CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE Department of Religious Studies

**WOMEN AND RELIGION, RS 304 (19471) Sp2017** REVISED: 2/1/2017

Dr. Ingrid Wilkerson

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Office hours: SN 419 6:30 to 7:30 AM and 2 - 3 PM Friday and via Skype by appointment. ONLINE Wed 10-11am.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Students will read original documents from various religious world views by and about women from ancient to modern times. The focus of the class is to determine the various themes covered by the authors for analysis under the larger idea of recognizing the duality of women’s position within each faith. The reading material will move somewhat chronologically through religions and the regions where each is most prominent, with very little historical background for context, other than time and place. Context will be focused on in class discussions. Understanding the social construction of the "nature" and roles of women in religious and the world is our goal.

Religious studies courses give students a chance to develop and utilize important analytical skills, as well as comprehension of the pervasiveness of “timeless” biases and stereotypes attributed to women. Students will also recognize the diversity of discourses and how interpretations of those discourses have changed over time as influenced by society and politics. Females, in particular, have been assigned symbolic roles in religion that rarely translate into the everyday reality of real women, primarily because of the additional layer of patriarchy developed over the millennia in various cultures. Not surprising, is the monotheisms’ complicity in reinforcing cultural and political gender norms perpetuating conflicting ideas about women accumulated over time and place. Finally, modernity has increased the complexity of gendered understanding partly because of “religious” resistance to change even though civil society in many cultures has recognized that gender biases and abuse are not compatible with concepts of basic human rights.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**:

**CLASS WORK:** attendance, preparation, interpretation, and discussion are an important part of your grade, which also includes following instructions. Participation means speaking in class and you must actively and effectively contribute during class if you want to work toward the full 100 points.

You get ONE unexcused absence, then your grade will be reduced by 1/3 for each subsequent unexcused absence. To be considered for excuse, I have to receive an email from you NO LATER than the day of the absence. No email /no excuse. I make the determination whether it is an acceptable reason or not. It is your responsibility to sign the class roll sheet.

**READING**: All assigned reading below must be read BEFORE class the following week.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Serinity Young, *An Anthology of Sacred Texts by and about Women*. ADDITIONAL reading will be found online on Moodle under “Online Readings.” Students will bring these to class discussion, along with their textbook. AND you may go to the Oviatt Library website, search for the *Encyclopedia of Religion* for background on the religions, as it is an electronic source or you may use the book if you happen to be in the library. Otherwise NO OUTSIDE SOURCES ALLOWED! 50% loss of points if assignment uses sources other than what is assigned. 0 points with no possibility of make up if this is also uncited (plagiarized).

**ASSIGNMENTS 5 :** 3 writings, 3 pages and 75 points each. 2 quizzes totaling 75 points.

POINTS: A 400-372 A- 371-360

B+ 359-348 B 347-332 B- 331-320

C+ 319-308 C 307-292 C- 291-280

D+ 279-268 D 267-252 D- 251-240

**DISCUSSION instructions for online course:**  
You will respond to the assigned question by 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday it is due. Your posts should be between 400 and 500 words each. Your response must be about 150 to 250 words and must ADD information to the thread. You are NOT critiquing anyone's writing, you are analyzing the argument and either adding to or offering contradicting evidence to the discussion.  
 **All discussion board comments should:**  
• be written in complete sentences and in Standard Written English.  
• not include vulgar, rude, or insulting language.  
• represent academic discourse (though you may also include “personal” examples, stories, etc.).  
  
Your discussion board participation will be evaluated according to the following  
1. If you are engaged, you struggle, you open up, and you deal with the difficult, you will earn points in the C range.

2. If, in addition to one above, your writing is clear, organized, proofread, and you use good quotes as examples and proof, you will earn points in the B range.

3. If, in addition to (1) and (2) above, you demonstrate intellectual imagination, you will earn points in the A range.

**ESSAY instructions:**

Your essay is what can be called a microtheme, which is a short, rigorously argued essay. Depending upon the assignment, a microtheme asks you to summarize arguments, organize evidence, compare texts/claims, state a thesis, support a thesis, and develop a critical perspective on an issue or text in a very condensed format.

Each microtheme must:

* be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday evening they are due. Late microthemes will not be accepted. MUST BE A WORD DOCUMENT, NO PDFs.
* be typed, with single-spaced paragraphs, double-spaced between paragraphs.
* be no LESS than 750 words unless otherwise specified (equivalent of a little over 3 double-spaced typed pages).
* follow the directions given in the prompt.

**Microtheme Evaluation:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100 pts. | * Controlled by a clear, concise, well-defined thesis, sophisticated in statement and insight. * Ideas are well developed, clearly explained, and presented in a thoughtful, sophisticated manner. Clear evidence of sophisticated, independent intellectual pursuit. * Shows a mastery of the assigned texts, offering insights and interpretations that go well-beyond ideas presented in class * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references seems particularly apt. |
| 80-89 pts. | * Controlled by a clear, well-defined thesis. * Ideas are well developed, clearly explained, and presented in a thoughtful manner. Clear evidence of thoughtful engagement with the material. * Clear evidence of having thoroughly read the assigned text, offering insights and interpretations that go beyond ideas presented in class * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references is effective. |
| 70-79 pts. | * Has a general thesis or controlling idea. * Ideas are presented in an organized manner. Clear evidence of engagement with the material. * Clear evidence of having read the assigned text. * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references is appropriate. |
| 60-69 pts. | * No thesis, or one that is extremely vague. * Tends to ramble. Does not get to the point. Contains extraneous information. * Demonstrates a familiarity with the assigned text(s). * Claims not supported with appropriate textual evidence. |
| 59 or less pts. | * Seems to have been done in haste. * Suggests a superficial understanding of the text(s) and assignment. * Intellectually weak. * Poorly written |
| 00 pts. | Plagiarized material |

**Top 10 Errors on Microthemes** From **Andrew Evans, Indiana University**

**1. The essay does not answer the question.** Many students in this course, especially in the beginning of the semester, tend to write essays that do not address or answer the question. Your essay should include an introductory paragraph that answers the question in one or two sentences. This will provide your essay with a thesis. Avoid essays that simply summarize events or plot - these papers do not answer the question and usually receive zero points.

**2. No structure.** Your essay should have a logical structure that includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. If your microtheme is one large paragraph, then your paper has no framework to guide the reader. Each paragraph in your paper should make a separate point. Write an outline before you begin writing in order to give your paper a structure.

**3. A thesis that argues nothing.** Another common error is a thesis that seems to address that question, but actually says nothing. For example, in answer to the question, "In the Bhagavad Gita how does Krishna get Arjuna to understand that life is impermanent? Student’s who DO NOT have any argument in mind often write:

BAD "In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna gets Arjuna to understand that life is impermanent in important ways." (THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT NOT TO WRITE!) But what are those ways? This sentence simply restates the question without answering it. A thesis should be specific and meaningful.

GOOD “In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna convinces Arjuna that all physical life is impermanent and the spirit is eternal, so killing the body is not an end.”

**4. Unexplained quotes.** DO NOT assume that passages quoted from sources will explain themselves. Quotes must be preceded or followed by at least a sentence or two that explains what it tells us and where it fits in your argument.

**5. Confusion about voices.** Many students confuse the voice and opinions of the author they are writing about with their own voices and opinions. When answering a question about Jean Jacques Rousseau's view of women in Emile, for example, be careful not to present his opinions as if they were your own. If, in your paper, you write:

"Women should be educated to be subservient and obedient."

then the reader will think this is your own opinion. If, on the other hand, you write:

"According to Rousseau, women should be educated to be subservient and obedient."

Then it is clear to the reader that you are discussing Rousseau's views, not your own.

**6. Tense shift.** A common stylistic error is switching between past and present tense over the course of an essay. You should use the same tense consistently throughout your paper. Here is an example:

"Elizabeth and Mary were disrespectful towards there sister. They look down on Anne and treat her like dirt."

The first sentence uses the past tense while the second uses the present tense. This mistake is easy to catch by checking your work carefully. And did you spot the egregious typo???

**7. Unnecessary words.** Effective and clear writing avoids unnecessary words. The following sentence is wordy and confusing:

"Basically, in the book Germinal, Catherine was expected to do lots of different stuff around the house, and she was supposed to work in the mines all the time too."

By omitting needless words and combining phrases, this sentence becomes clearer and more effective:

"In Germinal, Catherine was expected to work not only around the house but in the mines too."

**8. No page references or citation.** When using a quote or an idea from any source, you should ALWAYS provide an in-text reference, e.g. (Smith, 98). FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS CLASS, I am more concerned with what you think and understand than you regurgitating someone else’s ideas. YOU CANNOT USE ANY OUTSIDE OR ONLINE SOURCE other than what was required for this class for quotes, and you MUST CITE YOUR SOURCE FOR ANY NON- COMMON KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION, otherwise it is plagiarized. My determination that something is plagiarized results in 0 points for the assignment. There are no magical coincidences that you happened to write or mirror another source with your writing. Mathematical probability is decidedly against this happening, requiring infinite time and attempts, therefore impossible in reality.

**9. Some common grammatical mistakes.** Simple grammatical errors often detract from otherwise excellent papers. The following words are often used incorrectly:

* **it's and its** "It's" is the contraction for "it is," as in "It's raining today." (See also 10 below.) "Its" without an apostrophe is a possessive, as in "The flag in all its glory…"
* **there, their, they're** "There" is spatial, "over there." "Their" is possessive, " Their home's are in the same neighborhood." "They're" is a contraction of "they are."
* **effect and affect** "Effect" is a noun, as in "The effect of the stock market collapse was a panic among investors." "Affect" is the verb, as in "The collapse of the stock market affected millions of people."
* **For more help: http://www.grammar-monster.com/**

**10. Use of contractions.** Contractions, like "can't" and "isn't," should NOT be used in formal writing. One should also AVOID the personal pronouns I, you, he, and she.

**On Plagiarism**

**plagiarize**   /'pledrz/ ( also **plagiarise** ) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mwbw9KF-ACY> → ***verb***  [with obj.] take (the work or an idea of someone else) and pass it off as one's own.

• take the work or an idea of (someone) and pass it off as one's own.

- DERIVATIVES **plagiarizer** ***noun*** .

(From: "plagiarize verb"  *The Oxford Dictionary of English* (revised edition). Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2005. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press.  CSUN Academic Dishonesty: http://www.csun.edu/bus302/Course/Materials/AcademicHonesty/academic.dishonesty.pdf

2 of the most common forms of plagiarism are:

2. Paraphrase: Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in your own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Locke’s comment . . .’’ and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.

3. Borrowed Facts or Information: Information obtained in one’s reading or research which is not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. Examples of common knowledge might include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc.

**GE STUDENT SLOs**

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.

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;

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.

**SLOs for RS 304. Women and Religion**

1. Students will be able to explain and reflect critically on the search for and evidence of the “feminine sacred” and its persistence, meaning, and expression in pre-history and history.  
   
2. Students will be able to demonstrate their basic use of strategies to analyze and interpret the roles, symbols and concepts of and about women in religion in oral and literary cultures.  
  
3. Students will define the concepts of "religion" and "religious" as they particularly apply to women and religion.  
   
4. Students will demonstrate basic familiarity with select histories and contemporary experiences of women and religion in diverse global traditions.  
  
5. Students will be able to analyze, interpret and reflect on the development of feminist theologies and theories in both the Western and Eastern religious traditions and societies.  
  
6. Students will produce essays (following IC guidelines) on women and religion that utilize one or more of the several methodologies introduced in the course and the reading.

**Religious studies SLOs:** 1. Ability to interpret religious texts and other cultural phenomena (such as rituals, myths, architecture) that have religious presuppositions or implications.

2. Think empathetically and critically about conflicting religious claims.

3. Ability to use cross-0cultural methods of religious inquiry and analysis.

**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 disciplinarry 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 compete writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2500 words.

WI SLOs:

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.

**COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change at Professor’s discretion)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Week/Date** | **YOUR GPS FOR THE CLASS. Each week shows what will do in class and then the next section on the table is what your homework is for the following week.** |
| **INTRODUCTION** | |
| **Week 1:**  **Jan 27** | **LECTURE & DISCUSSION:** PowerPoint - Introductions all around. Intro to syllabus and materials.  **IN-CLASS WRITING SAMPLE:** Epic of Gilgamesh  **LECTURE**: Start context for the readings for next week. (15 min) |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week in Young “Introduction" (ix-xxviii)  **Online:** Cooey “Introduction,” Franzmann "Introduction" and Ch 2 "Learning Languages--A Context for Reading and Writing About Women in Religion." (63 pp reading will be a lot lighter in volume after this.)  FOR THE FUN OF IT: Break a norm. This could be as simple as standing facing everyone in the elevator, or acting like the "other" gender, or wearing jammies to get coffee, or even something your family/friends/significant other just wouldn't expect. DO NOT do something dangerous, extreme, or newsworthy, LOL. If you normally get up at noon, get up early one morning and bring someone coffee...just break 1 norm...and then jot down what happened. We'll share next class. |
| **Week 2: Feb 3** | **DISCUSSION NORM BUSTERS:** anyone have something fun to report?  **LECTURE & DISCUSSION:** This week's reading of introductions to how we study gender. Any questions about the reading? Important points.  **LECTURE**: Finish context for the readings for next week.(30 min) |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Young—Ancient Near East Introduction and Egypt 126-127, 130-133; Mesopotamia 133-136; Paganism introduction 180 - 181; Finland "Creation myth" 206-207; Shamanism Introduction 216-217; Aztec 235-236; Africa 251-253 **Online**: “Maui and his Grandma” and “Making a good argument” (19 pp)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Take note on how many different roles women play in these myths. Keep in mind the themes and various ideas about women. For example, isn’t it odd that the mother of the Aztec gods (some of the most fearsome warriors in mythology) was doing penance and sweeping? |
| **Paganism and Polytheists** | |
| **Week 3:**  **Feb 10**  **Week 3:**  **continued** | **DISCUSSION:** What themes did we find and what types of "women?" OUTLINE these things on the board.  **LECTURE** : Context for Ancient Greece and Rome. (45 min)  **Assignment #1 quiz:** on basic analytical observations of this first set of myths. Due by Feb 12th before midnight. |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Young—Goddesses, Egypt/Isis 128-130; Priestesses Mesopotamia/Inana 140-142. Mythological Women, Ancient Greece 142; Pandora & Clytemnestra 144-147; Aristotle on real women 157-159; Real Women, Rome-Women and Law/Lucretius on Women/Pregnancy and Menstruation 167-171.  **Online**: Plato, excerpt from *The Republic* (19 pp)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: What is the nature of women as perceived by men, whether goddess, mythological, or real? Why do you think men are so concerned with women's body functions? What new themes do we see in these readings? Power and settled society, who so important? |
| **Week 4:**  **Feb 17** | **DISCUSSION:**  Continue looking at what themes we find and what types of "women" are in this week's readings.  **LECTURE** : Context for India and Hinduism. Thesis due. (45 min) |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Young—Hinduism, Introduction 266-8; Durga 298-300; Sri Laksmi 302-305; Laws of Manu 277-279.  **Online**: Gupta 15-38 (33 pp).  “Sita Sings the Blues” (read the brief synopsis of the Ramayana for the story) click on the link. Click “Watch it” and enjoy Sita’s story, especially when Mother Earth takes her back and Rama sheds a tear...yes that is supposed to be funny.  Questions to consider while reading: If Sita and Laksmi represent perfect wives, what does Durga add to the identity of women? How do the "Laws of Manu" fit into Indian conceptions of identity? Do you think, if women had a say, they'd agree with the Laws of Manu? Why didn't they protest them like the Roman women did with the sumptuary laws? Power and gender?  Preparation for Essay: Write your thesis right after reading Gupta and bring it to next week's class. This will be 10 points of your paper. Instructions on Moodle. |
| **India & Hinduism** | |
| **Week 5:**  **Feb 24** | **IN CLASS & DISCUSSION:** Start with going over theses and questions on Gupta. Construction of gender in India from the readings.  **LECTURE:** Context for Confucianism and Daoism in China (After break) |
| **Due for next week's class.**  **Due for next week's class, continued** | **Assignment #2:** GUPTA ESSAY DUE before MIDNIGHT Thursday Mar 2nd. Turn it in as an attachment on Moodle.  **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Young—Confucianism Introduction 340; Start at “*The Judgment*"…” 346-347; excerpt starting “What follows is the last part…” 349; Pan Chao intro 357, Ch IV 359, Ch VI 360; Folktales-“Cure for Jealousy” (first part through “There was no criticism from inside or out.”) 369-370.  Taoism Introduction 378; Creation/Tao as Female 379-381; bottom of 383 (“The following two excerpts…)-384; Queen Mother/Goddess of the Lo River/Li Chi Slays the Serpent 391-4. (17 pp)  **Online**: [http://www.npr.org/2011/06/15/137106354/in-asia-the-perils-of-aborting-girls-and-keeping-boys](http://www.npr.org/2011/06/15/137106354/in-asia-the-perils-of-aborting-girls-and-keeping-boys%20) (This offers both audio and article from a book regarding sex selective abortions.)  Questions to consider while reading: Problems with hierarchy and an ordered society? Can you dictate how people are to "be" all their lives? Are life's events controllable? Why or why not? How do people "rebel" even in strict systems? WHO finds Confucianism most useful? How does Daoism "fix" the Confucian world for real people? How do Confucianism and Daoism work together, or do they? |
| **China & Confucianism & Taoism** | |
| **Week 6:**  **Mar 3** | **DISCUSSION:** Construction of genders in the Chinese world in this week's readings.  **LECTURE** : Context for Buddhism (from the break) |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Young— Buddhism Introduction/Theravada 306-8; Ordination of the first nuns 313-315; Mahayana/An issue of Gender 317-320; Zen Stories 324-325; Vajrayana or Tantra 326; Biography of Yeshe Tsogyel 333-335.  **Online**: “Great Departure” and Gross essay 65-72 (23 pp).  Questions to consider while reading: While Buddhism adapts to each culture, are there any drawbacks? How and why do even the most "equal" religions perpetuate gender stereotypes? How do women challenge things? Why is it a "women" problem instead of a "gender problem?" What kind of Buddhism has a very specific role for women? |
| **Asian Buddhism** | |
| **Week 7:**  **Mar 10** | **DISCUSSION:** Do we still see the same gendered themes and roles in religions that claim equal "salvation?" What is the problem with essentializing gender differences, making them "uncontrollable?" Discuss how gender, and specifically women, are essentialized because of physiological differences.  **LECTURE** : Context for Judaism. (start after break) |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week--Kvam "General Introduction" and Ch 1(p 1-40).  Questions to consider while reading: What does Jewish "history" say about the role of women? Who, in Jewish society, was allowed to be a religious professional and determine the "laws of God." Given the history of the area, why didn't God "talk" to women as only Adam and Abraham talked to God. |
| **Judaism** | |
| **Week 8:**  **Mar 17** | **DISCUSSION:** Did the new religion of Judaism change the status of women in Fertile Crescent society? Polygamy in Judaism (the difference of the Jewish "histories" versus the laws. Monogamy appears to be the norm for most. Was not "banned" until around 1000 CE.  **LECTURE** : Context for Xtianity. (start after break) |
| **Due for Week 10** | **Read online:** Plaskow "Transforming the nature of the community." (87-93, 97-105) Kvam (161-169) (22 pp)    Questions to consider while reading: What does Plaskow see as the problem in Judaism? What is the answer to the problem? How did women get to be subordinate? How does the concept of "chosenness" complicate both Jewish relationships within the community and between Jews and the larger community? What simple shift to a community "model" does she recommend as an answer?  **Assignment #3:** Either create a board game using the gender information we've covered so far OR write an essay using the question given for the Plaskow reading. This is due no later than Saturday April 1st, before midnight. |
| **Mayhem rules** | |
| **Week 9:**  **Mar 20 - 26** | SPRING BREAK. ENJOY! |
| **Week 10:**  **Mar 31** | **CEASAR CHAVEZ DAY (no class)** Key word...DAY. So there is work due this week.  DON'T forget Assignment #3 is due April 1st, nope, not joking (LOL). |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **Read online**: Kvam "Christianity" 108 - 119, Anastasiuus Sinaita to Origen 130 - 135, Augustine 147- 154, Christianity 169 - 172. (25 pp)  Questions to consider while reading: How does Christianity reread the Jewish texts and why? Why does institutionalizing the church result in the removal of women? Think about how institutionalizing anything is always hierarchical. How did Paul become more important than Christ? |
| **Christianity** | |
| **Week 11:**  **Apr 7** | **DISCUSSION:** Schism in Judaism, what the Messiah brings to monotheist religiosity for women? And what does Paul bring?  **LECTURE:**  Context for Islam. (Start after break) |
| **Due for next week's class.**  **Due for next week's reading continued.** | **Read online:** Livingston "Contemporary Challenges to Traditional Religion..." p 361- 393. (32 pp)  Questions to consider while reading: What do you think of the argument about "revering" gender as a form of idolatry? Is God genderless? What role does your physical place of worship play in how you worship? Can you really have a separation of church and state? How, in a diverse society, do we keep from dictating world views to those who do not agree with us? Is there any way to draw a line between secular law and moral considerations of various religions/world views? While we often say, in the US, that religion is "personal" it has become very "public" of late, how can we live together with people who have intolerant views? |
| **Week 12:**  **Apr 14** | **DISCUSSION:** Religion and a culturally diverse society. Why is the US one of the most religious countries and home to many of the newest religions? And yet the debate rages over whether to allow women to be ordained as priests and ministers. Why do many American men and women fear/hate women in leadership roles? |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Kvam "Islam" 178 - 203 (25 pp)  Questions to consider while reading: Compare Pre-Islamic Arabia and Saudi Arabia today (remember to use the information from Livingston reading as well). Muhammad and women, and is his wife Khadija a role model for Muslim women? And then what happened to their status as Islam became more institutionalized? |
| **Islam Yesterday and Today** | |
| **WEEK 13:**  **Apr 21** | **DISCUSSION:** Can a theocracy really be democratic? Are western ideas really "polluting" or antithetical to "Middle Eastern" ideas, especially since many of those ideas came from the Eastern Mediterranean? If Islam does not reject science or modernization in building/machinery etc., why must it retain medieval ideas about women? |
| **Due for next week's class.** | Prep for Assignment #4 Pick a movie for your final essay and email me what your choice was no later than before midnight April 28th.  **READING:** Due before Friday of next week Wadud Chap 4 from *Qur'an and Woman* 62 - 91 (29 pp)  Questions to consider while reading: What is Wadud's argument about the Qur'anic passages regarding women? How does she reread passages that seem to claim women are inferior to men? How can women offer other interpretations if they do not have status equal to religious men in the society? This last question applies to all religions we studied. Even if women are not "technically inferior," if they have no authoritative status within the hierarchical structure of the religion in "this world," how do their voices get heard? |
| **WEEK 14 Apr 28** | **DISCUSSION:** Discuss Wadud's chapter and counter readings to some interpretations of the Qur'an. How can we justify rereadings? And then discuss how women can achieve the status where their voices are accepted. |
| **Due for next week's class.** | **Assignment #4:** Write an informative review a minimum of 750 words long due on May 5th. Instructions on Moodle.  **READING:** Due before Friday of next week: Find articles for discussion next Friday. Instructions on Moodle. |
| **Modernity: How much more needs to be done?** | |
| **Week 15:**  **May 5** | **DISCUSSION:** Articles and "Difficult Conversations" Map quiz review. |
| **Week 16:**  **May 12** | **ASSIGNMENT #5 MAP QUIZ:** and I will have participation points estimated.  **DISCUSSION:** What are the most critical religious issues today? We will continue to use the articles you brought in. Class will be held for the full time! Anyone leaving early will lose 10 participation points. |
| **Week 16: May 13 - 19**  **FINALS** | CHECK YOUR EMAILS UNTIL midnight May 21st for any from me just in case something is missing or incomplete. I will also send out a general email when the final points are tallied and when grades will be submitted so you can check one last time. |