

Religion in American History / 840:319
Spring 2015
M | 10:55-1:55
LOR-131

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Course Description and Objectives: This course surveys the diverse manifestations of religion in American culture. Three main sets of questions guide the organization of the course:

- How has the religious landscape in the U.S. evolved over time? In particular, how have trends in politics, science, technology, gender relations, the economy, and immigration (to name a few) contributed to the growing diversity of religion in America?
- How have various religious traditions interacted in an American context, and how have these interactions shaped the religious ideas and rituals of Americans?
- What types of debates have emerged among scholars seeking to make sense of the pluralistic religious marketplace in the U.S.?

In answering these questions students will be introduced to the diversity of American religion and its relationship to other aspects of American culture. After taking this course, students should:

- gain a broad outline of the major figures and events in the history of religion in the U.S.
- be able to identify distinctive patterns and themes in the history of American religion, especially as they relate to the growing religious diversity in the U.S.
- become familiar with significant historiographical debates in the field of American religious history
- be introduced to some basic theoretical approaches to religion
- produce an original research paper based on both primary and secondary sources exploring the impact of historical trends discussed in class on evangelicalism in the United States

SAS Core Curriculum Goals

This course meets the following undergraduate SAS core curriculum goals associated with Historical Analysis (HST), Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd), and Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr). I will look for evidence of your mastery of these goals in the writing assignments, presentations, and exams.

- Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.
- Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors.
- (WCr) Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision.
- (WCd) Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

Course Texts (other readings are available on the internet or through Sakai):

Title: The Madonna of 115th Street, by Robert Orsi *(2nd or 3^d edition ok)
ISBN-10: 0300157525 ISBN-13: 978-0300157529
Publisher: Yale University Press

Title: The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America, by Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey
ISBN-10: 1469618842 ISBN-13: 978-1469618845
Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press

Title: Religion and American Culture: A Reader (2nd edition), edited by David Hackett
ISBN-10: 041594273X ISBN-13: 978-0415942737
Publisher: Routledge

Suggested Text:

Title: Religion in America (8th edition), by John Corrigan, Winthrop S. Hudson
ISBN-10: 013615817X ISBN-13: 978-0136158172
Publisher: Pearson

Course Requirements:

In Class Exams: There will be two in class exams (a mid-term and final exam). Make-up exams will only be permitted if arrangements are made with the instructor *prior to* the day of the test. The format of the exams will include multiple choice, short-answer, and mini-essay responses.

Essay: You will be required to write one main essay (9-10 pages/at least 2250 words). There will be a research component (you will need to utilize both primary and secondary sources). I will provide more specific guidelines in class, but you should be aware of the following:

General Requirements for the Essay: 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. **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 a hard copy of the paper. You will also lose 10% off your paper if you do not submit it electronically via Sakai on the due date.** Email submissions *will not* be accepted.

Peer-review process: You will need to 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.)

****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.** 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.

Visitation Response: Early on in the semester you will need to attend a religious service (please select a group that you are not very familiar with). You will then write a brief response (at least 500 words) that explores connections between what you observed and specific themes in American religion that we have discussed in class. The assignment will be factored into your quiz grade, and you should be prepared to talk about your experience during class discussions. I will provide more specific guidelines in class.

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is expected at all classes, and will be taken into account in your participation grade. If you expect to miss class, 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.

Grading System:

Main Essay: 30%	Final Exam: 25%	Participation: 10%
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.)

1/26 Introduction

2/2 Religious Exchange in North America: Native Americans and Spanish/French Missions

Please read excerpt from Axtell, *Invasion Within* (available on Sakai); and Hackett, Ch. 3.

2/2 Protestant Diversity and Revivalism in the American Colonies

Please read Hackett, Ch. 2; *Color of Christ* Intro and Ch. 1; and "The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable," by Jonathan Edwards (available on Sakai).

2/16 Religion, Revolution, and the State

Please read *Color of Christ* Ch. 2; readings on "Civil Religion"; and an excerpt from Hatch *The Democratization of American Christianity* (both available on Sakai).

2/23 New Visions in a New Republic

Please read *Color of Christ* Ch. 3; and Prothero, "Elder Brother" (available on Sakai).

3/2 The Native American Religious “Underground” / Slavery, the Civil War and Religion

Please read Hackett, Ch. 7; and *Color of Christ* Ch. 4 & 5.

***Visitation Response Due**

3/9 Exam #1

3/16 Spring Break, No class

3/23 Religion during the Gilded Age

Please read Orsi, Chs. 1-4; and Hackett Ch. 20.

3/30 Catholicism in America

Please read Orsi, Chs. 5-8.

***Paper drafts due for peer-review.**

4/6 Judaism in America

Please read Hackett, Ch. 12; and “Reform Judaism Readings” (available on Sakai)

***Peer-review responses due.**

4/13 Religion, Politics, and the Resurgence of Conservative Christianity in the late 20th Century

Please read Hackett Ch. 21; Lippy, “From Consensus to Struggle”; and an excerpt from Stephens and Giberson, *The Anointed* (both available on Sakai).

4/20 Islam in the U.S. / Black Religion in the 20th Century

Please read Hackett, Ch. 19; Bagby, “Isolate, Insulate, Assimilate” (available on Sakai); and *Color of Christ* Ch. 8.

4/27 West meets East: Asian traditions in the U.S.

Please read Hackett Ch. 25; and Barnes, “Multiple Meanings of Chinese Healing in the U.S.” (available on Sakai).

***Essays due.**

5/4 Summary and Conclusion of the Course

Please read *Color of Christ* Ch. 9 and epilogue

Final Exam Time: Monday, May 11th, 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.