

Tuesdays, 9:30-10:50 Arnold Hall

Thursdays, 9:30-10:50

Ammon: MB 202; Gottschall: Arnold Hall; Price, MB 204

REL 101: RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN AMERICA

Fall 2003

Instructors:

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Purpose and Scope of the Course: Religious Studies 101 aims to introduce you both to the contemporary religious landscape of Southern California and to the academic study of religion. Of all the regions in the contemporary U.S., religious diversity in America is probably most visible in Southern California. Indeed, greater Los Angeles is sometimes said to have the most religiously diverse environment in the world. Given the great variety of religions currently flourishing in Southern California, we will need to be selective in our focus.

Initially, we will examine the character and expressions of American spiritual life in a modern secular society. Then we will turn attention to Christian traditions, both longstanding Los Angeles area Roman Catholicism and more recent Protestant-Pentecostal movements that have thrived in Southern California. Finally we will focus on various local expressions of Islam—both the traditions of immigrants to the U.S. from the Middle East and Asia and of American converts to Islam. Finally we will focus on the interplay between media and religion, exploring various ways that media portray and influence American religious movements and the ways that religious organizations have utilized media to extend their outreach and to increase their support.

Important to how we become informed about the religious diversity of contemporary America will be field trips to religious sites in the greater Los Angeles area. You will, of course, be expected to read, to discuss, to view films, to make presentations, and to attend three field trips that are crucial to the course; attendance at the field trips is mandatory.

While becoming acquainted with the religious diversity of contemporary America is an important goal of this course, an equally important aim of the class is developing ways of understanding the American religious landscape. Setting the contemporary religious environment against its historical background is one way of understanding the information about religions that we will encounter. Discussion of the American notion of separation of

“church” and state and how this affects the organization and style of American religious life will also figure in our discussions. Some other analytical/interpretive questions that we intend to raise include: What are the benefits and costs of American religious pluralism? What is the relationship between consumerism, the market economy, and the types of religion that tend to thrive in America? How does religion function in constructing identity, particularly for immigrant communities? How do larger social forces such as gender, race, ethnicity, and class affect religious groups, and how are the above social factors themselves affected by religions? Are religions becoming “globalized,” and, if so, what does this mean? How is religion changing in the contemporary United States? Is “spirituality” replacing “religion” for many Americans? Thus, the course intends not only to inform you about the content of various religious groups but also to give you the tools to understand and analyze what is occurring in the American religious environment.

Course structure: The three sections will meet together on Tuesdays for lectures, discussions, etc. On Thursdays we will meet in three discussion sections, each led by one of the instructors.

Required Books: Escandon, *Esperanza's Box of Saints*
 Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*
 Balmer & Winner, *Protestantism in America*
 Smith, *Islam in America*

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance at class meetings and field trips/lectures/films scheduled outside of normal class hours is required. Three “cost-free” absences will be permitted from regular class sessions; each absence beyond three will result in the final grade for the course being lowered one notch (e.g., from A to A- for the fourth absence, from A- to B+ for the fifth, etc.). Absence from a field trip or film, when excused prior to the session, will require an extensive make-up assignment. Because attendance at the field trips is required, there will be two regular class days (when essays are due) that class will not meet.
2. Completion of assigned reading as scheduled and participation in class discussion on that reading.
3. Three formal papers, averaging 5 pages or more, will be due on assigned dates. Specific information about the assignments will be distributed ten days before the papers are due.
4. A journal kept in a separate notebook for recording items from the mass media, your reactions to readings, films, field trips, etc. as specified by the instructor of your section.
5. Occasional quizzes on assigned reading

Grading:

Two grading options are available: 1) a letter grade or 2) credit-no credit. Course grades will be determined as follows: 20% on each of the first two formal papers; 30% on the final paper; 15% on the field trip presentations (5% for each of the field trips); and 15% on class participation, the journal, quizzes, etc.

Special Accommodations:

To receive special accommodations, a student must complete the following process, which has been approved by the College. *Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make the necessary accommodations. The student also should present appropriate verification from the Learning Support Services Office.*

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Course Introduction: Framing Religious Diversity in the U. S.		
<u>Thursday</u> Sept. 4	The Academic Study of Religion and the Nature of American religion	
<u>Tuesday</u> Sept. 9	The Separation of Church and State in the U. S. (Episode of "The Simpsons")	First Amendment "Morality & 'the National Interest'"
<u>Thursday</u> Sept. 11	The Separation of Church and State in the U. S.	"Introduction" to <i>Supreme Court on Church and State</i>
<u>Tuesday</u> Sept. 16	Secularization and Religion in the U. S. (Episode of "Star Trek")	"Classic Star Trek and the Death of God"
<u>Thursday</u> Sept. 18	Secularization and Religion in the U. S.	Berger and Cox

Roman Catholic and Orthodox Diversity in America

<u>Tuesday</u> Sept. 23	Roots of Catholic Diversity: Distinctions of Catholicism	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chaps. 1-2
<u>Thursday</u> Sept. 25	Roots of Catholic Diversity: Its Early American History	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chap. 3
<u>Tuesday</u> Sept. 30	Issues and Institutions of Catholic Diversity: Reforms of Vatican II	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chap. 4
<u>Wed'day</u> Oct. 1	Film #1: My Big Fat Greek Wedding 7:00 p.m. , Hoover 100	
<u>Thursday</u> Oct. 2	Catholic Teachings and Beliefs	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chap. 5-6
<u>Sunday</u> Oct. 5	Field trips on Roman Catholicism <u>Dolores Mission</u> , 129 S. Gless, Los Angeles <u>Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels</u> , intersection of Temple and Grand (at the 101), LA <u>Mission San Gabriel Arcángel</u> , intersection of Mission Dr. & Junipero Serra, San Gabriel <u>St. Sophia's Orthodox Church</u> , 1324 South Normandie, Los Angeles	
<u>Tuesday</u> Oct. 7	Field Trip Presentations	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chap. 7
<u>Thursday</u> Oct. 9	Popular Catholicism	<i>Esperanza's Box of Saints</i> <i>Catholicism in America</i> , Chap. 8
<u>Tuesday</u> Oct. 14	Challenges and Future of American Catholicism	<i>Roman Catholicism in America</i> Chaps. 9-10
<u>Thursday</u> Oct. 16	Paper #1 Due NO CLASS SESSION	

Protestant Diversity in America

<u>Tuesday</u> Oct. 21	Roots of Protestant Diversity: Distinctions of Protestantism	<i>Protestantism in America</i> Chap. 1
<u>Wed'day</u> Oct. 22	Film #2: "The Apostle" 7:00 p.m. , Hoover 100	
<u>Thursday</u> Oct. 23	Roots of Protestant Diversity: Distinctions of Protestantism	<i>Protestantism in America</i> Chap. 2

Sunday Field Trips on Protestantism

Oct. 26 First AME Church, 2270 South Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles
Crystal Cathedral, 13280 Chapman Avenue, Garden Grove
My Friends House (Pentecostal Church), 6525 S. Norwalk Blvd., Whittier
Calvary Chapel of La Habra, Lambert Rd.
Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church (Korean or Filipino Service),
 16900 Colima Rd., Hacienda Heights

<u>Tuesday</u> Oct. 28	Field Trip Presentations	Site Specific Readings
<u>Thursday</u> Oct. 30	Issues and Institutions of Protestant Diversity	<i>Protestantism in America</i> Chaps. 7-9, as assigned
<u>Tuesday</u> Nov. 4	Challenges and Future of American Protestantism Media and "The Simpsons"	<i>Protestantism in America</i> Chap. 10
<u>Thursday</u> Nov. 6	Paper #2 Due NO CLASS SESSION	

Muslim Diversity in America

<u>Tuesday</u> Nov. 11	Muslim Teachings, Beliefs, and Practices	<i>Islam in America</i> Chaps. 1-2
<u>Tuesday</u> Nov. 11 7:00 p.m.	Special Class Session "A Muslim Woman's Faith and Practice" Nisreen Malhis	
<u>Thursday</u> Nov. 13	Roots of Muslim Identity	<i>Islam in America</i> Chap. 3
<u>Thursday</u> Nov. 13 5:00-7:30	Special Class Session Breaking the Fast with Muslims Islamic Center of Southern California 434 South Vermont St., Los Angeles	
<u>Tuesday</u> Nov. 18	Roots of Muslim Identity	<i>Islam in America</i> Chaps. 4, Profiles
<u>Wed'day</u> Nov. 19	Film #3: "Malcolm X" 7:00 p.m. , Hoover 100	
<u>Thursday</u> Nov. 20	American Muslim Teachings, Beliefs, & Practices	<i>Islam in America</i> Chaps. 5-6

Nov. 14- Field Trips on Islam

Nov. 24 Islamic Center of Southern California, 434 South Vermont St., Los Angeles
Bitul Hameed (Ahmadiyya) Mosque, 11941 Ramona Ave., Chino
King Fahad Mosque, 11004 Washington Blvd., Culver City
Masjid Of Allah – SIJLA, 7925 Serapis Ave., Pico Rivera
New Horizons School in Irvine, One Truman St., Irvine

Tuesday Field Trip Presentations
 Nov. 25

Islam in America
 Chap. 7

Thursday **Thanksgiving Break**
 Nov. 27

Tuesday Challenges and Future for American Muslims
 Dec. 2

Islam in America
 Chap. 8

Thursday Course Wrap-Up and Evaluation
 Dec. 4

Friday Paper #3 Due by 10:30 a.m. in boxes outside Platner 112, 118, 120
 Dec. 12