulary. In the paragraph below, we simply got rid of poor grammar, lazy writing, vague words, and spelling errors. Short sentences have been combined to make more complex sentences. Vague, general words, like “they” and “them” have been replaced by specific words. More descriptive adjectives were added. The paragraph has better organization. There were also some factual errors which have been corrected. The paragraph below demonstrates college level writing.**

**Edited version:** Cultures often use the arts as tool to convey powerful ideas through a simple medium, particularly to illiterate members of their society. During the Protestant Reformation, many members left the Catholic Church. In an effort to bring them back, or keep more members from leaving, the Church began its own campaign of Counter Reformation. They enlisted sculptors, architects, and artists to send a message that the Catholic Church offered the true path to salvation. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, a controversial Italian artist, known as much for his criminal antics as his paintings, created emotional works that spoke to the common people and promoted the agenda of the Catholic Church. For a time, the Church overlooked Caravaggio’s behavior, because the message of his paintings presented the Counter Reformation with a clear, powerful tool that spoke, even to those who could not read.

**I leave you with this quote from *Dead Poets Society***

**So avoid using the word ‘very’ because it’s lazy. A man is not very tired, he is exhausted. Don’t use very sad, use morose. Language was invented for one reason, boys - to woo women - and, in that endeavor, laziness will not do. It also won’t do in your essays.”   
― John Keating**