MTSU GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
New Course and Course Change Proposal Form

APPROVAL SIGNATURE SHEET

Department: PHILOSOPHY

Course Prefix(es)/Number(s): RS 2030 * Credit Hours: 3

Course Title: Religion and Society

*If course is cross-listed with another department, each department must complete a separate Approval Signature Sheet.

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Dr. Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand

CAMPUS PHONE: 898-2758 EMAIL ADDRESS: Jenna.Gray-Hildenbrand@mtsu.edu

CAMPUS BOX: 73

Course must be approved by Department Curriculum Committee or equivalent.

[Signature] 25 February 2013
Department Chair Date

[Signature] 2-26-13
Academic Dean Date

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved by General Education Curriculum Committee:

[Signature]
Committee Chair Date 4-24-13

Approved by Office of General Education:

[Signature]
Director of General Education Date 4-26-13

Approved by Office of University Provost:

[Signature]
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Date 5/23/13

After obtaining signatures from Department Chair and Academic Dean, please deliver this Approval Sheet and a hard copy of the Course Proposal Form to General Education, Peck Hall 240.
MTSU GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
New Course and Course Change Proposal Form

SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES REQUIREMENT COVER SHEET

Department: Philosophy

Course Prefix/Number: RS 2030

Course Title: Religion and Society

Credit Hours: 3

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Dr. Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand

CAMPUS PHONE: 898-2758 EMAIL ADDRESS: Jenna.Gray-Hildenbrand@mtsu.edu

CAMPUS BOX: 73

Submit this Course Proposal Form as an email attachment to Dr. Sheila Otto at sotto@mtsu.edu.

Deliver a hard copy of this Course Proposal Form and the Approval Signature Sheet to the General Education Office, Peck Hall 240.
COURSE JUSTIFICATION AND OUTLINE

TBR GOAL: The goal of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement is (a) to develop in the student an understanding of self and the world by examining the content and processes used by social and behavioral sciences to discover, describe, explain, and predict human behavior and social systems; (b) to enhance knowledge of social and cultural institutions and the values of this society and other societies and cultures in the world; and (c) to understand the interdependent nature of the individual, family, and society in shaping human behavior and determining quality of life. For the purposes of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement, courses will be expected from areas such as anthropology, economics, geography, psychology, political science, and sociology. One course in health/wellness may be included in this category.

A. SUMMARY COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the course content and objectives.

   This course introduces students to the academic study of religion and society, with an emphasis on the social scientific theories and methods that dominate the field of religious studies today. The goals of the course are to provide students with the theoretical skills and methodological tools necessary 1) to recognize, describe, compare, contrast, and explain religious phenomena both locally and globally; 2) to analyze the role of religion as a social and cultural institution and how religious values and worldviews inform both personal behavior and a religious community’s relationship to local and global society and culture; and 3) to understand how the beliefs and practices of religious people both influence and are influenced by personal, familial, social, cultural, political, economic, and gendered contexts and how social and cultural contexts shape and are shaped by religious motivations, behaviors, and aspirations in this life and what lies beyond this life.

   Concepts addressed and analyzed in this course may include (but are not limited to): theory and methods in the study of religion and society, sacred texts, sacred space, religious experience, morality, salvation, gender, pilgrimage, rites of passage, festivals, holidays, ritual healing, secularization, politics, and nationalism.

   Drawing from religious studies theories and methodologies, this course introduces students to the social scientific tools used to describe, explain, and analyze religion in its cultural and social contexts. Given the distinctive role
religion has played, and continues to play, in global culture, this course provides students with a cultural literacy that is invaluable in our increasingly diverse and multicultural society.

2. Describe and justify any special admission and prerequisite requirements for the course. **NOTE: Only other General Education courses can be used as prerequisites for a proposed course. If completion of certain prescribed courses is required, please list the courses in this section.**

College level reading and writing skills (i.e. does not require remedial instruction).

**B. COURSE STRUCTURE**

1. **Outline of Course Topics.** The outline should reflect a concise and sequential listing of the content and concepts to be addressed in the course.

(Note: This sequential list includes topics that also function recursively)

**Religion and Society**

1. **How do we study religion and society?**
   A. Recognizing, Describing, and Explaining Religion.
      i. What is Religion? Definitions of religion and the problem of defining.
      ii. Distinction between *prescriptive* and *descriptive* statements about religion.
      iii. Interpretive Frames. How does a researcher’s religious, political, geographic, economic, cultural, and social context inform how she/he investigates and interprets religion?
   B. Fieldwork and Methods
      i. Studying religion as an *insider* vs. an *outsider*.

**II. Religion as a Social Phenomenon**

A. Scholarly approaches addressing the reciprocal relationship between religion and society.
   i. Society the source of religion
   ii. The religious functions of society
   iii. Religion as a cultural system
B. How can we understand the relationship between religion and society? We approach religion as a worldview (creed, code, cultus) by means of which a people (a community) orient themselves in society and the world with reference to both ordinary and extraordinary powers, meanings, and values.

III. Creed: Religious Beliefs, Individual Behavior, and Society
A. Scholarly approaches addressing religious creeds, individual behavior, and society. Creeds are religious beliefs, teachings, and explanations about the meaning or meanings of human life. They often differentiate the sacred realm from the profane and provide a path for religious individuals to encounter the sacred in the world. This section may investigate, but is not limited to, how sacred spaces, texts, narratives, and experiences influence human behavior in society.
   i. Sacred Space,
   ii. Sacred Texts,
   iii. Sacred Narratives,
   iv. Religious Experience (experiencing the sacred)
B. Case Study: Religious creeds, individual behavior, and society.
   i. To be determined by instructor. Possible case studies include (but are not limited to):
      • Hindu Example: Diwali, the sacred narratives invoked during this festival (Rama’s rescue of Sita and return to Ayodhya), and Lakshmi Puja to thank the goddess.
      • Jewish/Christian/Muslim Example: Jerusalem as sacred space.
      • Muslim Example: Shi’a narrative of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn and the celebration of Ashura. The ways this sacred narrative is invoked in Iran to describe international conflicts and politics.

IV. Code: Religious Values/Ethics, Individual Behavior, and Society
A. Scholarly approaches regarding religious codes, individual behavior, and society. Religious codes consist of ethics and values that govern daily behavior. Codes direct the individual
how to live religiously in the world. Possible topics regarding code include (but are not limited to):
   i. Religion and Morality,
   ii. Achieving Salvation or Liberation,
   iii. Religion, Sex, and Gender,
   iv. Religious Obligation

B. Case Study: Religious codes, individual behavior, and society.
   i. To be determined by instructor. Possible case studies include (but are not limited to):
      • Buddhist Example: The Four Noble Truths, The Noble Eight Fold Path, nirvana, meditation, and monasticism.
      • Christian Example: The Amish: humility, submission, and community. In society, these religious codes translate into a rejection of modern innovations.
      • Muslim Example: The Five Pillars of Islam and the Sunnah (literature detailing how the prophet Muhammad lived his life).

A. Scholarly approaches addressing religious cultus. Cultus refers to ritual practices that embody the insights and explanations expressed in creeds and codes. The repeated nature of ritual practice reinforces and perpetuates central religious creeds and codes. Possible topics regarding cultus include (but are not limited to):
   i. Pilgrimage,
   ii. Rites of Passage,
   iii. Celebrations, Festivals, and Holidays,
   iv. Ritual Healing

B. Case Studies: Religious ritual, individual behavior, and society.
   i. To be determined by instructor. Possible case studies include (but are not limited to):
      • Native American Example: Ghost Dance.
      • Buddhist Example: Pilgrimage to 88 temples on Shikoku island, Japan.
      • Jewish Example: Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- Christian Example: Catholic pilgrimage (Chimayo, NM) and the veneration of saints (Our Lady of Charity – Cuba and Miami).


A. Scholarly approaches addressing religious community, individual behavior, and society. Religion is expressed, enacted, preserved, contested, and adjusted by groups of individuals informally and formally united by a shared creed, code, and cultus. These communities of believers engage in an ongoing process of negotiating the religious community’s relationship with society and how its individual members should engage with and participate in the world beyond its religious boundaries.

   i. Breaks, Divisions, Disputes within and among Religious Communities;
   ii. Religion, Secularization, and Modernity;
   iii. Religion and Nationalism;
   iv. Religion and Politics

B. Case Studies: Religious ritual, individual behavior, and society.

   i. To be determined by instructor. Possible case studies:
      - Hinduism, Ghandi, and Indian Nationalism.
      - Buddhism, self-immolation, and political protest.
      - Judaism, Zionism, and the state of Israel.
      - Christianity, Protestant fundamentalism v. modernism in the United States.
      - Islam, reform movements, Wahhabism, anti-colonialism, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

VII. Conclusion: Field Report Discussions and Course Summary/Reflection.

2. Student Activities. List the range of potential activities required of students (whether graded or not). Activities might include such things as readings, research or creative papers, class presentations, data collection, creative products, interviews, field experiences, etc.

   A. Course readings from religious studies scholarship and supplemental primary and secondary materials (newspaper articles, auto/biographies, archived letters, scholarly articles, etc.). Supplemental materials enhance the students’ comprehension of the important concepts, theories, and
methods discussed in class by providing case studies for students to apply and analyze what they have learned.

B. View and discuss documentaries, films, online videos, and other audio-visual materials relevant to the course.

C. Active participation in class discussions, oral reports, group activities, and collaborative projects. For example, students may be asked to follow the news and present current events related to religion and society, and how social scientists would interpret those events.

D. Written work in the form of journal entries (responding to and analyzing the readings), field report (to be discussed below), examinations, and/or quizzes. For example, after watching a documentary on the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, students may be asked to write an essay describing the key components of the hajj and analyzing its personal, social, and cultural significance within Islam using concepts, theories, and methods discussed in class.

E. Data collection, analysis, and presentation. Students in this course will be asked to gather, examine, and present data collected (using methods discussed in class) during a visit to a religious site, service, or event and explain the significance of her/his analysis (either through in class presentations or D2L discussion boards). The field report requires the student to utilize the theoretical and methodological tools learned in the classroom to observe, identify, categorize, and analyze religious themes and concepts outside of the classroom.

3. Evaluation Procedures. Describe the range of evaluation procedures (i.e., grading system) for student activities. All evaluation procedures in General Education courses should be explicitly related to achievement of the TBR General Education goals and learning outcomes.

While point distributions and grade weighting differ by instructor, all students in all sections are evaluated on their performance in class participation, written work, and data collection; on their abilities to recognize, describe and explain religious phenomena; and their analysis of religion’s role in society and culture (in the lives of individuals, communities, nations, and the globe). The Department of Philosophy will evaluate how well our sections of Religion and Society are meeting the TBR General Education goals and learning outcomes by implementing an embedded assessment instrument based on the embedded assessment instrument currently used by the Department for Introduction to Philosophy.
4. **Course Syllabus.** Attach a sample course syllabus.
Attached.

**C. CONTRIBUTION TO GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES**

For the Social/Behavioral Sciences Requirement, the proposed course must fulfill **four or more of the seven** learning outcomes. Provide a detailed justification for how the course will fulfill **each** of the selected TBR learning outcomes.

1. Recognize, describe, and explain social institutions, structures, and processes and the complexities of a global culture and diverse society.

   The core concepts, methods, and student activities of this course are designed to help students recognize, describe, and explain how religion influences and is influenced by social institutions, structures, and processes locally and globally. To measure the proficiency of students to do this, the instructor provides a series of case studies throughout the semester. Such case studies may include, but are not limited to, religious texts, video recordings of religious events and services, class field trips to local religious communities, news/current events, and other primary and secondary sources of the instructor's choosing relevant for analysis and discussion. The students are then asked to recognize, describe, and explain religious institutions, structures, and processes using the methods and theories presented throughout the semester both in class discussions and in graded essay examinations. Given the distinctive role religion has played and continues to play in global culture, this course provides students with a cultural literacy that is invaluable in our increasingly diverse and multicultural society.

2. Think critically about how individuals are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and family institutions in their own and other diverse cultures and explain how one's own belief system may differ from others.

   For many individuals and communities, religious belief systems are the central set of morals and values guiding their lives. A key component of this course is the examination of similarities and differences among religious
belief systems. In doing so, students are introduced to theories and methods used to think critically about the ways religious beliefs influence and are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and familial institutions and contexts. It is important to highlight that the objective of religious studies courses is never to endorse the truth of some belief systems and falsify the assertions of others. Rather the goal is to give students the social scientific tools to analyze the relationship between religion and society. Assigned readings, in class discussions, online discussion boards, journal assignments, field reports, examinations, and other possible assignments encourage students to situate their own belief system in relation to others and to analyze the social and cultural forces that influence these beliefs.

3. Explore the relationship between the individual and society as it affects the personal behavior, social development, and quality of life of the individual, the family, and the community.

Religion and Society explores the ways an individual’s or group’s religious worldview informs personal behavior and a community’s relationship to society. Students will read and be asked to describe, differentiate, apply, analyze, and critique how religious studies scholars present different interpretive models to explain the role of religion in shaping personal behavior, social development, and quality of life. As with the previous learning objectives, successful achievement of this learning outcome will be measured through a variety of assignments including, but not limited to, in-class discussions and group activities, written journal assignments, and exams.

4. Examine the impact of behavioral and social scientific research on major contemporary issues and their disciplines’ effects on individuals and society.
N/A

5. Using the most appropriate principles, methods, and technologies, perceptively and objectively gather, analyze, and present social and behavioral science research data, draw logical conclusions, and apply those conclusions to one’s life and society.
Religion and Society presents students with the theory and methods necessary to describe religious phenomena, to compare and contrast religious phenomena among cultures, to approach religious phenomena in a systematic way, to synthesize findings, and to analyze critically what one finds. For example, students may be required to attend a religious service, event, celebration, or meeting (other than their own), gather, analyze, and present the data they collected both in class and in an essay they turn for course credit. In addition to demonstrating successful execution of religious studies research methods, students explain which theory/ies presented in class best interprets or explains the religious phenomena observed and discuss what they learned about themselves and the religious diversity in Middle Tennessee by completing this assignment.

6. Take ethical stands based on appropriate research in the social and behavioral sciences.
   N/A

7. Analyze and communicate the values and processes that are used to formulate theories regarding the social context of individual human behavior in the social and behavioral sciences.

Courses introducing students to the study of religion and society necessarily begin with a discussion of the process by which various methods (which bring our subject into focus, enable researchers to create paths of inquiry, and facilitate the analysis of one’s findings) help religious studies scholars construct coherent theories. Students will read foundational theories on the interconnection of religion, society, and individual behavior as well as critiques of those theories. Through the readings and in-class discussions students will identify and explain how the values and intellectual positions of one theory provide an opening for critique by another theory. In class discussions, journal entries, and essay examinations, students will apply theories to specific case studies and assess the value and weakness of applying specific theories to the presented case study.

D. COURSE INTEGRITY

1. Estimate the number of sections and seats to be offered in the first academic year after approval (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

   Number of Sections   Number of Seats
2. If this course will be required for department degree programs or is required for any other known major/minor degree programs on campus, estimate the number of seats that will be required for those students versus the number of seats available for other students attempting to fulfill General Education requirements.

This course will not be required for department degree program.

3. Describe how the department plans to meet staffing needs, including projected use of temporary faculty and TAs.

The Department of Philosophy will utilize existing faculty, except in cases where release time has been granted to a member of the department. In the past, release time secured by internal or external grants has been accompanied by money to hire adjuncts. The Department has hired these adjuncts and will continue this practice.

4. Discuss methods of ensuring consistency in the content of the course (e.g., generic syllabus, common textbook, pool of activities from which specific ones can be selected at the discretion of the instructor). Describe how the department will ensure that new instructors understand the stated objectives.

Our commitment to consistency is met through shared content. All instructors will utilize common academic articles and texts. A generic syllabus will not be required. The individual instructor will choose case studies from her/his areas of expertise. However, instructors will meet every semester to review syllabi, class activities, and evaluation rubrics to evaluate the accomplishment of Learning Outcomes and to share pedagogical concerns and strategies. New faculty will be given sample syllabi, recommendations for student activities, a copy of this document, and an orientation to the Learning Outcomes expected from the course.
5. If the size of class sections will vary significantly, state the projected minimum and maximum enrollments for different sections and explain how the pedagogy and class activities will accommodate this variability while addressing TBR Learning Outcomes.

Variance in class size will be minor (10 students maximum) and will reflect seating limits in individual classrooms.

E. COMMENTS

**Space available for any other pertinent information not previously covered.**

We believe this course, Religion and Society, fills an important gap in MTSU’s current general education offerings. At this time, four of the six universities and nine of the thirteen community colleges within the Tennessee Board of Regents system offer at least one religious studies course in their general education curriculum. There are, moreover, three primary reasons for placing a religious studies course in the Social/Behavioral Sciences.

First, since the inclusion of religious studies in public education, the field has come to be dominated by social scientific approaches to the study of religious beliefs and practices.

Second, as the TBR learning outcomes for Social/Behavioral Sciences are crafted, religious studies courses (which focus on the ways religious belief systems influence individual behavior and society) are especially well equipped to fulfill these vital TBR learning goals.

Third, Religion and Society is designed to provide students with a religious and cultural literacy that is invaluable in our increasingly diverse and multicultural society, for which there is an immediate need. No matter what major, minor, or career ambition an MTSU student has, Religion and Society will equip her/him not only with the vocabulary to discuss the world’s religions but also with the theoretical and methodological foundation to understand, interpret, and analyze the impact of religion in Murfreesboro, the United States, and the world.
Religion and Society
RS 2030
Middle Tennessee State University

Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Jenna.Gray-Hildenbrand@mtsu.edu
Office: 300B James Union Building (JUB),
Department of Philosophy
Office Hours:

Important: Email is the best way to contact me. I respond to emails within 24 hours, although I do not check my email in the evenings or on the weekend. Please plan accordingly.

Meeting Times and Course Location:

Course Description

This course introduces students to the academic study of world religions, with an emphasis on the social scientific theories and methods that dominate the field of religious studies today. The goals of the course are to provide students with the theoretical skills and methodological tools necessary 1) to recognize, describe, compare, contrast, and explain religious phenomena both locally and globally; 2) to analyze the role of religion as a social and cultural institution and how religious values and worldviews inform both personal behavior and a religious community’s relationship to local and global society and culture; and 3) to understand how the beliefs and practices of religious people both influence and are influenced by personal, familial, social, cultural, political, economic, and gendered contexts and how social and cultural context shapes and is shaped by religious motivations, behaviors, and aspirations in this life and what lies beyond.

Specific concepts addressed in this course may include (but are not limited to): The religious creeds, codes, cultus, and communities of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Indigenous groups both in the United States and abroad.

Drawing from religious studies theories and methodologies, this course introduces students to the social scientific tools used to describe, explain, and analyze religion in its cultural and social context. Given the distinctive role religion has played, and continues to play, in global culture, this course provides students with a cultural literacy that is invaluable in our increasingly diverse and multicultural society.

The course assumes no prior knowledge about religion.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Summarize, differentiate, and apply foundational methods in the study of religion.
- Explain, analyze, and critique influential theories in the study of religion.
• Describe, examine, and interpret religious phenomena using the methods and theories introduced in class.
• Demonstrate a maturing understanding of the beliefs, practices, and histories of religious people.
• Analyze the role of religion in local and global culture and the ways an individual’s or group’s religious worldview informs personal behavior and a community’s relationship to the larger society.
• Gather, examine, and present data collected during a visit to a religious site, service, or event and explain the significance of her/his conclusions.

Required texts

The following text is available for purchase in the bookstore:


In addition to the above readings, there is a selection of readings on the D2L site (https://elearn.mtsu.edu/). These readings are REQUIRED. Please bring these readings with you to class. Please notify me IMMEDIATELY if there are any problems with the pdf files. If you object to printing these readings because of environmental or economic concerns, take extensive notes (with quotes and page numbers) to bring with you to class. If you experience difficulty with D2L please contact the MTSU Helpdesk at 615-898-5345 or help@mtsu.edu

Grades and Assignments

Case Study Essays (20%): At the end of each unit (Creed, Code, Cultus, and Community) students must compose an essay applying the theories and methods discussed in class to the assigned case study. Prompts given in class.

Class participation (10%): This includes three factors: regular attendance, quantity of participation, and quality of participation. The course will only be as good as its participants. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the assigned readings at each class session in a thoughtful and lively manner. Attendance is only a necessary pre-condition for participation, not a measure of it. The participation grade is based not only on attendance but, more importantly, on preparation and engagement of material for class discussions as evidenced by asking questions and active participation in class discussions.

Religious Site Visit Assignment (15%): 500-750 words (2-3 pages).
See: http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=2516330

Midterm Exam (25% each): multiple choice, identifications, and essay.

Final Exam (30%): Cumulative exam: multiple choice, identifications, and essay.
Course Schedule and Outline: Religion and Society

REligion and society

How do we study religion and society?

Recognizing, Describing, and Explaining Religion.
Read:


Study Questions: What is Religion? Why study religion? Why is it so difficult to define religion? What is the distinction between prescriptive and descriptive statements about religion? How does a researcher’s religious, political, geographic, economic, cultural, and social context inform how she/he investigates and interprets religion?

Fieldwork and Methods
Read:

- http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=2516330

Study Questions: What are the basic differences between the insider’s and outsider’s perspective? How do analysis and synthesis differ, and how are they related? Give an example. Why role does sympathetic imagination play in careful observing, reading, and listening? What is critical tolerance? Give an example. Why is fieldwork important for the study of religion? How should you prepare for fieldwork? What sorts of data should you look for? How should one interpret, explain, evaluate, and analyze the data collected?

Religion as a Social Phenomenon

How can we understand the relationship between religion and society? We approach religion as a worldview (creed, code, cultus) by means of which a people (a community) orient themselves in society and the world with reference to both ordinary and extraordinary powers, meanings, and values.
Scholarly Approaches: Religion and a Social Phenomenon

Read:


Study Questions: Albanese advocates for describing rather than defining religion. In your own words, explain her “two kinds of religion” and the components of religious systems. How does Paden articulate the relationship between religion and society? Which theorists influence his argument?

CREED: RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR, AND SOCIETY

What are creeds, and how do they impact individual behavior and society? Creeds are religious beliefs, teachings, and explanations about the meaning or meanings of human life. They often differentiate the sacred realm from the profane and provide a path for religious individuals to encounter the sacred in the world. This section may investigate, but is not limited to, how sacred spaces, texts, narratives, and experiences influence human behavior in society.

Scholarly Approaches: Creed

Read:


Study Questions: Explain in your own words the following key terms: animism, totemism, polytheism, monotheism, monism, pantheism, atheism, myth, axis mundi, and iconoclasm. Compare and contrast examples of sacred power in Taoism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism. Peter Berger, a sociologist of religion, remarked “religion is the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant.” Do the readings in this section support Berger’s claim? Explain your answer. What are the five theories of myth described in the readings, which do you think is the most helpful in understanding the meaning of myths and why? Compare and contrast the sacred narratives (or myths) of Marduk and Moses. Describe the differences between sacred and profane time and space. Compare and contrast Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania) and Dreamtime (among Australian Aborigines) as examples of sacred space and time. What are the roles of sacred power and myth in understanding sacred space and time? Compare and contrast Buddhist stupas, Jewish synagogues, and Christian cathedrals as examples of sacred architecture. How does music both enhance devotion and teach creeds?
Case Study: Temple Mount – Jerusalem

Read:


Study Questions: What is Temple Mount? Why is Temple Mount seen as holy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam? What Jewish, Christian, and Muslim myths support the significance of Temple Mount in each of these three world religions? Using the categories of myths discussed in the previous reading, explain what types of myths you see present and why. How do these myths mark this space as sacred in these religions? How can understanding these myths help us gain a better understanding of conflicts that have erupted over control of Temple Mount?

**CODE: RELIGIOUS ETHICS, INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR, AND SOCIETY**

What are codes, and how do they impact individual behavior and society? Religious codes consist of ethics and values that govern daily behavior. Codes direct the individual how to live religiously in the world.

Scholarly Approaches: Code

Read:


Study Questions: Distinguish natural from moral evil, nomos from anomie, and theodicies in the broad sense from the theodicies in the narrow sense by giving an example of each. Distinguish dualistic theodicies from theodicies of participation. Compare and contrast the karma theodicy within Hinduism and the escatology theodicy of the Mahdi within Islam. Explain in your own words how theodicies work. What is a norm, and why is this concept central to notions of morality? According to the text, what are the basic elements of religious moral reasoning? Define ethics. What is the difference between duty ethics and virtue ethics? Compare and contrast divine command theory within monotheistic religions (e.g. Judaism, Christianity, Islam) and Confucian virtue. Explain the Protestant ethic thesis. Do you think that religions have economic consequences? Why or why not? According to the text, what are the possible social consequences of religious views of salvation? Compare and contrast Sikh and Christian understandings of the human condition. How do religious creeds inform and shape religious codes?

Case Study – Mahatma Gandhi: Religion, Nonviolence, and Social Transformation
Read:


**Study Questions:** Who was Gandhi? What religious codes influenced his teachings on nonviolence? How did these codes, ethics, and values manifest in his everyday behavior and social activism? Is a theodicy present in Gandhi’s writings? Explain. Reflecting on our previous section on religious creeds, do you see examples of myths, sacred space, or sacred time in Gandhi’s writings? Explain your answer.

**CULTUS: RELIGIOUS RITUAL, INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR, AND SOCIETY**

**What is cultus, and how does it impact individual behavior and society?** Cultus refers to ritual practices that embody the insights and explanations expressed in creeds and codes. The repeated nature of ritual practice can both reinforce and destabilize central religious creeds and codes.

**Scholarly Approaches: Cultus**

Read:


**Study Questions:** What is communitas, and what role does it play in ritual? Explain, compare, and contrast the different types of rituals discussed in the text. What is the role of sacrifice in religious ritual? What is the myth and ritual theory? Reflecting on what you have learned so far this semester, do you agree or disagree with the myth and ritual theory? Explain your answer. Compare and contrast the ancient Babylonian Akitu festival with the Oglala Sioux *Ishna Ta Awi Cha Lowan* ritual. What are the differences between revelational and ecstatic experiences? Compare and contrast Stace’s and Zaehner’s typologies of mysticism. How might Freud and Jung analyze religious experiences? Be specific. Compare and contrast the religious experiences of Muhammad and the Buddha.

**Case Study: Ghost Dance Among the Lakota Sioux**

Read:

Study Questions: Describe the Ghost Dance. In what ways is the Ghost Dance similar to and different from the various rituals we read about in the previous section? Do you see examples of communitas? Which of the types of rituals we discussed best fits the Ghost Dance and why? Describe the experiences of Ghost Dancers. Do these experiences fit within any of our typologies of religious experience and/or mysticism? Explain your answer. Reflecting on the previous course units, do you see examples of creed and code in this case study? Where? How does the creed, code, and cultus of these Lakota Ghost Dancers help us to gain a better understanding of their response to U.S. government demands that they stop dancing?

COMMUNITY: RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR, AND SOCIETY

What is a religious community, and how does the construction of community boundaries impact individual behavior and society? Religion is expressed, enacted, preserved, contested, and adjusted by groups of individuals informally and formally united by a shared creed, code, and cultus. These communities of believers engage in an ongoing process of negotiating the religious community's relationship with society and how its individual members should engage with and participate in the world beyond its religious boundaries.

Scholarly Approaches: Community
Read:


Study Questions: Describe the five dilemmas of institutionalization and give an example of each. What are the three types of religious authority described in the text? Compare and contrast Tibetan Buddhism and Jonestown using the five functional prerequisites of groups discussed in the reading. How does a religion’s creed and code determine, legitimate, and/or challenge a woman’s status in a religious community? Give specific examples. Compare and contrast the status and roles of women in Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. Define theocracy, state church, separatism, and “culture wars.” How does a religion’s creed and code influence the relationship between the religious community and the government? Give specific examples.

Case Study: Amish Society
Read:


Study Questions: Who are the Amish? Identify important creeds, codes, and cultus within Amish community. Describe the models for understanding Amish society given by Hostetler. Discuss the gender roles present in Amish society. How do Amish creeds and codes support specific roles for males and females in Amish families and Amish society? What conflicts have developed between the Amish and the U.S. government? How does an understanding of Amish creeds, codes, and cultus help us to make sense of conflicts between this religious community and the U.S. government? How have the Amish responded to modernization?

COURSE CONCLUSION

Field Report Discussions and Course Summary/Reflection.