

General rules for answering exam questions

First of all, there're no multiple-choice type questions in my classes. Instead, there are short questions, which require brief answers which should be to the point. If we have an in class exam, you must follow the rules accordingly. For instance, if there're lines under the questions, then it would mean the answers must be written on the designated space available. Margins are to be kept clear, so the teacher can write comments on them.

In this kind of exam or quizzes, pencils with erasers attached must be used to avoid a mess. Naturally, when you make a mistake, you don't have to cross the words. You should simply erase your errors so you can present a clean and neat works to your teacher. As they say, packaging matters too. This means you need to bring in two or three sharpened pencils with erasers to the class. When it comes to answering the questions, you can't beat around the bush. You must get to the point and try to answer the question as it is asked. If you're not careful to answer the first question correctly, you might answer the following questions based on the previous incorrect one. So make sure your prior answers are correctly answered to the best of your ability. Once the foundation of your house is strong, then the whole project is safe from collapsing.

If there're quizzes, you can't use your texts or notes to answer the questions. However, when it comes to your final exam, you're allowed to use them while taking your exam. Thus, don't come to class without your books and notes. If your attendance records are good, naturally you would have more notes to help you when you need them. Suppose you were absent a few times, then you should ask one of your friends to let you have his or her notes. But there is nothing like your own notes. This is the key to your success along your texts for the class.

You need to budget your time so you can finish your exam on time. You ought to only rely on yourself in answering the questions.

Your hand writings must be legible. So print rather than writing in cursive style. Your letters shouldn't be either too small or too large. Write as if you're

typing. Your words must not be too close to each other. A good hand writing in a class exam is very important.

Your teachers are not like pharmacists to be able to read doctor's hand writings. We can't blame either side in this matter. Therefore, recently things have changed and many doctors no longer write their prescriptions. They rather type them on the computers, which are then sent directly to the pharmacists. Thus, there're ways to make life easier for one another.

For take home exams also there're rules to follow. First let us talk about the cover page, which many students tend to easily forget. Just as we have a cover page for our mid-term papers, we need to have them for our exams too. You type, "Final exam" in the middle of the page. On the bottom right corner, you'll have your name, school, and subject matter. Right before you start your work, you want to make sure your font is # 12. You must also follow the double- space rule. Yes your exams are expected to be double-spaced.

Having finished with your cover page, then you should remember the above rules. I repeat, make sure your letter size (font) or print is # 12. You then proceed to make sure again that your sentences are double-spaced. You don't want your work to look like news papers or books. This is the start of your answering project in your take home exams.

If you were taking a course in world Religions, you must use letters, namely, a, b, c, for each Religion. Let us say, you begin with 'Hinduism'. Then make use of the letter 'a'. It doesn't matter whether it is capital or otherwise. In other words, you could use 'A' to start this Religion. So this is the way you're starting to answer questions on 'Hinduism': a-Hinduism. And then you use numbers, as used in your exam questions, to answer each question separately. Remember to type the question first before answering them. Once you're finished, then you type: 1-under it. Don't type the questions first separately and then answer them. You type the question first, I repeat, and then your answer must be typed under it. Questions and answers are to be together. For example, if the question is: What is the Ultimate Reality in

Hinduism? Then the answer comes under it as if you're stepping down from a ladder:

1-What is the Ultimate Reality in Hinduism?

It is Brahman.

2-What is Brahman?

It is the Reality which is beyond dualism, namely, rest and motion, being and non-being, good and evil. We should neither name it, nor define it, for they limit it in our mind. Since it is beyond being and non-being, it doesn't even exist in our ordinary sense of the word or the way we use our languages. Thus, proving its very existence would be a waste of time and intellectual energy. We rather ought to experience it. We must smell the perfume rather than reading about it.

As you can see, our answer here is not short. But your answers should be short and to the point. I hope I have made myself clear.

When it comes to Buddhism, there you have: b or Be- Buddhism.

1-Why did Buddha reject Brahman?

Because he wasn't happy the way people had interpreted, thus, misinterpreted what they believed. In other words, he didn't deny the essence of what Brahman was. However, what he refuted was the forms individuals had created for themselves concerning this Reality, which was to be experienced rather than rationalized.

This is what we mean by answering the questions vertically: One answer under each question, not next to it. I hope it is understood.

By letters you title the Religions, and through numbers you answer them making sure answers are under each questions.

You also must arrange your answers chronologically: First 'Hinduism', then 'Buddhism', then 'Confucianism', then 'Taoism', etc. Don't hand in your works

such that your professor would have to fix them. Bear in mind that packaging matters too.

Also make sure your print quality is checked ahead of time. When a bar code lines are not printed clearly, it can't be scanned and correctly read. When the print quality is not good, your answers can't be read properly. So make sure to present your works neatly.

Monitor your answers so they wouldn't exceed more than required. Remember in world Religions courses we're dealing with seven Religions. In Eastern Religions, however, we're involved with only India and China, that is, 4 Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism (India) and Confucianism, Taoism (China). For introduction to Religions, we add three more Religions, which are, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Middle East).

By no means are students allowed to e-mail me their answered exams. I only accept printed exams, which are handed in on the scheduled day and time. So stay away from electronically sending your works to me. You can, however, mail your exams to my address, in case you're late. But you can't e-mail me your exams. I'm simply not responsible for printing your works. It is your duty as students to print them yourselves. For each late day you'll lose two points. There is a dead line for turning the grades in electronically. We need to meet that in time. We, as teachers, are supposed to send student's grades to college or universities electronically. I hope you see the difference.

As far as the quizzes and non-take home exams, which are given in class, you need to bring in your sharpened pencils and erasers. You're required to print your names as well as your answers. You write as if you're typing, namely, you should separate your words and your letters. In other words, you must not use cursive style to write your answers. This is what we mean by printing. Your letters shouldn't be joined. Your hand writings have to be legible or else I will not be able to read your answers and correct them accurately. Your first and last names must also be printed. You should mention both names clearly.

Should you have questions to which you want quick answers, you can always call me. And if I'm not available, you can leave a message. Human voice still matters to me a great deal. So don't resort to e-mailing. For the fastest way to reach me, use the good old phone conversation.

Be smart and get to know your teacher. If he or she talks a lot about e-mailing you and receiving e-mails from you, then keep e-mailing. Students sometimes make use of this silent communication tool that is, e-mailing system, in order to document and file. However, if you really want to speak with your teacher, then just call and leave a message. I'm not against these technological ways of contacting people. Nonetheless, hearing one another on the phone still is closest to physically be in the presence of each other. So please don't shy away from calling me. If you need to ask me questions regarding your exams, just call me and I'll be happy to return your call.

Remove yourself from the temptation of using Internet in order to answer the questions. You can read what is on line concerning the questions. Nevertheless, I want you to think for yourself and make sure you're the author of your answers not the Internet.

New technology is very important and expedient, if it is used correctly. Nevertheless, there is a difference between calculating without using a calculator and other wise. There're students who get their PhD's in mathematics without ever making a use of calculators. At least I knew of one who was student at Indiana University. He was working on his masters in 1973 while I was still at college. His brother had already earned a PhD in math years before him.

It is very important to remember that in answer to the question: What is Brahman? First you should tell me what is believed in Hinduism in regard to this question and then you can express your opinions as to what you think, this term means. You simply can't say this is what you think first. It is important to bear in mind to convey what the Hindus believe first and then you express your thoughts on the question.

To answer the questions, you can check with your text and notes. Nonetheless, once you're finished, let me know what you think Brahman is.

Keep in mind I'm a phone call away. We should always remember the title of Allan Bloom's famous book published in 1987: "The closing of the American mind." By thinking for ourselves, we keep our mind open. The authors of your text, the articles of you teachers, and the Internet are not taking your test. Read their works but at the end think for yourself and be the author of your works. It is a lot simpler than you think. You can mention the sources you have used at the end of your exams, if you wish.

Also make sure answer the bonus question at the very end of your exam. If your answer were correct, you'll be on a higher level when it comes to the final grade. However, if your answer were incorrect, this wouldn't change your grade on the previous questions. So don't miss the bonus questions for it will boost your final grades.

Make sure you answer questions, which are about the Religions we have studied in this course. Don't expect miracles. On world Religions we deal with seven faiths. If you answer only a few, you're bound to have your final grades lowered. Therefore, it is to your advantage to answer all the questions you have been asked.

Don't put yourself in harm's way by borrowing past exams or copying your, so called, friend's exam. If you do so, this will go against everything these courses stand for, namely, honesty, integrity, and transparency.

Grades are important, but how we get them are also important. The goal shouldn't justify the means. Robin Hood, who robbed the rich to feed the poor, should never be our model. After all, our moral health goes hand in hand with our mental health. When I submit a work that is not mine, I'm involved with a contradiction, which eventually eats into the fabric of who I ought to be and who I could be, as a human being.

I repeat, please don't forget the cover page. This is the door to your answers. Introduce yourself and the nature of your work in your cover page. In the middle of your page you type, final exam. At the bottom right corner, come your full name, college or University, and the name of your course. You don't have to number this page. If your computer insists on numbering it, just use white liquid paper and number other pages by hand. Use your common sense and look at the cover of one of your books to see if it is numbered. If it is not, then don't number your cover page.

If you're taking a course in world Religions, or Eastern Religions for that matter, then make sure questions concerning each Religion are answered chronologically. In other words, start with Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. You begin with India first, then China, and Middle East at the end.

Check your answers after you have finished printing them to make sure everything is in order. Presenting your work in an orderly fashion is very important.

Your answer comes under your questions:

1-What is Brahman?

It is the Ultimate Reality.

Don't type all the questions and then try to answer them separately. Just follow the rules and present your works correctly.

By vertically answering the question, we mean one answer under the first question just the way we have it above. You keep coming down from a ladder. When you're on a ladder, you can't go to the right or left. Type the question first, and then proceed to answer right under it.

Should you have any question, you can always call me and talk to me for help or leave a message. Don't e-mail me. Don't e-mail your exam, because I'm not responsible to print out your work. I sit about two hours in class; from the time we

start the lecture, in order to collect your exams. All you have to do is bring in your works and let me have them. So don't be late or absent.

Don't be absent on the day we decided to give you the exam. Be there to receive your exams and be there to hand them in.

Good luck to you.