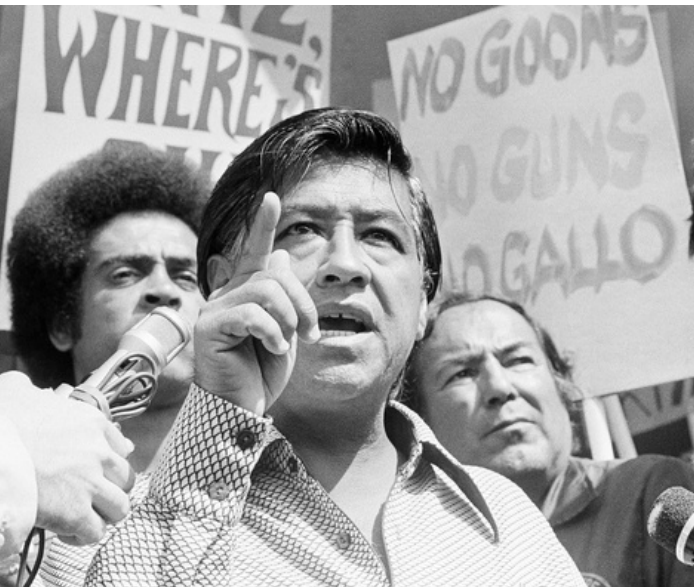


RLST138

AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY



CMC · FALL 2021 · TUE/THURS 2:55-4:10



DESCRIPTION

This seminar examines the role that religion plays in the history of the United States, and asks students to critically explore how peoples and communities in various places and times have drawn upon religion to give meaning to self, group, and nation. The course will cover a wide range of traditions, as well as regional, denominational, and racial-ethnic dimensions within these groups.

Throughout this course, we'll examine the dynamic relationship between religion & American culture. Our goal is to recognize, understand, and analyze religious influences in contemporary life through overarching themes: how religion shapes and is shaped by American life, how we encounter minority religions, and how the U.S. handles religious diversity.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All articles, links, documents, and videos will be available online.



EXPECTATIONS

This course is a survey of American religious history. I do not expect students have prior knowledge about any of the traditions we cover or the way scholars study religion. That's what we're here to learn.

Part of a seminar is learning how to talk about challenging topics. I expect you to be prepared for each class, having done the assigned readings and considered ways to thoughtfully engage through questions, comments, and interaction.

OUTCOMES

Demonstrate an understanding of the American religious landscape and develop religious literacy.

Recognize the relationship between religion and culture and confidently communicate new knowledge

Learn to analyze and support different perspectives. This includes challenging previously held ideas.

Develop the skills necessary for both national and global engagement.

LATE WORK

Assignments must be completed on time, unless prior approval is given. That said, I recognize this is a challenging time and I'm willing to work with you if you need additional support. Please email me as soon as possible to discuss extensions. Late assignments without prior approval will receive a 10% deduction per week they are late.

INTEGRITY

All assignments in this course fall under the Student Code of Conduct. For more information on these policies, refer to CMC's Statement of Academic Integrity.

Please, don't cheat. Consequences range from a zero on the assignment to a failing grade in the course. If you have questions about proper citation, please reach out prior to submission.

ACCESSIBILITY

I'm happy to work with you to meet any and all accessibility needs. Please contact Student Accessibility Services and your Academic Advisor so that we can set whatever provisions you need to succeed in this course.





TECHNOLOGY

This class is being held on campus. However, all reading assignments will be available online on your CMC portal.

I welcome the use of laptops in the classroom to ensure everyone has their readings available in class, as well as for taking notes. However, I expect that laptop use will be specific to course content.

GROUND RULES

Part of the humanities classroom is learning to thoughtfully engage with ideas that are different than your own. In this class, you will undoubtedly be challenged.

You are welcome to discuss personal beliefs. However, this is not a theology course. Opinions and perspectives should maintain a spirit of inquiry and dialogue. I am committed to ensuring safe and inclusive environment for these conversations.



GRADING RUBRIC

Participation (25%)

Reading Notes (25%)

Paper Proposal (15%)

Final Paper (35%)

A = 94-100 | A- = 90-93

B+ = 87-89 | B = 83-86 | B- = 80-82

C+ = 79-77 | C = 73-76 | C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69 | D = 63-66 | D- = 60-62

F = 59 and below

ASSIGNMENTS

PARTICIPATION

Participation is a required component of this course. Please show up ready and prepared to discuss the course readings and other assignments. Each class will be broken into two parts. The first half of the class will be devoted to contextualizing lectures. The second half of each course is devoted to discussing the reading in relation to lecture material or current events.

Part of humanities scholarship is learning to actively engage with unfamiliar ideas. Our course participation offers an opportunity to learn how to discuss new and complex ideas in productive and meaningful ways.

READING NOTES

Liberal arts education is about learning to learn. This is a skill that will support both this course and your future academic journey at CMC. Central to this is learning to read, understand, and think critically about challenging material.

Reading notes demonstrate thoughtful engagement with course material, and prepare you with the historical context necessary to determine and complete your final assignment.

Reading notes are due each Thursday by 5pm.





SWAMI VIVIKENANDA
GREEN ACRE SCHOOL, 1894

EXTRA CREDIT

For up to 2 percentage points, students have the option to watch *The Master* and write a two-page, double-spaced reflection on film and its relationship to course material. Extra credit assignments are due prior to final's week.

ASSIGNMENTS



PAPER PROPOSAL

A paper proposal is designed to help you determine a topic for your final paper and begin compiling the sources needed to complete the assignment.

The paper proposal should include a topic, a working thesis, and an annotated bibliography of at least five sources. If you plan to change topics at any point over the course of this class, a new proposal will be required.

The proposal is due on October 14 by 5pm

FINAL PAPER

Drawing on the various topics and themes from this course, choose a specific topic from our course content to write an 8-page analysis.

This assignment is designed to allow students to gain an increased understanding of a specific aspect of the course that they find interesting. The paper should include a thesis and use at least five sources.

The final paper is due via email on the day of the final, December 14 by 5pm.

CLASS SCHEDULE

| DATE | TOPIC | READING SCHEDULE |
|-----------|------------------------------|--|
| W1: 8/31 | Introduction | Review Syllabus and Readings |
| W1: 9/2 | What is Religion? | Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious" |
| W2: 9/7 | What is American Religion? | Albanese, "An Elephant in the Dark Room" from <i>American Religions and Religion</i> PRRI, "America's Changing Religious Identity" |
| W2: 9/9 | Indigenous Religion | Graber, "Introduction" from <i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> |
| W3: 9/14 | Junipero Serra's Missions | Moran, "Embodying Hospitality and Paternalism" in <i>The Imperial Church</i> Pope Alexander VI, <i>The Papal bull Inter Caetera</i> |
| W3: 9/16 | Witches and Hot Protestants | Winship, "Defining Puritanism" Godbeer, "How Could They Believe That?" |
| W4: 9/21 | Revival | Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" Wenger, "Female Christ and Feminist Foremother: The Many Lives of Anne Lee" |
| W4: 9/23 | Enlightenment | Noll, "The Separation of Church and State" in <i>The Old Religion in a New World</i> <i>The Jefferson Bible</i> |
| W5: 9/28 | Catholics and anti-Catholics | Zeitzy, "When America Hated Catholics" Laycock, "Making Sense of the Anomalous" |
| W5: 9/30 | Judaism in America | Sarna and Eleff, "The Immigration Clause that Transformed Orthodox Judaism in the United States" |
| W6: 10/5 | Awakening | Hatch, "Storming Heaven by the Back Door" Jedediah Burchard, "Revival Sermon" |
| W6: 10/7 | The Black Church | Glaude, "Of the Black Church and the Making of the Black Public" from <i>Exodus!</i> Absalom Jones, "A Thanksgiving Sermon" |
| W7: 10/12 | Diasporic Faith | Pérez, "Space, Time, and Ache" from <i>Religion in the Kitchen</i> <i>Lemonade</i> |
| W7: 10/14 | Waves of Migration | Seager, "The American Setting," in <i>Buddhism in America</i> Swami Vivekananda's Address PAPER PROPOSAL DUE BY 5PM! |
| W8: 10/19 | FALL BREAK! | NO CLASS! |

CLASS SCHEDULE

| DATE | TOPIC | ASSIGNMENT (DUE BEFORE CLASS) |
|------------|--|--|
| W8: 10/21 | Buddhism in America | Seager, "Making Some Sense of Americanization" in <i>Buddhism in America</i> |
| W9: 10/26 | Vivekananda and American Hinduism | Lucia, "A Darshan Experience" in <i>Reflections of Amma</i> |
| W9: 10/28 | Sikhism and the Struggle for Recognition | Falcone, "Seeking Recognition: Patriotism, Power, and Politics in Sikh American Discourse in the Immediate Aftermath of 9/11" |
| W10: 11/2 | Fundamentalism | Ahlstrom, "Dissent and Reaction in Protestantism" Eagle, "Historicizing the Megachurch" |
| W10: 11/4 | Faith in Motion | Peña, "Beyond Mexico: Guadalupan Sacred Space Production and Mobilization in a Chicago Suburb" Chavez, "The Mexican-American and the Church" |
| W11: 11/9 | Tongues of Fire | Orsi, "Snakes Alive!" Crawley, "Noise" <i>Holy Ghost People</i> |
| W11: 11/11 | "New Religions" and "Cults" | Gallagher, "Compared to What? 'Cults' and 'New Religious Movements'" Hutchinson, "Why Did So Many Black Women Die?" |
| W12: 11/16 | Criminalizing Faith | S.B. 102, Utah's Bigamy Amendments Goodwin, "Raiding Zion to Save It" |
| W12: 11/18 | What is Religion? Who Decides? | Urban, "Fair Game: Secrecy, Security, and the church of Scientology in Cold War America" |
| W13: 11/23 | Workshop | Please bring your paper proposals to seminar. |
| W13: 11/25 | THANKSGIVING RECESS! | NO CLASS! |
| W14: 11/30 | The Age of Aquarius | Albanese, "The New New Age," in <i>Republic of Mind and Spirit</i> |
| W14: 12/2 | Religion and Racial Justice | Cone, "'Nobody Knows the Trouble I see': The Cross and the Lynching Tree in the Black Experience in <i>The Cross and the Lynching Tree</i> " Butler, "The Fire this Time" |
| W15: 12/7 | Contagion and Conspiracy | Goodwin, "Satan Sellers" Snowden, "Responses to Plague" in <i>Epidemics and Society</i> |
| W15: 12/9 | Conclusions | Sullivan, "The Impossibility of Religious Freedom" |
| W16: 12/14 | FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5pm! | |



AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY



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Office: Kravis 271

Office hours: Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 11am-1pm or by appointment via Zoom.

I usually reply to email within 24 hours.
Reach out early and often!