

Paper #1 – Personal Narrative – due Monday 9/10/12

General Guidelines

- Paper should not exceed 4 double-spaced pages
- Please give it a title
- Include the date and your name
- Number your pages
- Spell-check and proofread carefully

Goal: the purpose of this paper is to provide you an opportunity to reflect on your own personal religious history in a short, well-organized essay. You can choose one of the starting points below or substitute one of your own creation along similar lines.

- Sketch the religious context of the community you hail from, or a place you have lived. Did you feel you matched the community's level of religiousness?
- Describe a significant personal religious or spiritual experience, and how you think it was formative for you.
- If you are affiliated with a religious organization or denomination, what would someone need to know who is encountering your faith tradition for the first time?
- How would you describe your own personal level of religiosity, and do you think you are typical among your peers? If not, provide an explanation for the "gap," either for your peers or for yourself.
- Tell me about a book, place, piece of artwork, or other cultural text that you feel has shaped your understanding of American religion and your personal religious story.
- What is your family's religious history in America? Think of your immediate family, or you could consider your extended or ancestral family.
- Choose one of the following terms and describe what it means in your own experience: faith, worship, sacred, conversion, meditation, devotion, scripture. Or write about another religious/spiritual term that has personal importance.

Because of the nature of this paper, obviously I will not be grading it for content, but for clarity of ideas and quality of writing, and for adherence to the guidelines of the assignment.