1. SPECIFIC FORMAT INSTRUCTIONS
- papers must be written double-spaced, in Arial Unicode font 11 (not 12!), with 1 1/4 inch margins on the left and right and one inch margins on the top and bottom. 10-15 pages.

- Put the title at the top of your first page. At the top right of the first page put your name. On top right of each following page have the page number.

2. REGARDING SOURCES
- No outside sources are required for this paper, but you are free to incorporate them. Online sources are always risky since there is so much silliness on the web, so for this class online sources are forbidden.

- you may find the following sources appropriate:
  - Anchor Bible Commentary
  - Anchor Bible Dictionary
  - New Catholic Encyclopedia
  - Encyclopaedia of Islam (BE CAREFUL: There are two versions of this, only one of which is scholarly. You want the green Encyclopaedia -- notice the spelling -- published by E.J. Brill. BE CAREFUL AGAIN: In this encyclopedia entries are listed under their Arabic names. So, for Jesus you will have to look under the Arabic “Īsā.” In order to find the Arabic form of English terms, use the index.)
  - Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān. (BE CAREFUL: There are two versions of this one too, only one of which is scholarly. You want the blue Encyclopaedia -- notice the spelling – again published by E.J. Brill)
  - These two sources are technical. The following sources on Islam are introductory:
    Islamic World
    The Oxford Dictionary of Islam
    The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam by Glasse
    The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam by Newby
    The Historical Dictionary of Islam by Adamec
    Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia
    The Qurʾān: An Encyclopedia by Leamen
  - A Concordance of the Qurʾān (ed. Kassis)
  - J. Jomier, The Bible and the Koran (On reserve for our class)
  - J.-M. Gaudeul, Encounters and Clashes: Islam and Christianity in History (On reserve for our class)
- Ibn Kathīr’s (14th century traditionalist Muslim), *Commentary on the Qurān* and his *Stories of the Prophets* (from Adam to Muhammad) are both available in English translation in the library.
- see the syllabus for other works on class reserve.

- when citing your sources, use footnotes, not endnotes or a works cited page. Follow the Chicago footnote method. This you will find through the citation guide link on the main page of our website. When citing an encyclopedia article, be sure to cite the name of the author of that article (not the editor of the encyclopedia) and the name of the article. No bibliography is necessary.

- Biblical or Qurānic references can be made in parentheses (Mark 13:8). Mention the name of the translation – not the edition -- the first time you cite (e.g. New American Bible; NOT Catholic Study Bible, which is the name of the version, not the translation) or, for the Qurān, by the name of the translator (e.g. Arberry).

- as for our class readings, simply indicate author, title, and page number in a footnote.

3. MISTAKES OF GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, SYNTAX AND INFELICITIES OF STYLE
- Muhammad should be spelled Muhammad. Qurān should be spelled Qurān or Quran.

- Refer to God as God, not Allah.

- Ibn means “son.” ‘Abd means “servant.” These two words are not first names but part of multi-word names such as Ibn Hishām (The Son of Hishām) and ‘Abd al-Jabbār (The Servant of the Most Powerful). Therefore they must always be included in the name.

- a period goes inside quotation marks but outside of parentheses. The latter rule trumps the former when both punctuation marks "appear" (got it?). Footnote references go after the quotation mark or the period, whichever comes last.

- avoid using quotation marks for words that are not quotations. e.g. Christian “fanatics” think prayer is awesome. Simply find a word that does not need quotation marks.

- after a semi-colon a full sentence is required.

- no contractions in formal writing. I'm serious.
- isn’t it interesting that the word interesting has no meaning and should never be used in writing?

- e.g. means "for example." i.e. means "in other words."

- quotation is the noun. Quote is the verb.

- numbers under 13 should be written out. Testing one, two, three, is anybody listening? hello?

- do not mistake adjectives and adverbs. "ND played badly," not "bad."

- split infinitive. “Remember to not do this.” Ooops!

- dangling participle "Watching the television show, the turkey burned" means that the turkey was watching the television show.

- beg the question. I do not think this means what you think it means. Look this phrase up in the OED (Oxford English Dictionary).

- “As regards” and “in regard to” are correct. “In regards” is incorrect.

- put foreign words in parentheses. The Qur’ān does not teach that humans were created in the image of God (imago Dei). Or does it?

- put etymologies in parentheses. Jacob had a nap at Bethel (“House of God”).

- use present, indicative tense whenever you discuss a text. “Luther remarks...” not “L remarked.” Save the past tense for the description of historical events.

- use the active voice, not the passive voice. A passive sentence such as, “Jerusalem was sacked in AD 70,” does not tell me who did the sacking. I need to know the subject of the verb! So: “The Romans sacked Jerusalem in AD 70” (or even better: “Titus sacked Jerusalem in AD 70”!).

- watch your subject, verb and object to see if they make sense. "One such comparison claims" Can a comparison claim? or “Theology is the subject that studies” Can a subject study? or "The theories examine...." Do they? No! “Scholars examine." “His goal concentrates on explaining” - Can a “goal” “concentrate”? Better: "His goal is to explain"
- beware of using the word “as” and/or “ing” words. This often leads to ugly phrases. For example: “Beauty is viewed as supreme....” Yech. Better to write, “To the author beauty is the supreme quality....” Another example: “He interprets this as foretelling....” Yech. Better: “He explains that this foretells....” How about, “The emphasis is not on being a member....” Blech! Better: “The emphasis is not on membership.”

- feel free to use first person: “I will show...” but do not use plural first person: “We will show.....” Do not use the general second person: “You cannot go wrong by....”

- parallel structure. "Paul said that believers should repent and to pray," should be "and should pray."

4. A FINAL PLEA FOR GOOD WRITING
- above all write simply and clearly. Quote only small portions of material. Write with short sentences and short paragraphs. Usually the longer a sentence or paragraph is, the more likely I am to start thinking about football before it ends.

- remember always to look at the context of a passage (i.e. what comes before and after) and the historical context of an author.

- make sure there is a smooth transition between different sections of a paper.

- your conclusion should be something more than a general review. What is the importance or consequence of your argument? What new horizons does it reveal?

- I will be grateful for a good effort to follow these principles. If I see such an effort I will happily overlook occasions where you miss them. All of this is meant to inspire you to write clearly, not to cause you anxiety!