

Gender and Religion



What does gender have to do with religion anyway? Explore a variety of theories, positions and cases studies drawn from world religions and contemporary events. This course is also meant to be explorative of your own positionality and encourages each student to be informed in a meaningful way.

Instructor: Priyanka Ramlakhan

Office hours: By appointment only (T 10:30 – 12:00 pm / TR 10:30 – 12:00 pm)

Class meeting times: Tuesday 8:30 - 10:25am (Period 2-3) / Thursday 9:35 - 10:25am (Period 3)

Course Objective & Goals

This course will explore the many ways that religious traditions have shaped and continue to shape intricate notions of gendered identities. Students will be introduced to important theories related to the construction of religion and gender. A significant part of this course is dedicated to gendered elements within sacred texts, rituals, oral traditions and in the lived context of religion. It will further examine issues such as purity, pollution, and auspiciousness, along with assumptions of religious authority connected to gender. Students will practice thinking broadly across theoretical, religious, geographical, and embodied ideas of gender. Students do not require previous coursework or familiarity with religious studies or gender studies, however, this course will prepare students for future coursework in these areas.

Required texts: There are no required textbooks for this course. Course readings will consist mostly of articles that will be provided by the Instructor.

Course Materials:

A selection of course materials will be provided on ELearning <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Learning Schedule (Check ELearning for the most updated schedule)	
Tue, Jan 8	Introduction to the course
Thurs, Jan 10	The Academic Study of Religion
Tue, Jan 15	Theories of Religion: Peter Berger - The Sacred Canopy Pals – Theory of Religion Introduction
Thurs, Jan 17	Gender theory, terms and categories: Collins – Toward a New Vision
Tue, Jan 22	Gender and Social constructions: Religion and Film: Melanie Wright 1-30; Mia Lovheim – Introduction Mia Lovheim chapter 1

Thurs, Jan 24	Gender as a Performance
Tue, Jan 29	Gender and Authority in Hindu Traditions: Graceful Guru - Introduction Joyce Flukeiker - Amma Allocco
Thurs, Jan 31	Political goddess campaigns: 1) Nationalism & Domestic Violence
Tues, Feb 5	Gender and Islam: Aysha Hidayatullah – “Islamic Conceptions of Sexuality” from Sexuality and the World’s Religions (Eds. Machacek and Wilcox) Hoodfar – The Veil in Their Minds and on Their Heads
Thurs, Feb 7	Persepolis
Tue, Feb 12	Gender and Christian Traditions: Cavendish – The Vatican and the Laity: Diverging Paths in Catholic Understanding of Sexuality Race & Gender: Grant - White Woman’s Christ Black Woman’s Jesus
Thurs, Feb 14	Gender, Religion and Hair: Conceptions of Hair in religious traditions (lecture) Pentecostalism and Hair
Tue, Feb 19	Gender and Judaic traditions
Thurs, Feb 21	Reading TBD
Tue, Feb 26	Colonialism and Archives: Ann Stoller Art and Visual Media
Thurs, Feb 28	Harn Museum Visit
	Spring Break!
Tue, Mar 12	Nature, Gender and Religion
Thurs, Mar 14	Continued
Tue, Mar 19	Religion, Gender and Gainesville: The Catholic Worker Hare Krishnas Buddhist Temple & Monastery (Includes field visits)
Thurs, Mar 21	Continued
Tue, Mar 26 –	New Age Religion: Sarah Pike – (ch 6) “All Acts of Love and Pleasure Are My Rituals” Indigenous Traditions: Cordero & Currans: Gender, Sexuality, & the Balance of Power in Native American World
Thurs, Mar 28	Native American Religion: Tohe – There is No Word for Feminism in My Language
Tue, April 2	Religion and LGBTQ+ communities: Wilcox - Innovation in Exile Same sex marriage readings
Thurs, April 4	Gender and Lived Experiences
Tue, April 9	Religion in the News! (Class presentations & discussion)
Thurs, April 11	TBD
Tue, April 16	Class Presentations

Thurs, April 18	Course Themes: Review
Tue, April 23	Independent research
Thurs, April 25	Reading day, no class

Grading & Assignments (Check ELearning for most updated criterion and deadlines)

15% Attendance / Participation
30% Response papers
20% Religion in the News & Digital Media assignments
35% Fieldwork Project

Class Expectations

- Students are expected to be on time to all class meetings. Attendance and class participation will be counted as part of your grade. Participation includes reading all assigned material prior to the start of class and a demonstration of reflection on the material that includes (but is not limited to) 1) raising questions in class 2) discussing thoughtful reflections on readings/lectures 3) responding to instructor and peers' questions.
- Students are expected to be respectful, courteous display professionalism in their communication and dealings with the instructor, students, invited class guests and during fieldwork trips.
- Constructive dialogue: Because we are dealing with sensitive topics, it is imperative that everyone maintain respect for all perspectives discussed.
- Late policy: NO late work will be accepted. Exceptions will only be made for students who have an excused absence with accompanying documentation.
- Cellphones may not be used during class. Laptops are useful tools that may be used in class for notes, but students must use the honor code and utilize personal computers/tablets for academic use only.
- The instructor and students are expected to honor participant's request to be addressed by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Active Learning Strategies

This course will engage students through controversial/ethical discussion topics, case studies, class discussions, out-of-class assignments, and group work. The course is heavy on the reading in the front end so as to provide basic tools for our discussions later in the course. As a result of the active learning methods that will be employed during class time, it is *imperative* that you read all materials before attending class. Although I will be lecturing every week for some portion of the time, I will not be covering every detail of the readings. The task is for you to come to class prepared to learn *beyond* the readings.

Email Policy

I am very prompt with responding to emails, but it is important that we all maintain a level of respect for each other regarding expectations for replies and emails. I generally do not answer any emails between 8PM-10AM each day. Please keep this in mind as you study for your exams and write your assignments. Most students leave questions until the last minute: do not let this happen to you.

Academic Honesty

The university's honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc. Suggested wording: "UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of

Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class."

Disability Statement

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Technical Issues:

For technical support, please first contact the Help Desk <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> and provide the Instructor with the ticket number.

Course Evaluations

A statement informing students of the online course evaluation process such as: "Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>."

Campus Resources:

Campus Resources: Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student. Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161. University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/> Academic Resources E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>. Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/> Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/> Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honorcode-student-conduct-code/> On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

University Policy requirements related to class attendance, make-up exams, assignments etc.: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
Grades and Grading Policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

This syllabus is subject to change at any time per the instructor's discretion and changes that arise in the pacing of the course throughout the semester. Instructor will send written communication to students regarding syllabus changes through email and/or ELearning as far advance as possible. Please regularly check instructor correspondences and course webpage for updated information.