

REL 3381/LAS 3930: Religion in Latin America

Instructor: Mary Puckett, m.puckett@ufl.edu

MWF 11:45-12:35pm, Anderson 0013

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday: 12:45-2pm in Anderson 0017

Course Description:

This course provides a broad survey of some of the main religious traditions in Latin America, including pre-colonial indigenous religions, Catholicism in its various forms, religions of the African diaspora, and Protestant and evangelical movements. We will use a variety of texts and methods to understand the diverse forms, practices, and belief systems of these religious traditions: historical surveys, primary source documents, film, and case studies. This course will emphasize the distinctive cross-fertilization and hybrid forms of these religious traditions in Latin America. In addition, we will focus on the social and political roles religion plays in Latin America, especially the roles religion plays in the lives of those at the margins of society (i.e., the poor, women, indigenous people, and people of African descent) during times of social change.

Objectives:

1. To become familiar with indigenous traditions in the context of pre-Colombian empires and civilizations
2. To understand the nature of contact between Old World European Christianity and New World indigenous religions, and how that contact shaped both European and American practices and world-views
3. To understand how the European slave trade shaped the development in the New World of practices and cosmologies from Africa
4. To identify and understand the various forms of Catholicism historically found throughout Latin America
5. Analyze why and how Protestantism has expanded rapidly in Latin America

Policies, Rules, and Resources

1. *Attendance and reading:* Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to arrive on time to class prepared to discuss the readings assigned. Assigned readings are to be read prior to class. Attendance is considered a part of your participation grade.
2. *Handing in Assignments:* All assignments are to be handed in during class unless other arrangements have been made prior to the due date.
3. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* Late work is only accepted with prior approval from the instructor or in extenuating circumstances. Documentation is required for doctor visits. Half a letter grade will be deducted from each day work is submitted late (e.g., B+ to a B), and work will not be accepted three days past the due date.
4. *Completion of All Assignments:* Class participation and completion of assignments are required to pass the class. A low participation grade will result from poor attendance (missing more than a few classes) or from inability or unwillingness to participate in discussion because you have neglected to properly prepare for class.

5. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls or messages during class will be asked to leave. You may not have a computer turned on in class unless you receive specific permission from the instructor. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class. Repeat violations of these rules will result in dismissal from the class.

6. *Honor Code*: On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. On the issue of plagiarism and cheating, I operate under a **zero tolerance policy**. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive a grade of zero on the assignment in question and will fail the course. In addition, they will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else's material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action. See <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm> & www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm for more information on UF policies.

7. *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.

8. *Counseling Resources* available on campus for students:

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

9. *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.

Required texts to be purchased by students (readings marked (*) will be available on Canvas):

Carrasco, David. *Religions of Mesoamerica: Cosmovision and Ceremonial Centers*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1990.

Chesnut, R. Andrew. *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997.

Murphy, Joseph M. *Santería: African Spirits in America*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1993.

Peterson, Anna L. *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion: Progressive Catholicism in El Salvador's Civil War*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1997.

Grading Scale:

Grades are based on a total of 600 points, added up at the end of the semester. Here are the points you need to achieve each grade:

Points	Grade
570-600	A
540-569	A-
522-539	B+
504-521	B
480-503	B-
462-479	C+
444-461	C
420-443	C-
402-419	D+
384-401	D
360-383	D-
Below 360	E

Course Requirements:

Three in-class, closed book exams: These exams will cover key figures, terms, and concepts. Exam questions will be based on class readings, lectures, discussions, and films. These exams will include some combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Exams will be administered in class on February 5, March 25, and April 29. Each exam will be worth 150 points.

Three reading quizzes: These quizzes will be administered in class throughout the semester to encourage students to keep up with reading assignments. All quizzes will be based on course readings and will not be cumulative. Quizzes will be given on January 25, February 19, and March 15. Each quiz will be worth 30 points.

Participation: You are expected to attend class and participate actively in class discussions. Active and informed class participation requires that assigned reading be completed before coming to class. Participation is worth 60 points of the final grade.

Extra credit: Extra credit opportunities will be offered at least twice during the semester in the form of short reviews (about 300 words) of the films viewed in class. Other extra credit opportunities are negotiable and I am open to suggestions. Students may only take advantage of **one** extra credit opportunity during the semester. Extra credit will be worth 10 points.

Course Schedule:

Precolonial Religion

January 6: Introduction to class, no readings

January 8: Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica*, xiii-23

January 11: Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica*, 24-57

January 13: Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica*, 58-91

January 15: Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica*, 92-123

January 18: No class

January 20: Carrasco, *Religions of Mesoamerica*, 124-157

January 22: Film, *Popol Vuh: The Creation Myth of the Maya*

January 25: Film, *Popol Vuh: The Creation Myth of the Maya*

****Quiz 1****

Folk Catholicism

January 27: Christian, "Spain in Latino Christianity"*

January 29: Wolfe, "The Virgin of Guadalupe"*

February 1: Vanderwood, "Criminals and Saints"*

February 3: Espinosa, "Mexican Madonna"*

February 5: ****Exam 1****

African Religions in Latin America

February 8: Murphy, *Santería*, 1-38

February 10: Murphy, *Santería*, 39-69

February 12: Murphy, *Santería*, 70-103

February 15: Murphy, *Santería*, 104-125

February 17: Murphy, *Santería*, 126-143

February 19: Brown, "Religion, Class, and Conflict"*

****Quiz 2****

Progressive Catholicism

February 22: Gutiérrez, “Notes for a Theology of Liberation”*, Medellín documents on “Peace”* and “Justice”*

February 24: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 1-23

February 26: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 24-42

February 29: No class, Spring break

March 2: No class, Spring break

March 4: No class, Spring break

March 7: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 43-71

March 9: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 72-92

March 11: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 93-117

March 14: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 118-136

March 16: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 137-156

March 18: Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion*, 157-182

March 21: Film, *Romero*

March 23: Film, *Romero*

March 25: ****Exam 2****

The Rise of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Renewal

March 28: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 3-24

March 30: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 25-48

April 1: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 51-72

April 4: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 73-91

April 6: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 92-107

April 8: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 108-125

April 11: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 126-144

April 13: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 145-166

April 15: Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 167-174

****Quiz 3****

April 18: Readings on charismatic Catholicism TBA

April 20: “Pope tells Brazilian church to keep it simple and reach out to the poor”:
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/28/pope-brazil-church-message-poor-rio>,
“Lunch with the Pope”: <http://dispatchesfrombrian.com/2014/07/09/lunch-with-the-pope/>,
“Pope Reaches Out to Pentecostals with iPhone Message”:
<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2014/03/29/pope-reaches-out-to-pentecostals-with-iphone-message/>

April 22: Review!

April 24: No class, reading day

April 29: Final Exam