

American Sacred Space
RELST 206 / WES 200

Definition of Sacred Space

- Assignment (from the class Website):

On (or before) the **date specified**, using (and citing) class materials, you must submit a statement (of no less than **1500 words**) **defining “sacred space.”** This paper must provide evidence of integrating arguments / definitions found in the readings with those we have discussed in class.

This statement will serve as the research foundation for your larger project, so be certain to consider different aspects of your topic: history / description of the space, descriptions of people connected to the space, etc.

- Strategies

> BEFORE YOU START WRITING:

Think about why you consider the space you have selected to be “sacred space.”

- Have you chosen a space that others consider sacred? Why might they consider it sacred? Did something out of the ordinary happen there?
- Have you chosen a space that others have not designated as sacred? Might they agree with you (even a little) if they learned that you were identifying the space a sacred?
- Have you chosen a space that might be sacred only to you (and / or one other person)? Why do you consider it sacred? Did something out of the ordinary happen there?

> ONCE YOU START WRITING:

- Offer a definition: “Space can be defined as sacred if...”
- “Locate” your definition (in terms of what we’ve read):
 - In what ways (if any) does your definition borrow from others we have read (Eliade, Foote, Chidester / Linenthal, Lane, etc.)?
 - In what ways (if any) does it differ from others we have read?

- Warning

> Do NOT discuss the specific space you have chosen – that will come later. This paper is designed to help you develop your own working definition of “sacred space” so that it can be used later, in your presentation and final paper, when discussing the space that you have chosen.

- Starting Prompt: “Sacred space can be defined as ...”