



## **REL 3160: RELIGION AND SCIENCE**

Summer B 2018

2:00-3:15 pm, MTWRF

Anderson Hall, Room 101

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1-2 pm and by appointment

### **Description**

This class examines the relationship between religion, science, and philosophy in different religious traditions, historical and contemporary. The course does not require any previous training in religious studies or in the specific topics addressed. However, as an intermediate level course, it will include intensive reading and writing, including critical analysis of complex materials and issues. As a Gordon Rule class, further, it will require 2000 words of writing outside of class (essay assignments, detailed below).

### **Required Books**

1. Gary B. Ferngren, ed., *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002; ISBN 9780801870385)
2. Mary Midgley, *Evolution as a Religion: Strange Hopes and Stranger Fears* (Routledge, 2002; ISBN 9780415278331)
3. Aaron Mackler, *Introduction to Jewish and Catholic Bioethics: A Comparative Analysis* (Georgetown, 2003; ISBN 0878401466)

Additional readings (articles and chapters) will be available on the course Canvas website

### **Code of Conduct**

*Code of Conduct:* On the first day of class, students will develop a code of conduct to guide student discussions and behavior in class. This code will be posted on the class website. For information on how we will develop the code of conduct, see [http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/handbook/content/technique\\_code\\_of\\_conduct](http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/handbook/content/technique_code_of_conduct)

### **Writing and Attendance Requirements**

1. Attendance and participation in class discussions, including timely and close reading of all assigned texts (10% of final grade)
2. In-class exam on historical perspectives, in class on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. 20% of final grade
3. Short essay (4 pages, min. 1000 words) on scientific revolution, due Saturday, July 21 by midnight (via email); bring print copy to class on Monday, July 23. 25% of final grade.
4. Short essay (4 pages, min. 1000 words) on evolution, due Wednesday, Aug. 2 by midnight (via email); bring print copy to class on Thursday, Aug. 3. 25% of final grade.
4. Modular debate on contemporary ethical issues, to be held in class on Aug 10. Every student will write a short (1-2 page) position paper in addition to participating in the debate. I will hand out detailed instructions, but for information “Modular Debate” see [http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/handbook/content/technique\\_modular\\_debate](http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/handbook/content/technique_modular_debate)  
The debate paper and participation will be 20% of your final grade.

### **Assignment Policies**

In addition to the code of conduct, here are some baseline rules regarding assignments:

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Place all papers in my mailbox in the Religion Department, 107 Anderson Hall. DO NOT slip them under the door or leave them on the door of my office, the main department office, or the teaching assistant’s office. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.
2. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may take an exam early or receive an extension on an exam or essay assignment *only* in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
3. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing any assignment or requirement.

4. *Attendance and Participation*: Class attendance is required. The instructor will *not* provide notes or discuss material that has already been covered for students who miss class or arrive late, barring extraordinary circumstances.

5. *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 university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.

### **Resources for Students**

1. *Accommodation for Disabilities*: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

2. *Counseling Resources*: Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

3. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

4. *Writing assistance*: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a writing studio which can help you write better papers! Please make use of this excellent resource. More info at <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

### **Schedule**

**\*\* PLEASE NOTE:** There may be changes in dates and assignments as the semester proceeds. Students will be informed of any changes and will be responsible for having assignments completed by the updated due dates.

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>
Mon 7/2	Introduction to the class	Develop our Code of Conduct

### I. Historical Origins and Religious Perspectives

T 7/3	Conflict or complexity?	Ferngren, Ch 1
W 7/4	Independence Day holiday, no class	
Th 7/5	Greece	Ferngren, Ch. 2 (Aristotle)
F 7/6	Judaism	Freudenthal, "From Arabic to Hebrew: The Reception of the Greco-Arab Sciences in Hebrew"
M 7/9	Christianity	Ferngren, Ch. 3 and 4 (early and Medieval Christianity)
T 7/10	Islam	Ferngren, Ch. 5
W 7/11	S. Asian religions	Engler, "Science vs. Religion in Classical Ayurveda"
Th 7/12	Reading day	
F 7/13	In-class exam	

### III. The Western Scientific Revolution

M 7/16	Scientific Revolution: Introduction	Ferngren, Ch. 6 and 7 (Copernicus and Galileo)
T 7/17	Engineering the Renaissance	Guest lecturer: Prof. Mark Law
W 7/18	The Scientific Revolution	Ferngren, Ch. 8 (Protestantism)
Th 7/19	The Scientific Revolution	Ferngren, Ch. 9 (Newton and Natural Theology)
F 7/20	Critiques of the scientific revolution	Merchant, <i>The Death of Nature</i> , Ch. 9-10

\* First short essay due via email by midnight on Saturday, 7/21; bring paper copy to class on Monday 7/23

### IV. Evolution and Religion, Evolutionary Perspectives on Religion

M 7/23	Darwin and Evolution	Ferngren, Ch. 13 and 14
Tu 7/24	<i>On the Origin of Species</i>	<i>On the Origin of Species</i> , Ch. 3-4
W 7/25	Religious responses to Darwin	Ferngren, Ch. 16, 18, and 19

Th 7/26	Evolution as religion	Midgley, Ch. 1-6
F 7/27	Evolution as religion	Midgley, Ch. 7-12
M/7/30	Evolution as religion	Midgley, Chapters 13-18
T 8/1	Evolutionary theories of Religion	J. Barrett, "Cognitive Science and Religion"; Bering, "The Cognitive Psychology of Belief in the Supernatural"; and Cohen, et al., "Common Criticisms of the Cognitive Science of Religion"
W 8/2	Reading day to complete second short essay; due at midnight tonight by email; Bring print copy to class on Thursday.	

#### V. Contemporary Ethical Issues

Th 8/4	Introduction to Bioethics	Mackler, Ch. 1-2 Also: in class today, we will select a topic for the debate and choose groups and stakeholders, and assign individual topics for position papers.
F 8/5	Euthanasia and end of life	Mackler, Ch. 3-4
M 8/7	Abortion and reproduction	Mackler, Ch. 5-6
T 8/8	Health Care Access	Mackler, Ch. 7 and conclusion
W 8/9	Environmental ethics	Ferngren, Ch. 27 and Leopold "The Land Ethic"
Th. 8/10	Meet with groups to prepare for modular debate	
F 8/11	Modular debate in class. Hand in copy of position paper at start of class.	

#### **Grading Scale (Letter, Percentage, GPA)**

A	93-100 (4.0)	B+	87-89 (3.33)	C+	77-79 (2.33)
A-	90-93 (3.67)	B	84-86 (3.0)	C	74-76 (2.0)
		B-	80-83 (2.67)	C-	70-73 (1.67)
D+	67-69 (1.33)	D-	60-63 (0.67)		
D	64-66 (1.0)	F	Below 60 (0)		

*Please Note:* A "C-" will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, General Education, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit. You must receive a "C" or better in order to receive that credit.

## **Objectives and Goals**

### General Education Humanities Objectives

1. To become familiar with diverse approaches to the study of religion and science, including those that assume conflict, integration, and separation between the two fields;
2. To learn about and discuss the relations between religion and specific scientific themes, including evolution, cognitive neuroscience, cosmology, and scientific method;
3. To improve students' ability to discuss and analyze theoretical claims and supporting arguments; and
4. To improve students' ability to express, in writing and orally, their own analytical arguments.

### General Education Student Learning Outcomes

1. To learn the history, underlying theory and methodologies used to analyze the relations between religion and science, as an interdisciplinary field of study drawing on natural and physical sciences, religious studies, and philosophy;
2. To identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape scholarly thinking about religion and science, from both scientific and humanistic perspectives;
3. To approach these issues from diverse disciplinary and theoretical perspectives; and
4. To communicate the information and analysis developed in this course in a clear, organized, and effective way in written work and in class discussions.

### Other Student Learning Outcomes

1. To learn about and analyze the importance of the religion and science debate in contemporary society;
2. To understand the ways different approaches to this topic have entered into contemporary cultural and scholarly debates;
3. To read and analyze prominent thinkers in the field and to compare not only their substantive arguments but also the ways their disciplinary, methodological, and ideological backgrounds have shaped their thinking; and
4. To craft, both in writing and orally, well-informed critical analyses of the issues at hand, with a comparative perspective based on cumulative reading and comprehension of all course materials.