



**REL 4141/RLG 5195:  
RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

Spring 2019

Tues. 5-6<sup>th</sup> periods, Thurs. 6th period, Matherly 3

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores religion's role in both intentional social change (e.g., social movements) and other forms of cultural, economic, and political transformation. We will focus on some key questions such as the following: Is religion an anaesthetizing or motivating force in struggles for social change? What can religion contribute to modernization and democratization? What factors shape the social character and role of religion? How does religion relate to other forces for or against social change? And how do different theoretical frameworks help us understand all these different processes? We explore these in relation both to classic theorists of religion and social change, especially Weber and Marx, and also contemporary studies from the U.S., Latin America, and more.

## **POLICIES AND RULES**

1. *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/~jtl/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.

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. *Attendance and Participation*: Class attendance is required. Poor attendance will harm your course grade. Students should arrive on time and prepared to discuss the day's readings.

4. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer, although the instructor reserves the right to ask you to turn off the computer if circumstances warrant. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class.

5. *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.

6. *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.

7. *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.

## REQUIREMENTS AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Undergraduates: This class fulfills the University writing requirement (WR2). Undergraduates must complete at least 2000 words of writing during the semester. Please ensure that your written work fulfills the minimum word requirement.

1. Complete all required readings by the date assigned. Be prepared to spend time on these books. Read carefully, so that you are prepared to ask questions about and discuss the assigned reading in each class.
2. Participate actively in class discussions. There will be five unannounced reading quizzes during the semester to check participation and engagement. 10% of final grade.
3. First essay on Weber and Weberian Tradition. 1000 words for undergraduates; 2000 words for grad students. Due by midnight on Sunday, 2/10. 30% of final grade (25% for grads).
4. Second essay on Marx and Marxist Tradition. 1000 words for undergraduates; 2000 words for grad students. Due by midnight on Monday, 3/11. 30% of final grade (25% for grads).
5. Third essay on religion and resistance, 1000 words for undergraduates, 4000 words for graduates. Due in class on Tuesday, 4/23. 30% of final grade (40% for grads).

## REQUIRED READING

The following required books are available at the UF bookstore and on reserve at Library West.

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. There are various editions; please purchase the Talcott Parson's translation

Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed* (Basic Books, 1973)

Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (W. W. Norton & Co., 1978)

E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Penguin, 1963)

Rowan Ireland, *Kingdoms Come: Religion and Politics in Brazil* (Pittsburgh, 1992)

Richard Wood, *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America* (University of Chicago, 2002).

We will also read the following articles, which are available on the course website (on Canvas):

Murali Balaji, "SCOTUS Decision Changes the Meaning of Civil Religion in America." *Religion Dispatches* (June 28, 2018).

<https://rewire.news/religion-dispatches/2018/06/28/scotus-decision-changes-meaning-civil-religion-america/>

Robert Bellah, "American Civil Religion," from *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 168-189.

John Carlson, "Donald Trump and the Battering of Civil Religion." *Sojourners* (Jan. 22, 2018).  
<https://sojo.net/articles/donald-trump-and-battering-civil-religion>

Kelly H. Chong, "Negotiating Patriarchy: South Korean Evangelical Women and the Politics of Gender." *Gender and Society* 20, No. 6 (Dec. 2006): 697-724.

Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, "The Post-9/11 'Hijab' as Icon." *Sociology of Religion* 68, No. 3, (Fall 2007): 253-267.

David Laitin, "Religion, Political Culture, and the Weberian Tradition." *World Politics* 30, no. 4 (July 1978): 563-592.

Roger Lancaster, selection from *Thanks to God and the Revolution*

Daniel Levine and David Stoll, "Religious Change, Empowerment, and Power: Bridging the Gap in Latin America." *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 1, no. 1-2 (Dec. 1995): 1-33.

Walter Macdougall, "Does Donald Trump Believe in American Civil Religion? If So, Which One?" Foreign Policy Research Institute (Feb. 23, 2017).  
<https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/02/donald-trump-believe-american-civil-religion-one/>

Benjamin Marcus, "How Trump is Reshaping the American Civil Religion." (July 11, 2017).  
<https://cruxnow.com/church-in-the-usa/2017/07/11/trump-reshaping-american-civil-religion/>

Anna Peterson, "Religious Narrative and Political Protest," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 64, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 27-44.

Michael Taussig, Chapters 1-2 in *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in Latin America*  
J

. W. Rubin, D. Smilde, and B. Junge, "Lived Religion and Lived Citizenship in Latin America's Zones of Crisis: Introduction." *Latin American Research Review* 49 (2014): 7-26.

Arthur Versluis, "Civil Religion and Civil Battles." *Sightings* (Jan. 18, 2018).  
<https://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings/civil-religion-and-civil-battles>

## **GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Grad students will have additional readings, including Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance* (Chicago, 1985) and others to be determined at the start of the semester. We will have grad-only meetings to discuss these readings on Feb. 7, March 12, and April 18.

## **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Please note: Schedule is subject to change. Please check Canvas and your ufl email regularly for class announcements. You are responsible for knowing about any changes that have been announced in assignments, etc.

Tuesday 1/8                      Introduction to class  
Grad student meeting to discuss additional readings

### **I. WEBER AND THE WEBERIAN TRADITION**

Thurs 1/10                      Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*: Author's Introduction and Chapter 1

Tues 1/15                      Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, Ch. 2-3

Thurs. 1/17                      Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, Chapter 4

Tues. 1/22                      Weber, *Protestant Ethic* Ch. 5

Th 1/24                          Geertz, *Islam Observed*, Chapter 1-2

Tu 1/29                          Geertz, *Islam Observed*, Ch. 3-4

Th 1/31                          Laitin, "Religion, Political Culture, and the Weberian Tradition"

Tu 2/5                              Bellah, "American Civil Religion" and articles by Balaji, Carlson, Macdougall, Marcus, and Versluis.

Th 2/7                              Undergrads, peer review in class: grad students meet to discuss Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*

Sunday, Feb. 10                \* First essay due via email ([annap@ufl.edu](mailto:annap@ufl.edu)) by 11:59 pm; please bring print copy to class on Tuesday 2/12.

### **II. MARX AND THE MARXIST TRADITION**

Tu 2/12                          Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach" and "The German Ideology, Part I" (in *The Marx-Engels Reader*)

Thurs 2/14                      Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844" (in *The Marx-Engels Reader*)

Tu 2/19                          Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (in *The Marx-Engels Reader*)

Th 2/21                          Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 17-76, 350-400

- Tu 2/26 Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 711-832
- Th 2/28 Selections from Taussig, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in Latin America* and Lancaster, *Thanks to God and the Revolution*
- Week of March 4: Spring Break, no class
- Monday 3/11 \* Second essay due, by 11:49 pm via email. Please bring print copy to class on Tuesday 3/12.

### **III. RELIGION AND RESISTANCE**

- Tu 3/12 Rubin et al., "Lived Religion and Lived Citizenship"; Levine and Stoll, "Religious Change, Empowerment, and Power"
- Th 3/14 Peterson, "Religious Narrative and Political Protest."
- Tu 3/19 Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*, Ch. 1-2
- Th 3/21 Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*, Ch. 3-4
- Tu 3/26 Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*, Ch. 5-6
- Th 3/28 Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*, Ch. 7-8
- Tu 4/2 Haddad, "The Post 9/11 'Hijab'" and Chong, "Negotiating Patriarchy.
- Th 4/4 Wood, *Faith in Action*, Ch. 1-2
- Tu 4/9 Wood, *Faith in Action*, Ch. 3-4
- Th 4/11 Wood, *Faith in Action*, Ch. 5-6
- Tu 4/16 Wood, *Faith in Action*, Ch. 7-8
- Th 4/18 Peer review for undergraduates: grad students only meet
- Tu 4/23 Presentations  
\* Final papers due in class \*