



Religion and Science

REL 120-001 | Spring 2021 | 3 Credit Hours

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Office: Presidents Hall (Manly Hall), 315B

Where we meet: Presidents Hall (PRH), 207 and on the interwebs

Ways to Reach Me

Come to office hours (due to COVID-19, please email in advance):

M (virtual only): 2-5pm

Th (virtual or in person): 11am-1pm

Or you can chat with me via Google Hangouts - jeri.elizabeth@gmail.com

How this Course Helps You Graduate

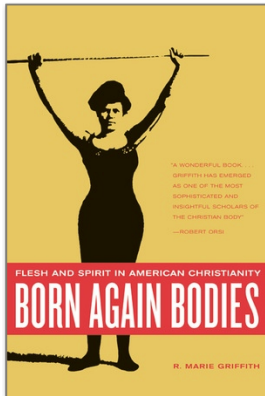
This course fulfills a humanities core requirement.

Course Description

Introduction to the ways in which “science” and “religion” have been defined and have historically interacted, with a focus on health and technology.

For this course, we are going to use three historical examples to consider ways people have thought about health, the body, and human flourishing: the Battle Creek Sanitarium and Seventh-day Adventism; New Thought and Christian Science; and Eugenics. For each of these movements, we will trace how ideas about health were shaped by both religious beliefs and the science of the day.

Required Texts



R. Marie Griffith, *Born Again Bodies*. University of California Press (2004) - Available at the University Bookstore.

Additional readings available through **Blackboard**.

Course Objectives

This course will

- Introduce students to major themes in the academic study of religion and the history of religion and science.
- Apply that knowledge to questions of health and human flourishing, with examples drawn from the 19th U.S.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course is structured to teach the following:

- Students will **identify** and **discuss** religion and science as critical terms in the study of culture.
- Students will **identify** and **describe** leading thinkers, texts, practices, and historical developments in American health reform movements.
- Students will **contextualize** and **interpret** primary source material related to health in American religious history.
- Students will **identify** and **examine** how historical and contemporary authors use the language of religion and science to identify, persuade, justify, intervene in discussions of health and human flourishing.

How to Succeed in this Class

1. Come to class, arrive on time (virtually or in person), and be prepared to engage with the topic.
2. Check your email regularly. I will use email to contact you about grades, changes to assignments, updates to the schedule, or any COVID-related changes.
3. Complete the readings and the journal entries.
4. Contribute to discussion. I reserve the right to call on you.
5. Complete all of the assignments. Revise and resubmit if you are unhappy with your grade.
6. Contact me early and often if you have questions or run into trouble.

Software

For this course, we are using the software **Omeka** to practice working with historical evidence and creating historical arguments about religion. Our course site is: <https://adhc.lib.ua.edu/rel120/>. Over the course of the semester we will use this site to develop collections of historical artifacts and present historical interpretations. All other work will be managed via **Blackboard**.

Assignments & Exams

Reading Responses: 3Q Reading Journals

Using the Journal feature in Blackboard, for each class period that has an assigned reading, you'll submit a reading journal entry on blackboard that includes: a rich **quote**, a discussion **question** for the class, and a **quandary** that the reading left with you.

Your journal entries are due an hour before the class begins.

Item Descriptions

Your first Omeka assignment is to fill in the metadata for two items. We will go over this assignment in more detail during the course and the requirements will be distributed via Blackboard.

The item description submission dates are:

February 25

March 16

A link to the item you completed is due in Blackboard before class on the due date.

Midterm Exam

You will have a take-home written exam due **March 4**.

You will receive the exam questions at the end of class on Tuesday and will have until **noon on Thursday, March 4 to submit your written response via Blackboard.**

Item Reflection

The item reflection builds on the item descriptions and asks you to reflect further on the context of the primary source and use the readings of the course to identify and interpret the claims being made. You will write the reflection essay on one of the items you filled in the metadata for. We will go over this assignment in more detail during the course and the requirements will be distributed via Blackboard.

The item reflection submission date is: **April 1**

A link to your item reflection is due in Blackboard by midnight on the due date.

Media Analysis Paper

Your final assignment is a 800-1000 word essay that analyzes a piece of media on religion and science using the theoretical ideas of the course. This could be a news story, advertisement, popular book, diet program, video, podcast -- pretty much anything is fair game. We will go over the assignment in more detail during the course and the requirements will be distributed via Blackboard.

Submission dates:

April 20 | Draft due at the beginning of class for peer review

April 27 | Final draft due (midnight)

Your final draft is due in Blackboard by midnight on the due date.

Grading

1. Your **reading reflections** will be graded for completion and will receive a - or a ✓. The overall grade will be computed based on the number of reflections you successfully complete.

95% of reflections completed ✓		50 points
85% of reflections completed ✓		40 points
75% of reflections completed ✓		20 points
65% of reflections completed ✓		10 points
< 65% of reflections completed		0 points

2. Each **item description** will be graded for completion and receive a -, ✓, or +.

+ Excellent. Exceeds the requirements		110 points
✓ Good. Meets the requirements		100 points
- Insufficient. Doesn't meet requirements		50 points
0 Not submitted		0 points

3. Your **midterm, item reflection, and analysis paper** will be graded for completion and receive a -, ✓, ✓+ or +.

+ Excellent. Assignment exceeded many of the requirements		200 points
✓+ Very Good. Assignment meets the requirements		180 points
✓ Sufficient. Assignment meets some of the requirements		150 points
- Insufficient. Assignment does not meet the requirements		100 points
0 Not submitted		0 points

4. Your **peer review responses** will be graded for completion and will receive a - or a ✓.

✓ Good. Meets the requirements		50 points
- Insufficient. Doesn't meet requirements		0 points

5. Attendance

Attend class regularly with 3 or fewer unexcused absences | 100 points
Have more than 3 unexcused absences (with no communication) | 0 points

* If you need to miss class because you are sick or because of a major life event, please contact me as soon as possible. These are likely excused absences.

Revise and resubmit

If you are unhappy with the grade on one of your assignments, you will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit. However, you must submit your work by the deadline to have this option.

Revisions must be resubmitted within one week of receiving your grade. Please let me know if you plan to revise an assignment.

“Do-Over”

You each have two chances to hit the “do-over” button on your work this semester. If you submit an assignment late that needs to be revised, you can request to use one of your “do-overs”. If you need an additional pass on a reading reflection, you can use a “do-over.” If you need to skip more than three classes, you can use a “do-over” to miss without penalty.

You can also earn “do-over” opportunities by attending extra credit events (more on these to come.)

Final Grades

There are 1020 total points available.

A+		1000+
A		999-900
B+		899-880
B		879-800
C+		799-780
C		779-700
D+		699-680
D		679-600
F		< 600

Elasticity Statement

I will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, I reserve the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, I will notify you in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for you to adjust to any changes.

Course Expectations

Respect for Material, Subjects, and Peers

We will be discussing topics related that may present viewpoints that are counter to your personal beliefs or that ask you to consider alternative explanations for things you value. This may be difficult and uncomfortable. I ask that you accept that tension and allow yourself to be challenged.

Additionally, our topics of study may result in some uncomfortable conversations. I expect you to be civil and polite in your communication, both in class and outside of it. Treat all those you interact with, both historical actors and your peers, with respect.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance and participation in the course discussion is a central component of the learning experience of this course. You have **three unexcused absences** that you can use without question.

Beyond that, please contact me if you need to miss class due to illness or other unavoidable event.

Late Work

The course work is designed to help you prepare for class and reinforce the discussion sections. I strongly discourage late work. Additionally, you must submit your work on time to have the opportunity to revise.

Please email me in cases of illness or other unavoidable event.

COVID-19

With the number of continued new infections in the state and elsewhere in the country, along with UA's response (e.g., mandated social distancing in all classrooms, thereby significantly reducing each classroom's capacity), we will begin this Hybrid course in a remote fashion.

Because we are too large a group to all meet in our assigned room at the same time, starting in February, half the class will be invited to meet in PRH 207, while the rest joins via Zoom, on a rotating basis. Think of this as practice for working with a distributed team. We will discuss how this will work at the end of January. Please be advised that this plan is contingent on recommendations from the University and public health officials.

If you do come in person, you are required to wear your mask at all times (no eating or drinking exceptions. You can step out of the room if you really need to take a drink.) If this is a problem, you will be required to complete the course remotely.

All students are required to have masks for in-person meetings and also sufficient technological resources and competencies to participate fully in any remote class. When doing so, cameras are expected to be on, so please select your Zoom location wisely.

You are also welcome to come to my office hours on Thursdays or to schedule a tutorial session with me if you need additional, in person, opportunities in order to be successful.

University and College Policies

Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Academic Misconduct Policy provided in the Online Catalog.

Statement on Disability Accommodations

The University of Alabama is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and need reasonable accommodation(s) to participate in this class, contact the Office of Disability Services (or ODS; 205-348-4285, ods@ua.edu, Houser Hall 1000, www.ods.ua.edu) as soon as possible. If you have been approved to receive accommodations through ODS, please meet with me during office hours or by appointment to submit your accommodation letter and discuss how accommodations can be implemented in this course.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website.

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest Severe Weather Guidelines in the Online Catalog.

UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

Statement on COVID-19

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, specific health and safety standards are in place to minimize exposure and community spread on campus. In the interest of your health and safety and that of all UA students, faculty and staff, the University reserves the right to change the mode of instruction or schedule of instruction at any time, based upon prevailing public health and other guidance. While the method of delivery may change, educational instruction and opportunities will continue. As such, the University will not provide a refund of tuition, in whole or in-part, based on any such changes. Detailed information on changes in format or schedule can be found at studentaccounts.ua.edu and financialaid.ua.edu.

All students must be familiar with and abide by the requirements outlined in the UA Return Plan | UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan. Students must (1) wear a mask or face covering at all times while participating in face-to-face class; (2) adhere to social distancing standards; and (3) comply with all other health and safety restrictions. If a student refuses to comply with the requirements, the student will be asked to leave the class and reported for a conduct violation. Unless a student has an exemption from the requirement to wear a face covering, (more information can be found at ods.ua.edu/covid-19-disability/), the student will be reported to Student Life for further disciplinary action. More information on these requirements and UA Healthcheck system and screening can be found at healthinfo.ua.edu/returnplan. You are expected to visit the site and comply with all noted requirements related to in-person class attendance.

Schedule

Week 1 | Welcome

Thursday, January 14

Goals:

- Discuss goals of the course
- Go over assignments and schedule
- Discuss COVID plans and create rotation

Week 2 | What's in a name? Religion and Science as Critical Terms

Tuesday, January 19

Question: What do we mean by critical terms?

Read before class:

- McCutcheon, "What's in a name?"

Thursday, January 21

Question: What is "science"?

Read before class:

- Kuhn, "The Route to Normal Science"

Week 3 | What's in a name? Religion and Science as Critical Terms

Tuesday, January 26

Question: So what is "religion"?

Read before class:

- McCutcheon, "The History of 'Religion'"

Thursday, January 28

Question: But aren't religion and science in conflict?

Read before class:

- Russell, "The Conflict of Science and Religion"
- Numbers, "Aggressors, Victims, & Peacemakers"

Week 4 | Historical Case Studies: Health in 19th Century America

Tuesday, February 2

Question: What is Health Reform?

Read before class:

- Green, *Fit for America*, ch. 1

Thursday, February 4

Question: Why bodies? Why health?

Read before class:

- “Body” - <https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/body/>
- Douglas, “Secular Defilement”

Week 5 | Interlude

Tuesday, February 9

Question: How do historians study religion?

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 1-21

Thursday, February 11

Methods: Items in Omeka

Read before class:

- https://omeka.org/classic/docs/Content/Working_with_Dublin_Core/
- Additional reading TBA

Week 6 | Controlling the body

Tuesday, February 16

Question: What was the Battle Creek Sanitarium and who are the Seventh-day Adventists?

Read before class:

- Watch “The Kellogg Brothers” (45 minutes)
- Butler, “From Millerism to Seventh-day Adventism”

Thursday, February 18

Question: What do they mean by health? How does one achieve health?

Read before class:

- Green, chapter 2

Week 7 | Controlling the body

Tuesday, February 23

Question: Why does health matter?

Read before class:

- “Importance of the Health Reform Work”

Thursday, February 25

First item due

Question: How might technology help one achieve health?

Read before class:

- Green, chapter 3
- Look through the ads in *Good Health* for March 1888. Choose one that you find interesting or curious.

Week 8 | Midterm

Tuesday, March 2

Review Discussion

Thursday, March 4

Take-home midterm due at noon.

Week 9 | Interlude

Tuesday, March 9

Question: How do historians consider context?

Read before class:

- Wineburg, “Historians Meet Thanksgiving”
- Historical Thinking Chart - <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/historical-thinking-chart>

Thursday, March 11

Method: Creating an exhibit page in Omeka

Read before class:

- <https://omeka.org/classic/docs/Plugins/ExhibitBuilder/>
- Additional reading TBA

Week 10 | Transcending the Body

Tuesday, March 16

Second item due

Question: What is Christian Science and New Thought

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 69-91, 108-9

Thursday, March 18

Question: What do they mean by health? And how does one achieve health?

Read before class:

- Eddy, *Science and health with Key to the Scriptures*, chapter 11
(<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044069750495&view=1up&seq=359>)

Week 11 | Transcending the Body

Tuesday, March 23

Question: Why does health matter?

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 110-1; 140-159

Thursday, March 25

Question: What is natural?

Read before class:

- Albanese, "Physic and Metaphysic in Nineteenth-Century America"

Week 12 | Interlude

Tuesday, March 30

Work day

I am available to help troubleshoot your item reflections.

Thursday, April 1

Item reflection due

Question: Phrenology: Religion? Science?

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 57-68

Week 13 | Policing the Body

Tuesday, April 6

Question: What is Social Darwinism and Eugenics?

Read before class:

- Durst, *Eugenics and Protestant Social Reform*, Introduction

Thursday, April 8

Question: How is personal and social health achieved?

Read before class:

- Official proceedings of the National Conference on Race Betterment (1914), pp. 5-22

Week 14 | Policing the Body

Tuesday, April 13

Question: Who can achieve health?

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 131-140; 225-238

Thursday, April 15

Question: The long legacy of American Eugenics

Read before class:

- DenHoed, "The Forgotten Lessons of the American Eugenics Movement"
(<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-forgotten-lessons-of-the-american-eugenics-movement>)

Week 15 | Conclusions

Tuesday, April 20

Media analysis draft due

In class peer review

Thursday, April 22

Why do ideas about health and bodies matter?

Read before class:

- *Born Again Bodies*, pp. 239-250

Week 16 | Finals Week

Final draft of media analysis paper due **April 27th at Midnight**