**RS 306: American religious diversity**

**CSUN Spring 2016**

**Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:45, Sierra Hall 314**

Dr. Amanda Baugh

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 11:00-12:30

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

What is the relationship between one’s identity as an American and one’s identification with a minority religious group? How do religious identities shape American identities in a supposedly secular society that simultaneously “celebrates” religious difference AND maintains frequent instances of religious intolerance? What historical trajectories have led some segments of the American population to identify the nation as pluralist, and why do some segments cling tightly to nativist, intolerant strands?

These are some of the questions we will explore in RS 306: American Religious Diversity. America is one of the most religiously diverse regions in the history of humanity; it is also one of the most monolithically Christian places on Earth. How do we make sense of these two competing threads? In this course we will deal with the tension between the “mainstream” and the edges. We will examine religious diversity both within and outside of Christian traditions, considering how immigration, gender, race, class, theology, practice, and other forces have produced and been shaped by the religious ferment of North American society.

**This course is a GE Writing Intensive course, and in each WI course students will be required to complete writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2500 words.**

**Required Texts**

* Nabhan-Warren, Kristy (2013). *The Cursillo Movement in America: Catholics, Protestants, and Fourth-Day Spirituality.* [CMA]
* Wilson, Jeff (2012). *Dixie Dharma: Inside a Buddhist Temple in the American South.* [DD]
* Additional articles and chapters will be available on Moodle. [M]

**Important Student Information**

Here you will fill in important information that will help you throughout the semester.

**Your #** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Please write in the top LEFT corner of everything you hand in)

**Your row** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Please write in the top RIGHT corner of everything you hand in)

**Classmate contact information**:

Please get the name and email address of two classmates so you can call on these classmates for help if you miss a class or have a simple question.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Baugh’s Three Cardinal Rules**

The following guidelines are written in stone and should be memorized, internalized, and adhered to. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in the bestowal of the instructor’s wrath and will negatively impact your grade.

1. Arrive on time (or early). Class begins promptly at 9:30 AM. This means you should be in your seat ready to discuss course assignments every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30, not 9:31, and certainly not 9:35!
2. No cell phones. Ever. Your phone must be turned off and properly stowed in your bag prior to class takeoff (which is promptly at 9:30. See Rule #1). Your phone should NEVER be in your hand, on your desk, in your pocket, or anywhere else that it might distract you, your classmates, or the professor. Note that the professor is easily distracted by cell phones.
3. Always bring the assigned reading to class. You have a reading assignment for every class meeting and class time will be devoted to discussing that reading. In order to participate in close readings and discussions it is imperative that you have all texts assigned for the day in hand. For articles available on Moodle you must either bring a printout or have access to the document on a computer/tablet (see below for Policy on Electronics in the Classroom). IT IS NEVER OKAY TO ACCESS COURSE MATERIALS USING A CELL PHONE (See Rule #2).

**Preparation**

Hey you! Did you finish the reading? Did you finish the assignment? This is an upper-level course that requires you to read, write, and think. It’s not easy, but it’s good for you! If you are someone who likes to sit in the back and passively soak up all of the knowledge, this is not the class for you. In order to succeed (or even to survive), you have to prepare for class. Every week. Every day. Plan ahead and be ready to work. If you show up with out preparing, you might as well not show up at all. You will be lost. Put in the time and effort, and you will be rewarded with a fabulous grade and a rewarding life. In general you’ll be a better person, and a better citizen. No joke.

**Attendance**

I will show up at every class, on time or early. I expect you to do the same! I know that life happens, and for that reason your first two absences are automatically “excused.” After that, it’s time to get it together. Each additional absence will result in a loss of FOUR points from your final grade. Don’t let that happen to you! Students with perfect attendance will earn extra credit.

**Email etiquette**

I am happy to communicate with you via email and will do my best to respond within 24 hours during the week. When I’m at home with my family, I’m at home with my family and not worried about you! Messages sent over the weekend will be read on Mondays, and messages sent at night will be read the next day. If it’s 3 AM and you’re feeling panicked, angry, frustrated, or annoyed, that most likely is NOT a good time to send an email. Ever. To me or anyone else. Take this as an important life lesson. It will serve you well.

If you are sure that your questions or comments are professional and appropriate, be sure to include these professional courtesies:

In the subject line please indicate the content of the email (not the single word URGENT or anything related) and begin your message in the following manner:

Dear Dr. Baugh,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am in your RS 306 class.

Take heed of this wonderful Internet advice: ***“Failure to plan on your part does NOT constitute an emergency on my part.”***

**Grading/Evaluation**

Your grade will be calculated using the points system. Throughout the semester you will have the opportunity to earn up to 200 points. Your grade will be calculated by dividing the total points you earned by the total points possible, 200.

\*\*Note – I will enter the grades for each assignment into the Moodle grade book to give you a sense of your overall progress in the class. However, please note that I will use an excel spreadsheet, and NOT the Moodle grade book, to calculate your final grade. This is because Moodle does not permit some of the functions required for final calculations, including dropping the lowest grade in certain categories and reducing points earned due to excessive absences.

You will earn points in the following areas:

1. **“Yes I Did the Reading” (YIDTR) assignments (20 points) –** (11-12 total, 2 points each)

Careful examination of assigned readings is essential for this discussion-based course, so you will be held accountable for completion of reading assignments each week. YIDTR assignments generally consist of reading questions to be completed in advance and posted to Moodle. Responses should consist of AT LEAST 100 words. Please DO NOT write out the question(s). Write only your response.

There will be 11-12 assignments worth two points each, so may choose to skip 1-2 assignments. Note: YIDTR assignments are designed to ensure that you complete reading assignments BEFORE class. For that reason, late assignments cannot be accepted.

1. **Quizzes (50 points)** – (3 total, 25 points each)

Because this is designated as an IC (Information Competence) course, you will be responsible for building and retaining factual knowledge. To that end, there will be 3 quizzes during the semester. You must be present in class to complete the quizzes – make-up quizzes are never possible for any reason. However, your lowest quiz grade will be dropped, so you can miss one quiz without penalty. Students who earn 90% or higher on all 3 quizzes will earn 2 extra credit points.

1. **Short Essay (20 points)**

You will write one short essay at the beginning of the semester. Details will be discussed in class and posted on Moodle.

1. **Midterm Exam (35 points)**

There will be an in-class midterm exam on Thursday March 17. We will discuss exam format and details in class.

1. **Final Exam (35 points)**

There will be a seated final exam during our scheduled final exam time: Tuesday May 17 at 8:00 AM.

1. **Class Project (40 points)** –

Throughout the semester you will work on a group research project in which you investigate religious diversity at CSUN. Details will be discussed in class and posted on Moodle.

\*\*\*You MUST take the Midterm and Final Exams during the scheduled time. Barring any serious, **documented** emergency, you will be ineligible to make up a missed exam.

Grade Range

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 95-100% = A | 77-79% = C+ | 60-63% = D- |
| 90-94% = A- | 74–76% = C | > 60% = F |
| 87-89% = B+ | 70-73% = C- |  |
| 84-86% = B | 67-69% = D+ |  |
| 80-83% = B- | 64-66% = D |  |

**Policy on electronics in the classroom**

If you are a studious and engaged student who likes to take notes or access reading assignments on your computer or tablet, *AND YOU CAN AVOID THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE INTERNET,* choose a seat in the **first three rows** of the classroom and go for it! If you are a slacker/easily distracted/addicted to Internet shopping/Facebook/porn/other temptations, I’m here to help. You officially may NOT use your computer or tablet during class. See? Problem solved.

In other words, texting, playing games, checking email, shopping, preparing for other classes, or any other distractions during class time are strictly prohibited. **Use of phones during class is NEVER allowed.** If you choose to ignore the policy on electronics in the classroom, I will choose to lower your grade and revoke your computer privileges for the rest of the semester. It’s written in the syllabus so believe me, this is the LAW of the class!

**Plagiarism/Cheating**

The CSUN Religious Studies Department is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence, honesty, and integrity. Students are expected to do their own work. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught cheating or helping someone else cheat will receive an F on the assignment and will be subject to disciplinary action such as suspension or expulsion.

For more information of the behavior defined as academic dishonesty, and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, consult pages 614-615 of the 2010-2012 CSUN catalog. **Remember, too, that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by U.S. copyright laws**. Passing off this information as your own is plagiarism and carries the penalties outlined above.

**Accommodation for disabilities**

If you have a disability and need accommodations, please register with the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) office or the National Center on Deafness (NCOD). The DRES office is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110 and can be reached at (818) 677-2684. NCOD is located on Bertrand Street in Jeanne Chisholm Hall and can be reached at (818) 677-2611. If you would like to discuss your need for accommodations with me, please contact me to set up an appointment.

**RS 306 Class Schedule\***

\*NOTE: Consult Moodle for the most current list of assignments.

Reading assignments and written assignments are subject to revision as needed. I will announce all revisions in class and do my best to make sure that everyone knows about revisions. If you miss class, you must nevertheless submit assignments according to any revisions that we make to the schedule. You should either make sure that you do not miss class or find a sure way of becoming aware of any revisions we make to the schedule or syllabus.

**Week 1 (Jan 26, 28): Introductions**

Read:

* “The Gospel According to Trump” <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/18/opinion/campaign-stops/the-gospel-according-to-trump.html?_r=0>
* “Obama’s Interfaith Vision and the Restlessness of our Wretched Refuse” <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-donald-heckman/obamas-interfaith-vision-_b_8972018.html>

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 2 (Feb 2, 4): Getting to know Religious Studies and American Religion**

Read:

* Nye, “Religion: Some Basics” (M)
* Northey et. al., “Getting to know Religious Studies” (M)
* Eck, “A New Religious America” (M)

Do:

* Explore the Pew Religious Landscape Study: <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>
* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 3 (Feb 9, 11): Diversity and Pluralism**

Read:

* Boisi Center, “Religious Pluralism in the United States”

Do:

* Write 2-page essay on personal religious and American identities
* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 4 (Feb 16, 18): Religion and Immigration**

Read:

* Kurien, “Becoming American by Becoming Hindu” (M)

Do:

* Prepare for Quiz #1 on Thurs Feb 18
* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 5 (Feb 23, 25): Religion and Immigration**

Read:

* Leon, “Born Again in East LA” (M)
* Kim and Leavitt, “Second-Generation Asian Americans and Judaism” (M)

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 6 (March 1, 3): Beginning the Class Project**

Read:

* “Finding and Using Academic Resources” (M)
* CMA

Do:

* Prepare for Quiz #2 on Tues March 1
* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 7: (March 8, 10) Cursillos**

Read:

* CMA

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 8 (March 15, 17): Cursillos**

Read:

* CMA

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment
* Prepare for Midterm Exam – in class on Thurs March 17

**March 21-25 HAPPY SPRING BREAK!!**

**Week 9 (March 29): Cesar Chavez**

Read:

* “Giving an Oral Presentation”
* Article TBA

**Week 10 (April 5, 7) : Dixie Dharma**

Read:

* DD

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 11 (Apr 12, 14): Dixie Dharma**

Read:

* DD

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment
* Prepare for Quiz #3 on Thurs Apr 14

**Apr 19 Week 12: Dixie Dharma**

Read:

* DD

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 13 (April 26, 28) : Islam in America**

\*\*On Thursday April 28 we will attend a public lecture on Islam in America by Dr. Justine Howe

Read:

* Article TBA

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 14 (May 3, 5): Pluralism Revisited**

Read:

* Hutchinson, “Don’t Change Your Name: Earl Assaults on the Melting Pot Ideal”
* Additional article TBA

Do:

* Complete YIDTR Assignment

**Week 15 (May 10, 12): Group Presentations**

**FINAL EXAM**

* There will be a seated final during our scheduled final exam time: Tuesday March 17 at 8:00 AM

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES COVERED IN THIS COURSE**

RS306 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through active participation in this course, students are expected to accomplish the following:

1. To demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of the American religious landscape and to reflect carefully on the meaning of democracy and religious freedom in a society where religious diversity involves conflicting religious claims.

2. To express an understanding of the history, beliefs and rituals of the religions of selected major American minority groups, i.e. religions that are marginal to the dominant Protestant tradition.

3. To think empathetically and critically about the religion of “the other;” and explain the problematic nature of the production of academic knowledge, especially how power, nationality, ethnicity, gender, and class shape and distort knowledge about the religion of “the other.”

4. To demonstrate appropriate use of analytical tools and critical thinking skills by articulating the merits and limitations of various key concepts, theories and paradigms scholars use in describing marginalized religions

GE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Goal: Students will understand the rich history and diversity of human knowledge, discourse and achievements of their own and other cultures as they are expressed in the arts, literatures, religions, and philosophy.

Students will:

1. Explain and reflect critically upon the human search for meaning, values, discourse and  expression in one or more eras/stylistic periods or cultures;
2. Analyze, interpret, and reflect critically upon ideas of value, meaning, discourse and  expression from a variety of perspectives from the arts and/or humanities;
3. Produce work/works of art that communicate to a diverse audience through a  demonstrated understanding and fluency of expressive forms;
4. Demonstrate ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative  development within the arts and humanities;
5. Use appropriate critical vocabulary to describe and analyze works of artistic expression,  literature, philosophy, or religion and a comprehension of the historical context within  which a body of work was created or a tradition emerged;
6. Describe and explain the historical and/or cultural context within which a body of work  was created or a tradition emerged.

Writing Intensive (GE Designation WI)

Goal: Students will develop their abilities to express themselves and the knowledge they have obtained through practicing various forms of writing within different disciplinary contexts. Writing intensive courses will build upon the skills gained in the Analytical Reading and Expository Writing section of Basic Skills. In each WI course students will be required to complete writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2500 words.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Develop and clearly define their ideas through writing;
2. Ethically integrate sources of various kinds into their writing;
3. Compose texts through drafting, revising, and completing a finished product;
4. Express themselves through their writing by posing questions, making original claims, and coherently structuring complex ideas;
5. Revise their writing for greater cogency and clarity;
6. Utilize adopted communication modes and documentation styles of specific disciplines (MLA, APA, Chicago, CBE, etc) where appropriate.

INFORMATION COMPETENCE (GE DESIGNATION IC)

Students will progressively develop information competence skills throughout their undergraduate career by developing a basic understanding of information retrieval tools and practices as well as improving their ability to evaluate and synthesize information ethically. Students will:

1. Determine the nature and extent of information needed;
2. Demonstrate effective search strategies for finding information using a variety of sources and methods;
3. Locate, retrieve, and evaluate a variety of relevant information including print and electronic formats.
4. Organize and synthesize information in order to communicate effectively;
5. Explain the legal and ethical dimensions of the use of information.