

**TAKE HOME MIDTERM EXAM #1**

*Reflecting on religion in American society, is the theory of secularization a myth?*

***Further instructions:***

- (1) The exam is due at the beginning of class on Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.
- (2) You will BOTH bring a printed copy of the exam to class AND e-mail a copy of the exam to me at [yamaned@wfu.edu](mailto:yamaned@wfu.edu).
- (3) To facilitate anonymous grading, you will attach a separate cover sheet with your name on it. Do not put your name or other identifying information on any other page.
- (4) You must answer this question in NO MORE THAN 1,500 WORDS. Please provide a word count on your title page. You can access this word count in Microsoft Word by going to the FILE menu, selecting PROPERTIES, and clicking on the STATISTICS tab.
- (5) Number your pages.
- (6) When you are referring to the course readings—as you must if you want a good grade—you should cite specific texts, even if you are not quoting directly. Making vague, general statements about what authors think is not cool. As long as it is clear from the text what work you are citing, you do not need to include a separate list of references. You can use parenthetical citation in the text to indicate the location of the ideas you are using. For example, I will understand what you are referring to if you write: “Finke and Stark find that costly religions grow and cheap religions decline over the course of American history (p. 123).”
- (7) The exam is open book/open note, and you are welcome to discuss the question and course material with your fellow students, but you are expected to write your own answer. Papers which overlap in substance by more than 25% are suspect.
- (8) As this is a test of what you know and how well you can think through the course material, I cannot provide substantive assistance from this point forward.
- (9) Study the grading criteria provided on the reverse of this page to understand what constitutes a good answer.

## GRADING

100% (A)	This answer does everything that a 95% answer does <u>and</u> upon reading it, I can only exclaim, "Wow!"
95% (A-)	This answer is well-written and well-organized. The answer has a clear point ("thesis") that guides its structure and flow. Counter arguments and alternative interpretations are addressed, and the course readings are used to guide and support the paper's argument in an <i>integral</i> way (specific arguments and authors are cited). Proofreading is excellent, and the answer stays within the 1,500 word limit.
85% (B-)	This answer is solid but not spectacular. This answer is lacking in one of the areas named above in a major way, typically in the integral use of the course readings, in organization, or in proofreading. It may contain an argument or thesis, supporting ideas and evidence, but counter arguments or counter examples or alternative explanations are not adequately addressed.
75% (C-)	This answer has major problems in multiple areas—typically in the integral use of the course readings <i>and</i> in organization or proofreading—though the author at least appears to have made a serious effort to do the assignment. It may correctly list, narrate, or describe different ideas, but make little or no attempt to frame an argument or thesis. It may state an argument or thesis, but one that does not address the question. It may state an argument or thesis, but supporting ideas and evidence are: missing, incorrect or anachronistic, irrelevant, not sufficiently specific, and/or all or partly obscured by errors in language.
66% (D)	This answer simply lists, narrates, or describes different ideas. It makes no effort at analysis or integration of the readings, it is poorly proofread, and may include factual errors.
Below 66% (F)	This answer is dishonest, completely ignores the question/assignment, is incomprehensible due to errors in language or usage, and/or contains very serious factual errors. Basically, the author of this answer made no serious effort to complete the assignment. The paper was a waste of my and (probably) the author's time.

My basic grading strategy is to begin by considering every paper a solid A- (95%), then move the paper up or down as I come across excellences or liabilities in the paper. This is not a perfect science, but I think any downward errors are offset by upward errors I may make.

**TAKE HOME EXAM #2**

*How does the concept of secularization help us to understand both civil religion and Catholic lobbying in the state legislatures?*

***Further instructions:***

- (1) The exam is due at noon on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.
- (2) You will BOTH bring a printed copy of the exam to my office (203 Carswell Hall) AND e-mail a copy of the exam to me at [yamaned@wfu.edu](mailto:yamaned@wfu.edu).
- (3) To facilitate anonymous grading, you will attach a separate cover sheet with your name on it. Do not put your name or other identifying information on any other page.
- (4) You must answer this question in NO MORE THAN 1,500 WORDS. Please provide a word count on your title page. You can access this word count in Microsoft Word by going to the FILE menu, selecting PROPERTIES, and clicking on the STATISTICS tab.
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- (9) Study the grading criteria provided on the reverse of this page to understand what constitutes a good answer.

## GRADING

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95% (A-)	This answer is well-written and well-organized. The answer has a clear point ("thesis") that guides its structure and flow. Counter arguments and alternative interpretations are addressed, and the course readings are used to guide and support the paper's argument in an <i>integral</i> way (specific arguments and authors are cited). Proofreading is excellent, and the answer stays within the 1,500 word limit.
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