

Philosophy Course #PHI 140 Section #621
RELIGION IN AMERICAN CULTURE Syllabus Spring 2020

Contact Information

Instructor: Briel, Jan

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Course Meeting Dates and Times

Start and End Dates: April 17 – May 2, 2020

Meeting Days: Friday and Saturday

Start and End Times: Friday 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM; Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Room: Arvada 7102

Arvada Campus Address:
5420 Miller Street
Arvada, CO 80002

Required Textbook

World Religions in America: Fourth Edition, edited by Jacob Neusner (Westminster John Knox Press, 2003)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Investigates the various ways in which religion and American culture interact. Beginning with the religion of Native Americans, which existed in a pre-modern society where religion was unchallenged as the pre-eminent organizing principle to our post-modern era, where religion competes with a multiplicity of other belief systems in a complex societal matrix. Focuses on the sundry ways in which religion and American culture interface.

REQUIRED STANDARD COMPETENCIES:

- I. The student should be able to understand and evaluate the various socio-cultural forces involved in the construction of religion based on the standards discussed in class (A,C,D,E).
- II. Students should be able to thoughtfully discuss the extent to which religion has shaped the way America understands itself and relates to its neighbors.
- III. Students should be able to identify key historical movements and describe how they gave rise to particular religious expressions.
- IV. Students should be able to summarize the general patterns of interaction between religion and an industrialized technologically sophisticated society.

REQUIRED TOPICAL OUTLINE:

The Antebellum Period

- A. Native American culture and its belief systems will be addressed as a way of gleaning an understanding of the 'New World' prior to the arrival of the Europeans.
- B. Late seventeenth-and early eighteenth-century thought will be explored as a way of gaining an appreciation for the supernaturalism and mysticism that pervaded colonial culture.
- C. Students will be asked to write a short paper on any aspect regarding religion and contemporary society.
- D. The conveyance of Africans to America, and their subsequent subjugation to institutional slavery, will be discussed as a way of understanding the power of religion as a coping mechanism.

The Postbellum Period

Students will be asked to write a short paper on any one article discussed in section one.

- A. Attention will be paid to the tumultuous intellectual and cultural conditions prevalent during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The impact of Darwinian evolution, the rise of industrialization, and the mass influx of European immigrants are but a few of the elements that will be shown to have a bearing on religion.
- B. The film `The Fundamentalism Project` will be shown. This film carefully depicts the rise of religious Fundamentalism around the world as well as its hostile encounter with modernity.
- C. Attention shall be paid to how the rise of a pluralistic, industrialized, and secularized America altered the relationship between piety and culture during this period.
- D. The film `Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory` will be shown. This film addresses the historical and cultural factors involved in the construction of conservative Protestantism, with special emphasis on the political and moral consequences to culture.
- E. The emergence of Fundamentalism will be discussed as a response to modernizing forces in America.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Attendance and participation in all classes and activities.
- B. Reading and viewing all assigned materials.
- C. Completion of all assignments and tests.
- D. Students are responsible to meet all deadlines for the course unless serious and unforeseen events can be documented for the instructor.
- E. Make copies of all material sent through the mail; the instructor is not responsible for undelivered assignments. Students will be required to resubmit any missing material.

GRADING

Grade Percentage	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-90	B
70-80	C
60-70	D
Below 60	F

Grade Item	Course Percentage
Attendance and Participation	50%
Written Test	25%
Presentation	25%

Important Dates

[REQUIRED – required wording as follows:]

STUDENTS: PLEASE VERIFY THE SPECIFIC DROP AND WITHDRAW DATES FOR THIS COURSE IN YOUR “[Detailed Student Schedule \(with Drop-Withdrawal Dates\)](https://erpdnssb.cccs.edu/PRODRRCC/wt_student_sched.P_DisplayStudentSched)” LINK IN THE ROCK, UNDER THE STUDENT TAB (https://erpdnssb.cccs.edu/PRODRRCC/wt_student_sched.P_DisplayStudentSched)

DROP/Census Date (last day to drop with a refund)

This is the last day you can remove yourself from this class without having to pay for the class and without the class showing on your permanent student record. If you are considering dropping the class, please talk to your instructor first. If you are on financial aid, you should also consult a financial aid advisor before dropping a class. All students are encouraged to see an academic advisor about how dropping may affect their goals.

Withdraw date (last day to withdraw with a “W”)

This is the last day you can remove yourself from this class and receive a “W” for the class instead of a grade. You are responsible for payment. If you are considering withdrawing from the class, please talk to your instructor first. If you are on financial aid, you should consult a financial aid advisor before withdrawing from a class. All students are encouraged to see an academic advisor about how withdrawing may affect their goals.

RRCC Syllabus Insert – REQUIRED and Additional Information

[REQUIRED – required wording as follows:]

All students are required to be familiar with the information contained in the RRCC Syllabus Insert document. In addition to your instructor reviewing the required content in class, the RRCC SYLLABUS INSERT can be found as an announcement on all D2L landing pages (where you have access to all of your courses) and in the “Student Help” pull-down menu.

Schedule**Week 1**

- Friday 4/17:
 - Introduction
 - Native American: pgs. 11-25 Christianity: pgs. 29-53; pgs. 73-86; pgs. 105-120
- Saturday 4/18:
 - African-American: pgs. 55-72
 - Latino/Hispanic-American: pgs. 87-104
 - Latter Day Saints: pgs. 333-352

Week 2

- Friday 4/24:
 - Judaism: pgs. 123-142
- Saturday 4/25
 - : Islam: pgs. 143-176
 - Hinduism/Buddhism: pgs. 179-212

Week 3

- Friday 5/1:
 - Field Experience
- Saturday 5/2:
 - Presentations.
 - Tests due: 5/2.