

Religions Now

Religion 840:105:01, :02, :03, and H1

Fall 2016

Lectures M-W 1:40, Livingston Cinema 1

Recitation times and locations are shown on the online schedule of classes

<https://sis.rutgers.edu/soc/#courses%3Fsubject%3D840%26semester%3D92016%26campus%3DNB%26level%3DU>

Instructors

Professor Tia Kolbaba (lectures and Recitation H1)

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Office hours: Tuesday, 11 a.m. to noon; **appointments available at other times—just ask!**

Professor Joseph Williams (lectures)

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Dr. Kelly Robbins (Recitations 1, 2, and 3)

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Office hours: Will be announced in recitation.

This course fulfills part of the following SAS Core Curriculum Requirements:

21st-Century Challenges (21C)

- a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world.

- d. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.

Arts and the Humanities [AH]

- o. Philosophical and theoretical issues. Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

Course Objectives:

After taking this course, students should:

- appreciate the sheer diversity of religious opinions in modern societies, especially as they relate to social justice issues
- grasp key interconnections between religion and major 21st-century developments
- understand certain key theoretical approaches involved in the academic study of religion

Assessment

Student progress toward the goals of the course will be measured by a midterm and a final examination, each with a fact-based component and an essay component to measure higher-order thinking skills.

Student progress will also be assessed in weekly recitation sessions. **Participation is therefore a crucial component of this course. At the end of this syllabus is a description of the criteria used for judging participation—please read them carefully.**

Reading and Other Assignments

There are no books to purchase.

All readings for the course will either be online or posted as documents to the Sakai site for the course. Go to sakai.rutgers.edu for details.

NOTE: ALL READING ASSIGNMENTS ARE TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE CLASS PERIOD FOR WHICH THEY ARE ASSIGNED.

We will give occasional pop quizzes to assess whether you are doing the reading. More importantly, your exam and participation grades will be better if you have done the reading.

Above all we hope that the readings will deepen your understanding of the issues we are studying, help you get more out of the lectures, and enliven your recitation sections.

Grading:

The course will have a midterm and a final exam. Each will be worth 30% of your grade.

The course will have occasional pop quizzes to check whether students are doing the reading. Your scores on these quizzes will constitute 20% of your grade.

Participation both in your recitation and in the iClicker polls during the lectures will count for 20% of your grade. **At the end of this syllabus is a description of the criteria used for judging participation—please read it carefully.**

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend 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 your instructor. **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).**

Calendar of Assignments and Lectures

Introduction

Weds., Sept. 7: Recitation sections will NOT meet on Sept. 7.

Weds., Sept. 7: Lecture: Introducing ourselves, introducing the goals and objectives of the class.

Religion and the State: *A Modern Wall of Separation*

Reading (to be completed before class on Monday, Sept. 12):

John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration," online at <http://www.constitution.org/jl/tolerati.htm>

Monday, Sept. 12: Lecture: Separation of "Church" and "State"—an introduction to some of the issues.

Reading (to be completed before recitation on Weds. Sept. 14):

Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion. A History of a Modern Concept*, pp. 97-105 (starting at the section entitled "The Formation of the State and the Formation of Religion"). On Sakai.

Gerd Baumann, "The Nation-State, II: Business or Temple? Why Nation-States are not Religiously Neutral," in *The Multicultural Riddle. Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 41-55. On Sakai.

Wednesday, Sept. 14: Recitation.

Wednesday, Sept. 14: Lecture: Getting to the Historical Point: When, Where, and Why Did the Idea of Religion's 'Separate Sphere' Develop?

American ideas about separation of church and state

Reading (to be completed before class on Monday, Sept. 19).

Interview with David Sehat re: his book, *The Myth of American Religious Freedom*.
<http://usreligion.blogspot.com/2011/01/myth-of-american-religious-freedom.html>

Thomas Jefferson, A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, 18 June 1779,
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0132-0004-0082>

Excerpts from First Amendment Supreme Court opinions. On Sakai.

Monday, Sept. 19: Lecture: The First Amendment in Historical Context

Reading (to be completed before lecture on Wednesday, Sept. 21):

<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/09/02/436820789/fasting-to-the-death-is-it-a-religious-rite-or-suicide>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/manoj-jain-md-mph/santhara-jain-way-of-death_b_8078786.html

Wednesday, Sept. 21: Recitation

Wednesday, Sept. 21: Film and Guest Speaker: Shekhar Hattangadi, "Santhara".

Reading (to be completed before class on Monday, Sept. 26).

"Shifting Standards of Review in Free Exercise Cases" and "Mapping Establishment Cause Cases," Witte, John, and Joel A Nichols. *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 4th ed., 121-125, 158-171.

"Shave and a haircut: Prisoner grooming and RLUIPA,"

<http://www.scotusblog.com/media/shave-and-a-haircut-prisoner-grooming-and-rluipa/>

Monday, Sept. 26: Lecture: What does it mean to "establish religion"? When can the government restrict religiously motivated actions/practices? How have the Courts defined religion?

Sex, Sexuality, Sexual Morality, and Religion

Reading (to be completed before recitation on Wednesday, Sept. 28):

Mark D. Regnerus, "Introduction" and "Chapter 1: Fashioning New Stories from Old Wisdom," in *Forbidden Fruit*. On Sakai.

Pope Paul VI: Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html

Look at and make some notes about what you conclude from the following charts depicting American attitudes toward various sex-and-sexuality questions:

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/117328/marriage.aspx> -- don't worry about the same-sex marriage statistics (yet); we'll get to that later. Study the charts that answer the questions: "How about sex between an unmarried man and woman?" "How about married men and women having an affair?" "How about divorce?" "How about having a baby outside of marriage?" "Do you approve of marriage between blacks and whites?"

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/183413/americans-continue-shift-left-key-moral-issues.aspx>

And for a more global view look at:

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/04/15/global-morality/table/premarital-sex/>

Wednesday, Sept. 28: Recitation

Wednesday, Sept. 28: Lecture: Attitudes toward premarital sex, birth control, single parenthood, and sex education.

Reading (To be completed before lecture on Monday, Oct. 3

Article about "moral relativism" in Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/moral-re/>, start at section 2: "Clarifying What Moral Relativism Is (and Is Not)" [about 30 pages total]

On why "moral relativism" is wrong: Chapter 1, "Abortion and Moral Argument," in Francis J. Beckwith, *Defending Life. A Moral and Legal Case against Abortion Choice*. On Sakai.

Stanley Fish, "Don't Blame Relativism," online:

<http://www2.gwu.edu/~ccps/rcq/Fish.pdf>

Monday, Oct. 3: Lecture: Religion, moral codes, moral relativism, and changing morality

Reading (to be completed before Recitation on Weds., Oct. 5):

Gary Leber, "We Must Rescue Them," in *The Ethics of Abortion, Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice*, 3rd ed., ed. Robert M. Baird and Stuart E. Rosenbaum, pp. 195-198. On Sakai.

Daniel C. Maguire, "A Catholic Theologian at an Abortion Clinic," in *Ethics of Abortion*, pp. 199-206. On Sakai.

Wednesday, October 5: Recitation

Wednesday, October 5: Lecture: Issues in the Abortion Debate. And Does the Abortion Debate Belong in a Unit on Sexuality?

Reading (to be completed before lecture on Monday, October 10):

A conservative evangelical Christian interpretation of the Christian scriptures related to homosexuality (you will hear the liberal Christian interpretation in the film on Monday, Oct. 10):

<http://reports.weforum.org/outlook-global-agenda-2015/global-leadership-and-governance/the-road-to-equality/>

A report on an American evangelical pastor helping formulate and pass anti-gay legislation in Uganda: <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/03/scott-lively-anti-gay-law-uganda>

A (pretty balanced) article on Islam and homosexuality:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/29/opinion/mustafa-akyol-what-does-islam-say-about-being-gay.html>

Monday, October 10: Lecture and part of the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So"

Social Inequality

Readings (to be completed before recitation on Wednesday, Oct. 12):

Sean McCloud, *Divine Hierarchies: Class in American Religion and Religious Studies* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 105–128. On Sakai.

Excerpts from *Laudato Si*. On Sakai.

“The Contradictory Pope,” <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/economic-intelligence/2015/09/28/pope-francis-critique-of-capitalism-contradicts-his-call-to-end-poverty>

Wednesday, October 12: Recitation:

Wednesday, October 12: Lecture: “Divine Hierarchies” Past & Present: Religious Approaches to Economic Justice in the U.S., part 1

Monday, October 17: Lecture: “Divine Hierarchies” Past & Present: Religious Approaches to Economic Justice in the U.S., part 2

Readings (to be completed before recitation on Wednesday, October 19):

“Revival in the Aisles,” chapter from Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 86–99. On Sakai.

Daniel L. Pals, "Religion as Alienation: Karl Marx," *Eight Theories of Religion*, 2 edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 123–37. On Sakai.

“The Secret,” <http://www.oprah.com/spirit/75/all>

Wednesday, October 19: Recitation:

Wednesday, October 19: Lecture: Religion, Capitalism and Inequality: Competing Theories, part 1

Monday, October 24: Lecture: Religion, Capitalism and Inequality: Competing Theories, part 2

Wednesday, Oct. 26: Midterm Examination. PRECEPTS WILL not MEET.

Monday, October 31, Wednesday, Nov. 2, and Monday, Nov. 7: 2 lectures, 1 recitation: American Presidential Election 2016.

Everything for this unit will be determined at a later date. Who knows what could be happening as election-day approaches?

Violence and Religion

Readings (to be completed before recitation on Weds. Nov. 9):

R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, Chapter 2: "Religion's Violent Accomplices" (pp. 57-80). On Sakai.

Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, chapter 1, "The Study of Religion in the Current Political Moment," parts 1-3 (pages 1-8). On Sakai.

Weds., Nov. 9: Recitation:

Weds., Nov. 9: Lecture: "Ethnoreligious" conflict in Myanmar, India, and elsewhere.

Readings (to be completed before lecture on Mon., Nov. 14):

Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 2nd ed., chapter 3: "Jihads, Jeremiads, and the Enemy Within." On Sakai.

Appleby, *Ambivalence*, chapter 3: "Violence as a Sacred Duty: Patterns of Religious Extremism," pages 81-91--not the whole chapter. On Sakai.

Mon., Nov. 14: Lecture: Religious "extremism" or "maximilism" across religious traditions.

Readings (to be completed before recitation on Weds., Nov. 16):

Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 2nd ed., Chapter 7: "Theses on Religion and Violence"; and Appendices A, B, C, and D. On Sakai.

Appleby, *Ambivalence*, chapter 3: "Violence as a Sacred Duty," pages 101-120--not the whole chapter. On Sakai.

Weds. Nov. 16: Recitation

Weds., Nov. 16: Lecture: Religious "fundamentalism" and violence.

Reading (to be completed before recitation on Monday, Nov. 21):

James W. Jones, *Blood that Cries out from the Earth: The Psychology of Religious Terrorism*, ch. 5: "The Role of the Individual: Toward a Clinical Psychology of Religious Terrorism," pp. 115-141. On Sakai.

Read and listen to: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/30/us/al-qaeda-islamic-state-jihad-fbi.html>

Mon., Nov. 21: Lecture: The Psychology of Religious Terrorism—what makes an individual commit extreme acts in the name of religion?

Thanksgiving break

Pluralism, America as a Christian Nation, Civil Religion

Readings (to be completed before lecture Monday, Nov. 28):

Charles Lippy, "From Consensus to Struggle" in Charles L. Cohen and Ronald L. Numbers, eds., *Gods in America: Religious Pluralism in the United States*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 297–319. On Sakai.

Excerpts from Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016). On Sakai.

Selections from David Barton's "Wallbuilders" website. On Sakai.

Monday, Nov. 28: Lecture: The Evolving Ideal of Religious Pluralism

Wednesday, Nov. 30: Recitation

Wednesday, Nov. 30: Lecture: Visions of Christian America, Past and Present

Readings (to be completed before lecture on Monday, Dec. 5):

“America’s Grace,” in Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (Simon & Schuster, 2012), 516–550. On Sakai.

Michael Schulson, “The Moral Tribalism of Contemporary Politics,”

<http://religionandpolitics.org/2016/08/15/the-moral-tribalism-of-contemporary-politics/>

Michael Lipka, “Why America’s Nones Left Religion Behind,”

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/24/why-americas-nones-left-religion-behind/>

Monday, Dec. 5: Lecture: Expanding Religious Diversity, the “Nones,” and Civil Religion in the 21st century U.S., part 1

Wednesday, Dec. 7, Recitation.

Wednesday, Dec. 7: Lecture: Expanding Religious Diversity, the “Nones,” and Civil Religion in the 21st century U.S., part 2

Monday, Dec. 12: To be determined.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Conclusion of the Course

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Recitation

Final Exam: Dec. 21, 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Standards for Grading Student Participation in Class Discussions

A:

A student who receives an **A** for participation in discussion typically comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An **A** discussant engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others, and consistently elevates the level of discussion.

B:

A student who receives a **B** for participation in discussion typically does not always come to class with questions about the readings in mind. A **B** discussant waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some discussants in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.

C:

A student who receives a **C** for participation attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant. S/he may also fail to show respect for the contributions of others, fail to listen carefully to others, or be discourteous in other ways.

D:

A student who fails to attend regularly and prepare adequately for discussion risks the grade of **D**

Or even F

[These standards are adapted only slightly from those officially adopted by the Princeton University Department of History in 1998. They were authored primarily by Andrew Isenberg (thanks, Drew).]