

Rel 311 AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY Fall 2017

sec. 1 - 12:35-1:50 Tues/Thurs Rm 233 CCC

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Office: 412 CCC

Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 2:00-3:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on American religious history, with particular emphasis on themes involving religion, race and gender, and the double-sided role of religion in legitimating oppression and in challenging injustice. In tandem with these themes, we will be investigating the different ways that American history has been told, what difference it makes how you tell the story, and how religious issues play a role in different narratives of American history. Given the vast scope of the field of American religious history, we won't be able to cover everything; the weight of our explorations will be on these themes within the Colonial Era and the 19th century, with further attention to African American religious history in the 20th century.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

Students who successfully complete this class will:

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully and think critically about primary sources relevant to American religious history, to situate these sources in their historical contexts, and to write persuasively about the themes and issues found in these sources.
- Identify and analyze ways in which religious beliefs, values and symbols were deployed in defense of racism and sexism and in challenges to racism and sexism in American history
- Identify and analyze ways in which religious beliefs, values and symbols served to help marginalized people affirm their equality and full humanity in the face of racism and sexism.
- Identify and analyze the issues at stake in different ways of narrating and thinking about American history, and the ways religious issues are involved in those narrations.
- Exercise and hone skills in close reading, interpretation of primary source texts, critical thinking, writing and research.

Book on Text Rental:

Charles H. Lippy, *Introducing American Religion*

Amanda Porterfield, *American Religious History*

To Purchase:

Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans, by Albert J. Raboteau

REL 311 Reader

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:

6 homework assignments	25%
Research paper	25%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Attendance, participation and potential extra credit	– 10%

EXPLANATION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Midterm (20%) and Final Exam (20%)

The midterm and final exam will be based on material covered in the readings and lectures. Tests will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions, short essay and/or quote ID.

6 (out of 7) Homework assignments (25%)

You need to complete 6 out of 7 homework assignments to receive a good grade in this category. You may skip any one homework assignment except for homework #5 (research paper proposals) which everyone MUST do. You may do all 7 assignments, but your final total score in this area cannot exceed 100%.

Homework assignments must “meet expectations” for each of the following criteria

- Respond to the prompt in its entirety
- Demonstrate understanding of the issues and texts being explored
- Be typed and double-spaced with minimal grammatical errors
- Be at least 250 words (one typed page, excluding headers), and no more than 750.
- Be handed in on assigned due date at the beginning of class

Homework which “meets expectations” for these four criteria will receive 10 points.

Homework which “needs improvement” will lose one point for each criteria which needs improvement.

Homework which is late will lose one point for each class period late.

Homework which “exceeds expectations” in all of these criteria may receive 11 points.

Your final homework score will be calculated using the following formula: $x/66 = y/100$ in which x = your cumulative homework score.

Your research paper (25%):

- must focus upon the *analysis of a primary source* relevant to American religious history; this primary source can NOT be one of the primary sources included in our assignment schedule.
- must exhibit sound research methodology (as reflected in your notes and reference list), and must make use of at least four relevant secondary sources such as encyclopedia entries, academic articles, and scholarly books.
- Must situate your primary source in its historical/religious context, accurately summarize its contents and highlight important points, including direct quotes as needed.
- Must explore the significance of this primary source for understanding and telling the story of American religious history
- Must be well organized, with a strong introduction, a clear paragraph structure, and a thoughtful, relevant conclusion.
- must appropriately cite all sources in a reference list or bibliography, with notations (parenthetical notes, footnotes or endnotes) throughout as needed.
- Must be typed and double-spaced, free of obvious grammatical and spelling errors, and approximately 5-8 pages in length.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

- Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned materials and with a copy of any assigned primary source materials with them so that they are ready to contribute to discussion and ask questions.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly; and excessive unexcused absences will lower your grade in this category.
- Absences will be excused only when an acceptable excuse is provided (via email or in person) in advance of the class that will be missed. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence include illness, family emergency, or school sponsored trip (including sports events).
- Criteria for calculating attendance grade:
Excellent attendance: two or fewer unexcused absences = A in this category.
Good attendance: three to five unexcused absences = B in this category.
Poor attendance: six to eight unexcused absences = C in this category.
Even worse attendance: nine to ten unexcused absences = D in this category.
Failing attendance: eleven or more unexcused absences = specific failing grade calculated by following formula – $x*100/30$ in which x = number of unexcused absences.
- If you miss class (excused or unexcused) you should complete the assignments and study any class notes posted on D2L.

SELECTED RESERVE ROOM RESOURCES

Encyclopedia of Religion, ed. Mircea Eliade et. al. (12 vol.) (also available electronically)

Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience, (3 vol.),
ed. Lippy and Williams

Encyclopedia of American Religious History (2 vol.),
ed., Ed. Queen et al.

Encyclopedia of American Religions, ed. J. Gordon Melton

Dictionary of American Religious Biography

Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion (2 vol.),
ed. Robert Wuthnow

Encyclopedia of Fundamentalism

Encyclopedia of Women in American History, eds Cheng and Goodwin

Religious Sites in America: A Reference Guide, ed. M. Snodgrass

Contemporary American Religion (2 vol.), Ed. Wade Clark Roof

Cults in America, ed. James R. Lewis

Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America, ed. J. Gordon Melton

Twentieth-Century Shapers of American Popular Religion,
ed. Ch. Lippy

Biographical Dictionary of American Cult and Sect Leaders,
ed. J. Gordon Melton

Encyclopedia of African and African-American Religions

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ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

I adhere to a strict policy on academic integrity. Any questions that you may have regarding academic integrity should be resolved before you turn your assignments in. The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. In addition, all infractions will be reported to the university. For more information regarding the university policy on academic misconduct (plagiarism) and disciplinary procedures, please see chapter 14 of the University Handbook, located at this web page link:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>

LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS: *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability Services Office and then contact me. For more information, please visit the Disability Services Office, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). For more information, check here:*

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

