

American Religious History

REL 241 | SPRING 2017

T/TR 12:30-1:45 PM | MANLY 207

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appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a survey of religious themes and movements in American culture from the period before European colonization to the present.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will analyze primary sources in American religious history.
2. Students will recall important figures and events in American religious history.
3. Students will critique historical narratives of religion in America.
4. Students will analyze constructions of “religion” in American history.

REQUIRED WEB SERVICES.

UA Box: <http://oit.ua.edu/oit/ua-box-welcome/uaboxinfo/>

All course readings beyond the required books will be in a shared Box folder.

Blackboard

I will be using the Blackboard grade book and you will turn your final essay in through Blackboard.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Griffith, R. Marie, ed. *American Religions: A Documentary History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Gaustad, Edwin and Leigh Schmidt. *The Religious History of America: The Heart of the American Story from Colonial Times to Today*. New York: HarperOne, 2004.

Blum, Edward J., and Paul Harvey. *The Color of Christ: The Son of God & the Saga of Race in America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.

READINGS

Readings are listed underneath each date on the schedule. Complete the readings before you come to class that day.

Readings under *American Religions* (AR) and *The Religious History of America* (RHA) come from the required book. The rest are posted in the course’s UA Box folder:

<https://alabama.box.com/v/REL241SP17>

I recommend you annotate your readings. **Write in your book. Write on the article. Make notes, underline, and highlight things.** If you choose not to print readings, use a PDF annotator such as [Foxit](#) (Windows) or [Preview](#) (Mac).

ASSIGNMENTS

3 Quizzes- 60% (3 X 20%)

The quizzes will be a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and fill-in-the-blank. The focus of the quizzes will be the **key events, figures, documents, and ideas from the readings**. Relevant content from **class discussions** is also testable material.

Final Synthetic Essay - 40%

Drawing on everything we have covered this semester, what do you think is the major theme, trope, pattern, conflict, or argument in the history of religion in America? To put it another way, how would you sum up the big story of religion in American history? Give three specific examples or case studies that support your claim, drawing on the secondary and primary sources we read this semester. Conclude your essay by explaining what your claim means for the future of religion in America and whether you see your claim holding true into the future.

Do not do any research or use any sources beyond what we read this semester. **The essay should be 1500-2000 words (5-7 pages) in length, double-spaced, in 12pt readable font.** You may use whatever citation style you are comfortable with as long as you are consistent and I can tell which of our course materials you are citing.

Essay Draft (15%)

Students will turn in a draft of their final essay that will be peer-edited by a classmate. I will provide a rubric for peer-editing. The essay draft grade is a combination of turning in a proper essay draft and a thorough review of your partner's essay. **A proper draft fulfills the required word count (1500-2000). An outline or part outline, part draft will not get full credit.** I will hand out a peer-review guide with requirements for the peer-review as the due date approaches.

Final Essay (25%)

The final draft of your essay after it has been discussed, peer-edited, and revised. It will be brilliant, don't worry.

GRADE SCALE

A+	95-100%	C	70-74
A	90-94	D+	65-69
B+	85-89	D	60-64
B	80-84	D-	50-59
C+	75-79	F	below 50

GROUND RULES

Attendance

You are expected to attend class. I will take attendance. Your attendance is expected unless there is an emergency outside of your control. You may miss up to 4 classes during the semester without penalty. **Every missed class after 4 will result in a 2-point reduction of your final grade.** I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences except in the case of the three quiz days (see below).

Excused Absences During Quizzes and Exams

Evidence of your legitimate absence must be presented to the professor in a timely fashion if you wish it not to count against you in the course. If you miss a quiz, you must contact the professor immediately to explain your absence; make-up quizzes are not an option in this course; instead, for quiz absences that the professor deems legitimate, the portion of the grade dedicated to the missed quiz will be completely transferred to the next quiz.

At this point, I'd like to try a little experiment to see how many of you have made it this far into the syllabus. Perform a Google image search for "Nature Boy Ric Flair," greatest pro wrestler ever. Email me your favorite photo from the results, writing, "Wooo!" in the subject line. You will receive 3 bonus points on your first quiz.

Late Work

I do not accept late work. I do give extensions in the case of extraordinary circumstances, but I expect that you will ask for the extension promptly. Do not email asking for an extension unless it is under extreme circumstances outside of your control (like a relative died over the weekend and you need to leave immediately. See technology policy regarding technological "emergencies.") I allow for make up exams in extraordinary circumstances and only with appropriate documentation that a student missed the exam for reasons outside of their control.

Technology policy

Let's face it: technology breaks. Servers go down. Transfers time out. Files become corrupt. The list goes on and on. These are not considered emergencies. They are part of the normal production process. An issue you may have with technology is no excuse for late work. You need to protect yourself by managing your time and backing up your work.

Turn your cell phone on silent when you come into class. Do not text in class. If you Yik Yak in class you must only say nice things about me.

If you bring a laptop to class, use it for class. I reserve the right to ask anyone with a laptop or tablet to use it to Google something or lookup something to amend our class. At times I will ask that we put all technology away so we can focus on one another.

Accommodations

Students with a documented physical and/or learning disability should contact the professor outside of class time as soon as possible to review documentation and

discuss accommodations. Also, students should familiarize themselves with the Office of Disability Services at <http://www.ods.ua.edu>.

In Case of Emergency/Weather

UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at www.ua.edu. In the event of an emergency, students should consult this site for further directions. In the event of an emergency, I will use Blackboard to provide additional course information.

Honor Code

Academic misconduct is a serious offense and is taken very seriously at UA and in the class. Suspected cases of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. You are bound by UA's [Honor Code](#) in this class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**1/12 Introductions****1/17 “Religion” and “America”**

Catherine Albanese, “Introduction: An Elephant in the Dark”

Thomas Tweed, “Expanding the Study of U.S. Religion: Reflections on the State of a Subfield”

BRINGING “RELIGION” TO AMERICA**1/19 Spanish Colonies**

The Religious History of America (RHA) Chapter 1

“Franciscans in New Mexico”

American Religions: “The Bull *Sublimus Deus*” (2-3)

1/24 Puritans in New England

American Religions: John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (16-19)

Increase Mather, “Sleeping at Sermons is a Great and Dangerous Evil” (20-21)

Anne Hutchinson, “The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson” (37-63)

Roger Williams, “Letter to the Town of Providence on the Limits of Religious Liberty” (75-76)

1/26 The Middle Colonies

RHA Chapter 4

American Religions: William Penn, “A Persuasive to Moderation to *Church Dissenters*, in Prudence and Conscience” (76-80)

“The Petition of the Philadelphia Synagogue to Council of Censors of Pennsylvania” (148-150)

1/31 The Southern Colonies

RHA Chapters 2 and 5

Virginia Documents

North Carolina & South Carolina Documents

American Religions: Charles Woodmason, “1 Cor. 14 v. 40 Let All Things Be Done Decently and in Order” (109-114)

2/2 Native and Colonial Americans

American Religions: Mary Rowlandson, “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson” (63-73)

William Penn, “Letter to the Indians” (73-75)

David Brainerd, “From *Journal*” (138-148)

2/7 Colonial Slaves

Jon Butler, “Slavery and the African Spiritual Holocaust”

American Religions: Phillis Wheatley (121-127)

2/9 Review Day

2/14 Quiz 1

THE BOUNDARIES OF “RELIGION” IN AMERICA

2/16 “Religion” in a New Republic

RHA Chapter 6

American Religions: Thomas Jefferson, “A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom” (150-152)
James Madison, “Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments” (152-156)

2/21 National Revivalism

RHA Chapter 7

American Religions: Alexis de Toqueville, “from *Democracy in America*” (245-262)

2/23 The Black Church

Albert Raboteau, “The Independent African Church Movement”

American Religions: Jarena Lee, “from *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee*” (197-213)

2/28 Slave Religion

Raboteau, “‘The Invisible Institution’: Religion Among the Slaves”

Nat Turner, “from *The Confessions of Nat Turner*”

American Religion: Frederick Douglas, “from *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*” (213-220)

3/2 Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism

Sydney Ahlstrom, “The Expansion of the Roman Catholic Church” & “Anti-Catholicism and the Nativist Movement”

Nativism Documents

3/7 Review Day

3/9 Quiz 2

SPRING BREAK

“RELIGION,” PROTESTANTISM, AND PLURALISM

3/21 The Protestant Establishment

Ahlstrom, “The Protestant Establishment and the New Nativism”

Reynolds v. United States

American Religions:

Josiah Strong, "from *Our Country*" (365-382)

3/23 "World Religions": in America

Richard Hughes Seager, "General Introduction" from *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism*

United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind

Asian Exclusion Act

American Religions: Mabel Potter Daggett, "The Heathen Invasion of America" (384-389)

James Freeman Clarke, "The Ten Religions and Christianity" (389-402)

Swami Vivekananda, "Hinduism as a Religion" & "Farewell" (402-411)

3/28 Religion in the "American Way of Life"

RHA Chapter 15

American Religions:

Will Herberg, "from *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*" (517-533)

3/30 The Race of Religion in America

American Religions: Howard Thurman, "What We May Learn from India" & "Howard and Sue Bailey Thurman Meet with Mahatma Gandhi" (492-502)

Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" (502-514)

Malcolm X, "Letters from Abroad" (514-517)

4/4 "Religion" in Public

RHA Chapter 16

Employment Division v. Smith

Religious Freedom Restoration Act

Burwell v. Hobby Lobby (syllabus only)

American Religions: U.S. Department of Education, "Religious Expression in Public Schools" (624-627)

4/6 Pluralism, Protestantism, Nationalism

RHA Chapter 18

American Religions: Franklin Graham, "from *The Name*" (602-605)

"Letter for Franklin Graham from the Council on American-Islamic Relations" (605-606)

4/11 The New Age, the Spiritual But Not Religious, and the Nones

Albanese, "Fundamentals of the New Age: Present-time Pluralism and Postpluarlism"

American Religion: Robert N. Bellah, from *Habits of the Heart* (609-624)

4/13 "American Religion"

Albanese, "The Public, the Civil, and the Culture of the Center"

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Tracy Fessenden, "The Objects of American Religious Studies"

4/18 Review Day

4/20 Quiz 3

**4/25 *The Color of Christ* discussion
Essay draft due**

4/27 Peer Review Day

Final Essay Due on Tuesday May 2nd via Blackboard