

Religion and the American Immigration Experience

Course: REL 3120

Term: Fall 2023

Times: MWF (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)

Location: MAT 0005

Instructor: Dr. Jeyoul Choi

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

This course explores U.S. religious history through the lens of migration/immigration. Employing historical, sociological, and anthropological approaches to religion, the course, in particular, examines the role of religion as an important component for navigating American life as an immigrant experience. The first portion of the course provides conceptual tools for understanding the interaction between religion and migration/immigration. The following portions explore case studies of religious immigrants' lives. Throughout the course, students will explore the changing role of religion in navigating the lives of immigrants in different historical, social, and cultural milieus of American society.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To understand U.S. religious history through the lens of migration/immigration
- 2) To understand major concepts in migration/immigration and globalization studies for the study of religion
- 3) To understand various roles of religion in immigrants' lives

Required Reading Materials

For Purchase:

Butler, Jon. 1990. *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Orsi, Robert A. 1985. *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Tweed, Thomas. 1997. *Our Lady of the Exile: Diaspora Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cadge, Wendy. 2005. *Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Additional Readings (book chapters and articles) marked with (*) will be available in Canvas

Assignments:

1. Reading Reflections (20%)

Starting from the second week, students will write a reading reflection on each week's required readings before they come to Monday's class (12-set). The assignment intends to make sure students complete the reading and be prepared for in-class discussion. Each post should be at least three paragraphs (each paragraph should contain 4-5 sentences) and be analytical of the readings instead of being descriptive. While students have the freedom to organize their responses, the following is a suggested prompt to answer: What does the reading material tell you about religion, immigration/migration, or their relationship in American society? The assignment is due every Sunday.

2. Midterm and Final Essays (30%)

At the end of Units II and IV, students will submit midterm and final essays (double-spaced five pages in length, Times New Roman, and font size 12) in Canvas. The instructor will provide students with several keywords for each Unit. Students have the freedom to organize their essays to discuss the keywords by drawing from the reading materials. The purpose of the assignment is to evaluate student's ability to discuss different concepts and topics of the course materials in-depth and to weave them into a coherent thesis statement. Students will upload their essays by each due date (10/9 and 11/20). Each essay is worth 15 points.

3. Autobiographical Research Essay (30%)

Students will write an autobiographical research essay (double-spaced ten to twelve pages in length, Times New Roman, font 12) on their religious genealogy, drawing upon ethnographic interviews with their familial members, historiographical research on academic literature, and the course materials. The purpose of the assignment is to help students to comprehend the impacts of their familial religious backgrounds on their own identities, as well as to evaluate their ability to conduct independent research on the role of religion in larger American society.

Students will interview their familial members and conduct additional research to compose a list of relevant academic sources to understand the immigration history of their family and its religious impacts on themselves. By October 9, students will submit a brief report (two to three page-single-spaced in length) about their preliminary interviews with family members (five points). By October 30, students will submit a bibliography (excluding the course materials) of their research paper (five points). In the fifth week of November (27th and 29th), students will present a draft of their research in class (five points). The final draft of the essays (fifteen points) is due May 16. A handout with more specific guidelines for the assignment will be available and discussed in class at the beginning of the semester.

4. Class Participation (15%)

Reading:

Students are expected to do all the reading for this class. Success on the assignments and in-class discussions depends on the student's close reading of the material. The instructor reserves the right to administer pop-up quizzes if discussion in class becomes stagnant and/or if it becomes that the reading is being neglected. Each week requires 50 to 80 pages of reading.

Class Discussion:

Although it is the instructor's responsibility to lead each class with lectures or discussions, students are expected to engage in each class by asking and answering questions concerning the relevant topics. Because immigration can be a controversial topic, students must act and speak respectfully. Comments should be thoughtful and based on information in the readings. Personal opinions based on emotional, gut feelings should be avoided.

6. Attendance (5%)

Students are expected to attend all classes throughout the semester. Absence will be exempted only with documentation of a hardship affecting performance in the classroom such as sickness, family issues, or deployment.

Grading:

Reading Reflections (20%)

Midterm Essay (15%)

Final Essay (15%)

Autobiographical Research Essay (30%)

Class Participation (15%)

Attendance (5%)

Grade Scale

93 and up	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
60-69.9	D
<60	F

Policies, Rules, and Resources

1. 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. If possible, please request prior approval from the instructor. If that is not possible, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange for the makeup. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

2. 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.

3. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academicregulations/attendance-policies/

4. Common Courtesy: You may take notes on a laptop computer, although the instructor may ask you to turn off the computer if circumstances warrant. The instructor and TA reserve the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class.

5. Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/.

6. Honor Code: 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 (sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/) specifies several behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Please note that acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or assignment that was written by someone else.
- Copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without proper citation and quotation marks.
- Using and copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from Chatgpt or any other AI software for any kind of course assignments.
- Paraphrasing or restating in your own words, text or ideas written by someone else without proper citation.

For more info, see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>

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 in this class.

7. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, 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.

Schedule of Classes

Week 1: What is Religion and How Can we Study it?

Wednesday: (08/23): Course Introduction

Friday (08/25): (*) Esposito, et al. Chapter 1—Introduction: Understanding World Religions in Global Perspective

Part I: Theoretical Considerations

Week 2: What is Religion and How Can we Study it?

Monday (08/28): (*) David Chidester— “Virtual Religion” in *Authentic Fakes*

Wednesday (08/30): (*) Robert Orsi— “Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion” in *Lived Religion*

Friday (09/01): Discussion

Week 3: Globalization, Migration/Immigration, and Religion

Monday (09/04): No Class (Labor Day)

Wednesday (09/06): (*) Jan Pieterse— Chapter 1 “Globalization: Consensus and Controversies” and Chapter 2 “Globalization and Human Integration: We are All Migrants” in *Globalization & Culture*

Friday (09/08): (*) Jan Pieterse— Chapter 4 “Globalization as Hybridization” in *Globalization & Culture*

Week 4: Globalization, Migration/Immigration, and Religion

Monday (09/11): (*) Barbara S. Heisler— “The Sociology of Immigration” in *Migration Theory*

Wednesday (09/13): (*) Manuel Vasquez— “Diaspora and Religion” in *Diaspora* and (*) Nina Glick Schiller— “Transmigrants and Nation-States: Something Old and Something New in the U.S. Immigrant Experience”

Friday (09/15): Discussion

Part II: Mobility among Indigenous Peoples and European Migration

Week 5: Early European Protestant Immigrants in America

Monday (09/18): (*) Daniel Richter— “Confronting a Material New World,” in *Facing East from Indian Country*

Wednesday (09/20): (*) Roger Daniels, Chapter 2— “English Immigrants in America” in *Coming to America* and (*) John Winthrop— Dreams of a City upon a Hill, 1630

Friday (09/22): Jon Butler— Introduction and Chapter 1 in *Awash in a Sea of Faith*

Week 6: Early European Protestant Immigrants in America

Monday (09/25): Jon Butler—Chapters 2 and 3 in *Awash in a Sea of Faith*

Wednesday (09/27): Jon Butler— Chapters 4 and 5 in *Awash in a Sea of Faith*

Supplementary Reading: (*) Roger Daniels— Chapters 3 “Slavery and Immigrant from Africa,” and 4 “Other Europeans in Colonial America”

(*) Albert Raboteau— “African Americans, Exodus, and the American Israel” in *Religion and American Culture*

Friday (09/29): Discussion

Week 7: Early European Protestant Immigrants in America

Monday (10/02): Jon Butler— Chapters 6 and 7 in *Awash in a Sea of Faith*

Wednesday (10/04): Jon Butler— Chapters 8, 9, and Conclusion in *Awash in a Sea of Faith*

Friday (10/06): Discussion

Part III: European Migration at the Turn of Twentieth Century

Week 8: Italian Catholic Immigrants

Monday (10/09): Robert Orsi— Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 in *The Madonna of 115th Street*

Midterm Essay & Autobiographical Research Essay Interview Report
Due Monday (10/9)

Wednesday (10/11): Robert Orsi— Chapters 3 and 4 in *The Madonna of 115th Street*

Friday (10/13): No Class (Midterm)

Week 9: Italian Catholic Immigrants

Monday (10/16): Robert Orsi— Chapters 5 and 6 in *The Madonna of 115th Street*

Wednesday (10/18): Robert Orsi— Chapters 7 and 8 in *The Madonna of 115th Street*

Friday (10/20): Discussion

Part IV: Immigration and Religion After the Immigration Act of 1965

Week: 10: Cuban Catholic Immigrants

Monday (10/23): Thomas Tweed— Introduction and Chapter 1

Supplementary Reading: (*) Rogers Daniels— Chapter 13 “Changing the Rules” in *Coming to America*

Wednesday (10/25): Thomas Tweed— Chapters 2 and 3 in *Our Lady of the Exile*

Friday (10/27): Thomas Tweed— Chapters 4 and 5

Autobiographical Research Essay Bibliography Due Friday (10/27)

Week 11: Cuban Catholic Immigrants & Thai Buddhist Immigrants

Monday (10/30): Thomas Tweed— Chapter 6 and Postscript in *Our Lady of the Exile*

Wednesday (11/01): (*) McAlister, “The Madonna of 115th Street Revisited: Vodou and Haitian Catholicism in the Age of Transnationalism”

Friday (11/03): (*) Esposito, et al. Chapter 7—Buddhism: Paths Toward Nirvana (p.339-370)

Week 12: Thai Buddhist Immigrants

Monday (11/06): Wendy Cadge— Chapters 1 and 2 in *Heartwood*

Wednesday (11/08): Wendy Cadge— Chapters 3 and 4 in *Heartwood*

Friday (11/10): Discussion

Week 13: Thai Buddhist Immigrants

Monday (11/13): Wendy Cadge— Chapters 5 and 6 in *Heartwood*

Wednesday (11/15): Wendy Cadge— Chapters 7 and 8 in Heartwood

Friday (11/17): Discussion

Week 14: Thanksgiving Week

Monday (11/20): No Class

Final Essay Due Monday (11/20)

Wednesday (11/22): No Class

Friday (11/24): No Class

Week 15: Final Week

Monday (11/27): Autobiographical Research Essay Presentation

Wednesday (11/29): Autobiographical Research Essay Presentation

Friday (12/01): Discussion

Week 16: Final Week

No Class

Autobiographical Research Essay Due Tuesday (12/8)