***California State University Northridge***

***RS 307OL: Religion in America***

***Spring 2017***

# *Instructor:* Mary Jane O'Donnell, Ph.D.

## *Ticket Number:* 14813

# *Course Day/Time:* Online only; no class meetings.

## *On Campus Office Hours:* 2:00 to 4:00 on Fridays

***Online Office Hours:*** 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Thursdays.

***Office:*** Room 233, Santa Susana Hall

***Telephone:*** 818-677-2742 (Office hours only)

**Email: mjod@csun.edu**

***Course Description:*** This course will provide students with an in-depth examination of the religious traditions, practices, and beliefs that have shaped the American character. By approaching America’s religious history as a complex, dynamic, and reflexive process of interaction involving all segments of American society, we will determine how America’s religious history has affected and, in turn, been affected by America’s political, social, economic, and cultural history.

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| ***Student Learning Outcomes for RS 307:*** |
| 1. Students will explain and reflect critically on the human search for meaning, values, discourse and expression in the historical development of religions in the United States from the founding period until the present. |
| 1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the historical and cultural contexts within which American religious institutions were created. |
| 1. Students will be able to recognize the influence of religion on contemporary American political institutions and politics, culture and society. |
| 1. Students will be able to describe the role of religion in the shaping of American concepts of race, gender, and national identity. |
| 1. Students will use appropriate critical vocabulary to describe and analyze works of American religious expression orally and in essays. |

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| ***Arts and Humanities GE:*** *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.* |
| Student Learning Outcomes/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; |
| 1. Analyze, interpret, and reflect critically upon ideas of value, meaning, discourse and expression from a variety of perspectives from the arts and/or humanities; |
| 1. Produce work/works of art that communicate to a diverse audience through a demonstrated understanding and fluency of expressive forms; |
| 1. Demonstrate ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development within the arts and humanities; |
| 1. 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; |
| 1. Describe and explain the historical and/or cultural context within which a body of work was created or a tradition emerged. |

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| *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. |

***Required Texts:***

* Charles H. Lippy, *Introducing American Religion*, Routledge, 2009
* Selected Readings posted on Moodle

***Instructor Office Hours:*** My office hours are posted above. I look forward to working with each of you in class and on an individual basis. Therefore, I urge you to take advantage of my office hours. I am happy to discuss any aspect of this course with you, and help you with the assignments. I especially urge you to see me if you are confused about the course or an assignment. Really successful students ask questions!

***Technological Information:*** This class, which will be entirely online, will employ Moodle as our “classroom.” ***YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING HOW TO USE THIS FORMAT!*** For instruction on how to use this technology, go to <http://www.csun.edu/it/student-moodle-help/> You may also contact the IT Help Center for information: 818-677-1500.

***Character of the Course:*** This course will be primarily independent reading punctuated by required weekly discussions about the readings. Each Monday I will post an introduction to the week’s assignments. A week in this class will begin on Monday mornings at 6:00 a.m. and end on Sundays at 11:00 p.m. when all assignments for the week, including your reading, discussion, and writing assignments, will be due.

***Individual Responsibility:***As with all classes, you are responsible for the work you do in this class. However, unlike traditional classes that meet in real time and place, an online course can be dangerously deceptive. Although there are deadlines, you are free to do much of the work when you wish. While this may be convenient, there can be a dangerous tendency toward procrastination. Leaving everything to the end, whether the week’s readings and deadlines or end of course obligations, is a very dangerous course of action in terms of your grade. I urge you to look at all of the obligations you will have overall during the semester—in this course and in others—and plan accordingly.

***Student Online Readiness Survey:***  Although online courses may seem like a breeze, they are not. In fact, not everyone’s learning style is suited to such a course. I urge you to take the Student Online Readiness Survey before taking this class. It may be found on the Moodle home page.

***Course Assignments:***

* + - ***Weekly Quizzes:*** There will be weekly quizzes that will cover all of the assigned material (texts, videos, etc.) for the week. Specific information about the quizzes will be on Moodle. *50% of your grade.*
    - ***Primary Source Discussion Forum:*** Each week a primary source will be assigned for you to read. You must conduct basic research regarding the source in order to understand its context and its relevance to the material assigned for the week. You will post a 150+ word commentary regarding specific information about the source. It is very important to note that you may not repeat points or observations made by those who have already posted unless you provide new information and ideas that significantly advance the original point. This means that you must first read what other students have written and then look for new sources for your post. More complete instructions are on Moodle. *15% of your grade.*
    - ***General Discussion Forums:*** There will be one general discussion forum that will explore what you think are the most important aspects of the week’s assigned material. You must post a 150+ word commentary on the general discussion forum. As with the Primary Source Discussion Forum, you cannot repeat the information or ideas that previous posters have made unless you significantly advance the understanding of the original point. In other words, each post must be original. *15% of your grade.*
    - ***Research Paper:*** Students will prepare one research paper, which will be an extensive analysis of a primary source of seminal importance to religion in America. Possible sources and specific directions may be found on the class’s Moodle site. *20% of your grade.*

***Course Requirements:***

* Students must read all texts assigned for the week and review, watch or read all resources presented, including videos.
* All commentaries and the research paper must be written according to basic scholarly standards appropriate for university level work. Not only does this include proper grammar, punctuation, and syntax, but also serious reflection on your topic. There are many sources to help you with your writing assignments. The most important is the Writing Program at CSUN’s Learning Resource Center, Oviatt Library (3rd Floor, East Wing), or call 818-677-2033. For more information: <http://www.csun.edu/lrc/writing.html>
* All papers and weekly discussion assignments must be posted on Moodle on or by the date and time listed. Once the deadline has passed you will not be able to make up the assignment. However, I will make an exception only if there is an extremely serious documented reason why you cannot do the assignment. Otherwise, a student who fails to submit an assignment on time will receive a 0 for the assignment. Period.
* Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a failing grade, certainly for the item plagiarized, but also quite possibly for the course as well.

***Grading: Plus-Minus System will be used***

* + - ***Weekly Quizzes:*** 50%
    - ***Primary Source Discussion Forum:*** 15%
    - ***General Discussion Forum:*** 15%
    - ***Research Paper:*** 20%

***Course Schedule*:**

***Week 1: January 23-29***

* ***Introduction: Religion in America: The Current State of Affairs***
  + Read: “Introduction: Approaches to the Study of Religion and Religion in America” and “The History and Memory of Religion in America” (On Moodle)
  + Watch: “America’s New Religious Landscape” (Electronic Resource on Oviatt Library’s Website and on RS 307 Moodle site.)
  + Read: Summary of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life/U.S. Religious Landscape Survey and Table on Religious Affiliations in America (On Moodle)
  + Examine: Interactive database tool (On Moodle)
  + Read: “How to Read Primary Sources” (On Moodle)
  + Read Primary Source: “The Mayflower Compact” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums.
  + Quiz #1

***Week Two: January 30-February 5***

* ***The Beginning***
  + Read “Religious Diversity in the Age of Colonial Conquest,” Lippy, 1-16;
  + Read “European Settlers Increase Religious Diversity,” Lippy, 17-29;
  + Examine Primary Source: The Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums.
  + Quiz #2

***Week Three: February 6-12***

* ***Puritans***
  + Read “Mary Dyer Must Die,” Wills, 15-36 (On Moodle)
  + Read “The Puritan Psyche,” Wills, 37-53 (On Moodle)
  + Read Primary Source John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity” (Download from Moodle)
  + Watch: “God in America: A New Adam” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #3.

***Week Four: February 13-19***

* ***Religion in Colonial America***
  + Read “The Expanding Religious Culture of English Colonial America,” Lippy, 30-44
  + Read “Spur to Enlightenment: The Great Awakening,” Wills, 100-117 (On Moodle)
  + Read Nathan Cole’s Account of George Whitefield in Middletown, Connecticut on Thursday, October 23, 1740. (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #4

***Week Five: February 20-26***

* ***Religion and Revolution: Church and State***
  + Read “Religion in an Age of Revolution,” Lippy, 45-60
  + Read “Deists,” Wills, 153-171 (On Moodle)
  + Look at and Analyze Primary Source: Reverse of the Great Seal of the United States, Lippy, p. 51
  + Watch: “God in America: A New Eden” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #5

***Week Six: February 27-March 5***

* ***Disestablishment, Part I***
  + Read: “Beyond Tolerance” and “Jefferson’s Statute,” Wills, 175-202 (On Moodle)
  + Read Primary Source: Jefferson’s Letter from/to Danbury Baptists (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #6

***Week Seven: March 6-12***

* ***Disestablishment, Part II***
  + Read “Madison’s Remonstrance” and “First Amendment”
  + Read Primary Source: “Memorial and Remonstrance” by James Madison (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #7

***Week Eight: March 13-19***

* ***Evangelicalism*** 
  + Read “Native Americans and African Americans Challenge Religious Life,” Lippy, 61-74
  + Read “Evangelical America,” Lippy, 75-90
  + Listen to Primary Source: “Wade in the Water” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #8

***Week Nine: March 20-26***

* ***Religion in the Nineteenth Century***
  + Read “Religious Experimentation Brings More Diversity,” Lippy, 91-107
  + Read “Catholic and Jewish Growth Stretch Diversity,” Lippy, 108-122
  + Read Debate between Josiah Strong and Cardinal Gibbons over Catholicism’s “threat” to American democracy. (On Moodle)
  + Watch: “The Mormons” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz # 9

***Week Ten: March 27-April 2***

* ***Spring Break***

***Week Eleven: April 3-9***

* ***Religion and the Civil War***
  + Read “The Impact of Civil War and Regionalism,” Lippy, 123-136
  + Read “Schisms Over Slavery” and “God of Battles,” Wills, 303-335
  + Read Primary Source: Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address (on Moodle)
  + Watch “A Nation Reborn: God in America/How Religious Liberty Shaped America” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #10

***Week Twelve: April 10-16***

* ***Post Civil War America***
  + Read “Immigrants, Industries, and Cities, Lippy, 137-153
  + Read “Other Dimensions of Urbanizing America,” Lippy, 154-171
  + Read Primary Source: Introduction to the *Women’s Bible (On Moodle*
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #11

***Week Thirteen: April 17-23***

* ***Modernity***
  + Read “Modernity Brings More Change,” Lippy 172-186
  + Read “Reaction and Retreat,” Lippy, 187-200
  + Watch “A New Light: God in America/How Religious Liberty Shaped America” (On Moodle)
  + Read Primary Source: The Fundamentals (excerpts) (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #12

***Week Fourteen: April 24-30***

* ***Seeking Unity***
  + Read “Quests for Unity Amid Diversity,” Lippy, 201-216
  + Watch “I Have a Dream” speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. (On Moodle)
  + Watch “Soul of a Nation” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #13

***Week Fifteen: May 1-7***

* ***New Faiths and Traditions in America***
  + Read “The ‘New Pluralism’ of the Later Twentieth Century,” Lippy, 217-232
  + Read “The Many Faces of Pluralism in Postmodern America,” Lippy 233-247
  + Scan “The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.” (On Moodle)
  + Post on Primary Source Discussion Forum
  + Post on one of the two General Discussion Forums
  + Quiz #14

***Week Sixteen: May 8-12***

* ***Research Paper***

***Important to note:*** This syllabus is subject to change. I will make every effort to notify you in advance about any changes.

***DRES:*** 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.