



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

Summer B 2020

2:00-3:15 pm, MTWRF

Anderson 101

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Office Hours: please email me to make an appointment for a phone or Zoom conference.

### **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. This class fulfills 2000 words of the University writing requirement.

### **Format and Participation**

First and foremost, please remember that summer classes fit a whole semester into 6 weeks. The class goes quickly and the reading and writing assignments may seem heavy – that is necessary in order to cover the same material (and give you the same 3 credits) that we would normally do over a semester. Please take this class **ONLY** if you are prepared to keep up with the reading and other required materials, complete all written assignments on time, and participate in all live class discussions.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UF has required that all summer courses be taught online. We will use a (generally) “flipped” format that captures the discussion-oriented style of the class as I usually teach it. Each week we will have two or three live (synchronous) Zoom sessions, which

will mostly be small group discussions. Format for each day is listed on the schedule below. The synchronous sessions are required. I will take attendance for every Zoom session, and after one absence, I will subtract points from your grade for each unexcused absence. There will be some days when you are working independently and we do not have a synchronous class, so please plan necessary appointments, etc. for those days rather than the ones for which we have Zoom meetings.

You must prepare for each class day. There will be assigned reading almost every day, and on many days I will also assign podcasts and/or videos, including some recorded conversations with guest lecturers. You can access the links for the conversations in the [Zoom meetings](#) section of the canvas site. Live meetings will be available in the “Upcoming meetings” section, while prerecorded ones will be available in the “Cloud recordings” section. Each meeting has a descriptive name (e.g., Conversation with Dr John Palmer). Please look carefully to make sure you are joining or watching the correct session.

Please read and follow the “Netiquette Guide for Online Courses,” produced by the UF Center for Teaching Excellence, which I have posted in “Files.”

For some days, I will also provide a narrated powerpoint presentation, which will focus on the reading and highlight key themes and issues that I want you to understand. These presentations do not substitute for the reading but are meant to help you read effectively.

If you have questions about the readings, please post them in the discussion board for that week. Please respond to student questions posted there, as well! The discussion board is optional, but lively engagement with each other will make your learning experience more fun and productive.

The schedule will be different every week, so please read the syllabus carefully and also pay attention to Canvas announcements about any changes and updates to the schedule.

### **Required Books**

1. Gary B. Ferngren, ed., *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017).
2. Aaron Mackler, *Introduction to Jewish and Catholic Bioethics: A Comparative Analysis* (Georgetown, 2003).

### **Additional Required Readings (Available on canvas or online)**

Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 12, Ch. 6-7

<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.12.xii.html> (Go to this page and scroll down to Part 6 and 7)

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 10, Ch. 8

<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.10.x.html> (Go to this page and scroll down to 8)

“Isaac Newton (1643–1727).” In *The Faith of Scientists: In Their Own Words*, ed. Nancy K. Frankenberry (Princeton, 2008).

Margaret Osler, “That the Scientific Revolution Liberated Science from Religion.” In *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Harvard, 2009).

Noah Efron, “That Christianity Gave Birth to Modern Science.” In *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Harvard, 2009).

Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature*, Ch. 9-10

Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, Ch. 3-4 (multiple online sources)

Charles Darwin, selections from *The Descent of Man* – I will give you exact readings (multiple online sources)

Michael Ruse, “That ‘Intelligent Design’ Represents a Scientific Challenge to Evolution.” In *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Harvard, 2009).

Kathleen Garces-Foley, “Buddhism, Hospice, and the American Way of Dying.” *Review of Religious Research* 44, No. 4 (June 2003): 341-353.

Aasim I. Padela, “Muslim Perspectives on the American Healthcare System: The Discursive Framing of ‘Islamic’ Bioethical Discourse.” *Die Welt des Islams* 55, Issue 3/4 (2015): 413-447.

David C. Barker and David H. Bearce, “End-Times Theology, the Shadow of the Future, and Public Resistance to Addressing Global Climate Change.” *Political Research Quarterly* 66, No. 2 (June 2013): 267-279.

Pew Research Center, “[Religion and Views on Climate and Energy Issues](#).” (Oct. 15, 2015).

Matt Arbuckle and David Konisky, “[The Role of Religion in Environmental Attitudes](#).” *Social Science Quarterly* (November 2015).

[Ariana Cha, “New York’s Bioethics Experts Prepare for a Wave of Difficult Decisions.”](#) *Washington Post* (March 25, 2020).

Ben Guarino, “[Hospitals Consider Wave of Do Not Resuscitate Orders For Coronavirus Patients](#).” *Washington Post* (March 28, 2020).

Vivian Yee, “[In a Pandemic, Religion Can be a Balm and a Risk](#).” *New York Times* (March 22, 2020).

Richard Luscombe, "[The US Churches and Pastors Ignoring 'Stay at Home' Orders.](#)" *The Guardian* (April 5, 2020).

Elana Shor, "[Coronavirus gathering bans raise religious freedom questions.](#)" *National Catholic Reporter* (March 20, 2020).

Chris Mooney, "[New Study Reaffirms the Link between Conservative Religious Faith and Climate Change Doubt.](#)" *Washington Post* (May 29, 2015).

David Kyle Johnson, "[Is Religion Pseudoscience?](#)" *Psychology Today* (July 31, 2014).

### **Online materials**

In addition to the readings, course materials include several rerecorded conversations with guest lecturers. These will be available on our Canvas site. You can access them by going to the Zoom Conference section and then clicking on "Cloud recordings." Links for you to join live conversations are available in the "upcoming meetings" section.

Other online resources, including narrated powerpoints, have hyperlinks. You can access the non-narrated version of the powerpoints on the Canvas site.

### **Course Requirements**

1. *Synchronous Zoom discussions:* We will hold live classes via Zoom on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays most weeks, except there will be no Monday meeting during weeks 4 and 5. On the schedule below, live classes are **highlighted in blue**. Please read the schedule carefully so you know which days we have live discussions. You can join Zoom sessions from the "zoom conferences" link in our course Canvas site. Please check these carefully and make sure to enter the correct meeting ID and password to join each session.

There is a list of discussion questions for each week, under "assignments." The entire list is also posted in files. Please read the questions carefully to prepare for class discussions and to write your weekly reflection papers.

2. *Asynchronous work.* In general, on Tuesdays and Thursdays you will work independently, doing reading, listening to podcasts, and/or watching videos.

3. *Five weekly reflection papers:* These short essays will reflect on the discussion questions for each week (explained in #1 above). You do not need to answer every single question, but you should show that you have completed and thought about the readings, podcasts, and other assignments for each week. These papers can be less formal than the short essays, but they should still be well informed, thoughtful, and checked for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. You must submit FIVE papers during the six weeks, meaning you can skip a paper one week. Please let me know by Friday if you are not submitting a paper that week. These are due by midnight every Friday. Each paper is worth 8% of your total grade, for a total of 40%.

4. *Two short essays* (min. 1000 words each). This class offers 2000 words toward the university writing requirement. This requirement will be met by two 1000 word essays, which will be evaluated for both content and writing style. Each is worth 25% of your final grade.

- Historical perspectives and the Scientific Revolution. Due by midnight on Sunday, July 19.

- Bioethics and evolution, due by midnight on Sunday, August 2.

5. *Final project: Powerpoint Poster:* During the last week of class, you will conduct research on the position of a specific religious group on science – in general, or a particular scientific issue. You will produce a poster, as a powerpoint slide, on your research, which we will discuss on the last day of class. 10% of final grade.

### **Assignment Policies**

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Submit all via Canvas. Please keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.

2. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* If you have any concerns about any assignment, including submitting on time or understanding the assignment or the material, please email me. I will be glad to help you! My policy on extensions and make-up assignments is that students 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:* Attendance at synchronous classes is required.

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 <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-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 that offers individual tutoring and assistance with writing. For more information and to make appointments, see <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

### **Schedule**

**\*\* PLEASE NOTE:** There may be changes in dates and assignments. 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>
<u>Module 1: Introduction and Historical perspectives</u>		
M 7/6	Overview	<a href="#">Powerpoint 1: Conflict or complexity?</a> <a href="#">Zoom discussion: Syllabus quiz</a>
T 7/7	Aristotle	Ferngren, Ch. 2 <a href="#">Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics</i>, Book 12, Ch. 6-7</a> <a href="#">Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>, Book 10, Ch. 8</a> Guest conversation: Dr. John Palmer (prerecorded)
W 7/8	Early Christianity	Ferngren, Ch. 3 <a href="#">Powerpoint 2: Early Christianity and science</a> <a href="#">Zoom discussion: The Handmaiden Formula</a>
Th 7/9	Medieval Christianity	Ferngren, Ch. 4 <a href="#">Powerpoint 3: Medieval religion &amp; science</a>
F 7/10	Islam	Ferngren, Ch. 5 <a href="#">Guest conversation: Dr. Christopher Furlow, Santa Fe College</a> Discussion report #1 due by midnight
<u>Module 2: The Scientific Revolution</u>		

M 7/13	Copernicus and Galileo	Ferngren, Ch. 6 and 7 <a href="#">Zoom discussion with guest Dr. Desika Narayanan</a>
T 7/14	Newton	Ferngren, Ch. 9 Newton, "In his own words" <a href="#">Powerpoint 4: Newton's theology</a>
W 7/15	Scientific revolution	Merchant, <i>The Death of Nature</i> , Ch. 9-10 <a href="#">Powerpoint 5: The Death of Nature</a> <a href="#">Zoom discussion: Is Merchant right?</a>
Th 7/16	Scientific Revolution: Myths	Osler, "That the Scientific Revolution..." Efron, "That Christianity Gave Birth..." <a href="#">Ted Talk: David Deutsch</a>
F 7/17	Engineering the Renaissance	<a href="#">Guest lecture: Dr. Mark Law</a> Discussion report #2 due by midnight
Sun. 7/19		Short essay #1 due by midnight
<u>Module 3: Evolution and Religious Responses</u>		
M 7/20	Darwin Evolution	Read: Ferngren, Ch. 13-14 <a href="#">Zoom discussion: What does natural selection mean for religion?</a>
T 7/21	<i>On the Origin of Species</i>	<a href="#">On the Origin of Species, Ch. 3-4</a> <a href="#">Powerpoint 6: On the Origin of Species</a>
W 7/22	Human evolution	<a href="#">The Descent of Man (selections)</a> <a href="#">Guest conversation: Dr. Betty Smocovitis</a>
Th 7/23	Evangelicalism The Scopes Trial	Ferngren, Ch. 18 Ferngren, Ch. 19 <a href="#">Powerpoint 7: Evangelical responses to evolution</a>
F 7/24	Catholic responses Jewish responses	Ferngren, Ch. 15 Ferngren, Ch. 20 <a href="#">Zoom discussion: religious responses to evolution</a> Discussion report #3 due by midnight
<u>Module 4: Bioethics</u>		
M 7/27	Introduction to Bioethics	Mackler, Introduction and Ch. 1-2 <a href="#">Powerpoint 8: Introduction to bioethics</a>
Tu 7/28	Euthanasia and end of life	Mackler, Ch. 3-4



Powerpoint 9: End of life issues

W 7/29	Euthanasia and end of life	Garces-Foley, “Buddhism, Hospice...” <a href="#">Zoom discussion: assisted suicide</a>
Th 7/30	Abortion and reproduction	Mackler, Ch. 7 Padela, “Muslim Perspectives” Guest conversation: Dr Ali Mian (prerecorded)
F 7/31	Health Care reform	Mackler, Ch. 5 and 6 <a href="#">Zoom discussion: abortion</a> Discussion report #4 due by midnight
Sun. 8/3		Short essay #2 due by midnight

Module 5: Religion and the environment

M 8/3	Religion and environment: Introduction	Ferngren, Ch. 27 <a href="#">Powerpoint 10: Introduction to environmental ethics</a>
T 8/4	Religious attitudes	<a href="#">Arbuckle and Konisky, “The Role of Religion”</a>
W 8/5	Science and religious activism	<a href="#">Zoom discussion with Vickie Machado</a>
Th 8/6	Evangelicalism and climate	Barker and Bearce, “End-Times Theology” <a href="#">Guest conversation: Ben Lowe</a>
F 8/7	Religious positions on climate	<a href="#">Pew Research Center report</a> <a href="#">Ted Talk: Katherine Hayhoe</a> <a href="#">Zoom discussion: religion and climate change</a> Discussion report #5 due by midnight

Module 6: Religion, Science, and Pandemic

M 8/10	Pandemic ethics	<a href="#">Cha</a> and <a href="#">Guarino</a> articles <a href="#">Zoom discussion: pandemic ethics</a>
T 8/11	Denial and pseudoscience	<a href="#">Mooney</a> and <a href="#">Johnson</a> articles <a href="#">Ted talk: Richard Dawkins</a> <a href="#">Ted talk: Billy Graham</a>
W 8/12	Communication, ethics, pandemic	<a href="#">Yee</a> , <a href="#">Luscombe</a> , and <a href="#">Shor</a> articles Guest conversation: Dr Kim Walsh-Childers



Th 8/13	Religion and science	Research religious positions on science; create posters
F 8/14	Conflict or complexity?	<b>Zoom discussion: religious positions</b> Powerpoint posters due by 10 am