Preliminary Research Logs

Before doing any research, read the following pages on avoiding plagiarism on *Owl: Online Writing Lab* (Purdue University):

- “Overview and Contradictions” [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/)
- “Is it Plagiarism Yet?” [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/)
- “Safe Practices” [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/03/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/03/)

Do not assume that you already know all this! Even if you know about plagiarism in general, there are important reminders and specific recommendations for efficient documentation strategies.

On Friday, March 4, each student will bring to class an individually written preliminary research log. This log will be based on research you are have done about the larger tradition that your research site community is a part of (e.g., if the research site community is St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, your research will focus on the Episcopal Church; if your site is Temple Sinai, your research will focus on Reform Judaism). To create the log, read:

- one specialized encyclopedia or reference source about the larger tradition.
- two scholarly sources (articles or book chapters) that offer you ideas about what might be good subjects for further investigation by your group. Use the keyword searches in the databases available through Bailey/Howe (e.g., *ATLA Religion*, *Academic Search Premier*), the Classic Library Catalogue (for books), and the bibliographies in reference sources.
- the website of your particular research site.

Be aware that the first scholarly sources you choose may not be that helpful for your project. Give yourself time to find sources that are good for your purpose. You might find that articles that aren’t about your specific religious tradition but are nonetheless useful in suggesting research questions, as long as you judge that the issues are relevant.

Take careful notes in all your reading, including full documentation.

In 2-3 pages, summarize the important and most relevant information about the larger tradition. Summarize what you find most interesting, or promising, or distinctive about your particular research site. Explain the arguments made in the two scholarly sources. Propose questions that might guide further research and focus the poster project.

Give a complete bibliography in MLA format of all the sources you use.

For class on Monday, March 14, bring enough hard copies of the log to distribute to the members of your group. The class time will be spent in group work. Your assignment in that session will be to work on developing a specific research focus for the group.