

Religion and Globalization
840:393
Spring 2012
M Th | 11:30-12:50
SC-120 | College Ave.

Dr. Joseph Williams
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Office Hours: Thursday 1:00-3:00
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Course Description: This course will explore the relationship between religion and key aspects of globalization, focusing especially on the following questions: What is globalization and how might we conceptualize the various social, cultural, economic, and political transformations associated with an increasingly interconnected world? Where does religion fit in this conversation? In what ways have religion and religious individuals contributed to, resisted, or simply been caught up in globalizing trends? Has globalization fundamentally changed individuals' experience and perception of religion? What is the relationship between globalization, religious extremism, and religious violence?

Course Objectives:

This course seeks to encourage critical thinking about the nature of globalization and its relationship to various religious traditions. After taking this course, students should:

- appreciate the diversity of responses to globalization within religious communities
- gain a broad outline of major historical developments that have contributed to globalizing trends (and in turn influenced religions)
- be introduced to some basic theoretical approaches to the study of globalization and their relevance to the academic study of religion
- produce an original research paper based on both primary and secondary sources exploring the impact of globalizing trends discussed in class on a particular religious tradition

Course readings. For class sessions with required reading I have assembled a reading guide that includes 1) questions pertaining to the assigned readings and 2) instructions for obtaining the readings (some of the articles/readings have been placed on reserve and are available via the library website, others can be found on the internet, and some are posted on Sakai). As much as possible I have tried to pair articles/selections together that offer contrasting arguments and perspectives related to the day's topic. Please note: while there are no books that you need to purchase for this course, I recommend that you print out the readings and bring them with you to class (if you bring a laptop to class, you simply may want to save an electronic copy of the reading on your computer). We will be discussing each reading in class, and having a copy of the text in front of you will enable you to participate more fully in the discussion. In addition, this will allow you to mark key passages and points, which will be quite useful as you review for exams and pull material together for the writing assignments.

Course Requirements:

Exams: There will be a take-home mid-term exam and an in-class final exam. Make-up exams will only be permitted if arrangements are made with the instructor *prior* to the day of the test.

Essay: You will be required to write one main essay this semester. In your essay you will explore the impact of globalization on the religious tradition of your choice. (I will provide specific questions for you to address.) Requirements: There will be a research component to this essay (you will need to utilize both primary and secondary sources) and you will present your research to the class. The essay should be 8-

10 pages (a minimum of 2000 words). You also must provide a draft of the paper prior to the due date and work with other students in draft reading groups. **You will lose 5% off your paper if you do not submit a working draft of the paper for peer-review by the date indicated on the syllabus.** (I will provide further details about this process in class.) In addition, papers turned in after class has started on the final due date will be considered late and lose 5%. Papers turned in after class is over will lose 15%. **No papers will be accepted if they are turned in more than one class period after the due date** unless arrangements have been made with the instructor *prior to the due date*. **In addition to the hard copy of your paper turned in during class, you should also submit your paper to Turnitin.com via Sakai on the due date of the paper.** ****Please note, your paper is not officially turned in until I have both a hard copy of the paper and it is also submitted via Sakai.** Email submissions *will not* be accepted.

**Plagiarism and cheating will be handled in accordance with university policy. See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#plagiarism>

Quizzes: There will be unannounced quizzes throughout the semester based on the course readings. **Readings should be read by the date they are listed on the syllabus.** (A list of questions for each reading will be posted as part of the reading guides on Sakai to help you know what I want you to focus on as you read.) Anyone who has read the assigned pages should have no problem answering the questions. One quiz score may be dropped and will not count towards the final grade (this includes a missed quiz). Make-up quizzes will only be allowed for excused absences approved by me beforehand (for funerals, heart bypass surgeries, et cetera). ****It is your responsibility to make sure you have read the material by the due date.** Problems downloading the online readings will not excuse you from taking a quiz.

Participation (Presentations and Attendance): **Attendance is expected at all classes.** If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Please note: A record of attendance will be kept throughout the semester. More than 4 missed classes will negatively impact your participation grade (you will lose 10% off your participation grade for each absence above the first four). **At different points in the semester you also will be asked to make brief presentations to the class, one regarding your research essay, and twice regarding “Religion and Globalization in the News” assignments.** These presentations will constitute half of your participation grade, the other half is based on your attendance.

Grading System:

Main Essay: 30%	Final Exam: 20%	Participation: 15%
Mid-term Exam: 20%	Reading Quizzes: 15%	

100-92 A, 91-87 B+, 86-80 B, 79-77 C+, 76-70 C, 69-60 D, 59-below F.

Course Schedule (**Fine Print:** I may make changes to the course readings, schedule, and policies as the course progresses. It is your responsibility, even if you miss classes, to keep yourself up-to-date on the course requirements.)

1/19 Introduction/Course Overview

CONCEPTUALIZING GLOBALIZATION AND RELIGION

1/23 What is religion and how will we study it?

Globalization, McDonaldization, and Religion.

1/26 See the “Religion and the Wal-Mart Effect” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

1/30 See the “Religion and Economic Globalization” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

Globalization, Religion, and the “Information Age”

2/2 See the “Religion and the Internet” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

2/6 See the “Religion and Authority in the ‘Information Age’” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

Globalization, Transnationalism, and Religion

2/9 See the “Globalization in Historical Perspective” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

2/13 See the “Globalization, Transnationalism, and Religion” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

Globalization as Secularization

2/16 See the “Globalization, Religion, and Secularization” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

2/20 No class—in lieu of class, please work on your take-home mid-term exam. Questions will be passed out in class prior to this date.

2/23 Catch-up day. No reading due.

2/27 Mid-term exam due.

3/1 Religion and Globalization in the News Assignment (#1). (Details will be discussed in class.)

KEY TOPICS IN THE STUDY OF GLOBALIZATION AND RELIGION
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Religious Fundamentalism and Globalization

3/5 See the “Globalization and Religious Fundamentalism” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

3/8 See the “Religious Terrorism” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

NO CLASS 3/12, 3/15—Spring Break

Religion, Gender, and Globalization

3/19 See the “Religion, Gender, and Globalization” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

3/22 See the “A Case Study in Gender and Globalization” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

East and West in the Globalization of Religion

3/26 See the “Religious Healing and Globalization” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

3/29 Working Draft of Essay Due. (Details will be discussed in class). No reading due.

Globalization and its (Religious) Discontents

4/2 See the “Globalization and its (Religious) Discontents” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

4/5 Religion and Globalization in the News Assignment (#2). Class time also will be set aside to discuss peer-reviews of the essay drafts.

Popular Culture and the Globalization of Religion

4/9 No reading due. Work on your essay!

4/12 Essay due.

4/16 Presentations of Research

4/19 Presentations of Research

THE FUTURE OF RELIGION IN AN INCREASINGLY GLOBALIZED WORLD

4/23 See “The Pessimists” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

4/26 See “The Optimists” reading guide/questions, available on Sakai.

4/30 Summary and conclusion of course.

Final Exam Time: Thursday, 5/3 8:00-11:00 a.m.