This course will examine religious practices and beliefs from a cross-cultural and comparative perspective. Drawing from anthropology, sociology and religious studies we will explore how social scientists and others have studied and theorized religion. The course begins with a focus on religion as a concept and explores theoretical approaches to the study of religion. The second half of the course focuses on how modernity and globalization are affecting religious traditions across the globe.

Teaching and learning objectives:
• To gain a more nuanced understanding of the various ways in which scholars have approached the social scientific study of religion.
• The ability to read and critically evaluate primary and secondary texts.
• The ability to combine description and analysis of religious and cultural phenomena in written and oral work in such a way as to construct a coherent and cogent argument.

Required Texts: (Available at the Rutgers-Newark Bookstore, online booksellers, and on reserve at library):

All other readings are available online via Blackboard.

Course Requirements
Attendance: You are expected to attend every class, from start to finish. Failure to show up for class or to arrive on time will impact your grade: all absences must be discussed with the instructor, and will be excused only in the event of a medical issues (accompanied by a doctor’s note), family emergencies, and similar situations. After one unexcused absence your final grade will be lowered 5% points per missed class. Thus is you miss three classes your grade could go from a C to a D.

Punctuality: You are expected to arrive at class on time. You know where the class is, you are aware of the difficulties of parking on campus, you have no excuse for continually arriving late. You are allowed two unexcused late arrivals, after that if you are more than 5 minutes late you will be considered absent and a receive a zero for participation for the day. If you are more than 15 minutes late do not bother coming to class. If you are late do NOT ask me after class if I noted your arrival – it is a small class I know who is here.

All quizzes will begin at exactly 10AM and will conclude at 10:20AM. If you are late you will NOT receive extra time nor be allowed to take the quiz after class.
**Class Participation:** 10% of your grade. Class participation is NOT the same thing as class attendance. I will assume you come to class prepared and have done the reading, and thus I will not hesitate to call upon you to answer questions. You are expected to take an active role in this class, discussing the readings and raising further topics of interest for discussion. I expect students to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the readings, think critically and creatively about the material, come to class with ideas and questions, actively participate in class discussions, and show respect for other students’ perspectives. Grades will be assigned on the basis of the level of meaningful contribution to class conversations. Contributing to discussions through thoughtful and reflective comments and questions is the ideal. Simply speaking a lot is not the ideal; in fact, speaking too much is problematic, since dominating class discussions prevents others from contributing to the conversation. One of the best things you can do if you feel you've participated “enough” in any given class is to ask questions that will encourage other students to participate. We will have “group quizzes” on an occasional basis, and these will be counted toward your participation grade. At any point in the semester, you may check in with me to inquire about your participation grade.

**Quizzes and reflection papers:** 25% of your final grade. Quizzes will be short quizzes consisting of short answer questions to ensure that you are keeping up with the material. Some of these are listed on the syllabus. At other points throughout the semester I will give short take home essay assignments or reflection papers. I also reserve the right to give in-class pop quizzes. These are 25% of your grade so you need to take them seriously.

**Exams:** 40% of your final grade. There will be two exams in this course. One will be an in-class midterm and the other will be a take home final essay exam.

**Essays:** 25% of your final grade. These essays will be written assignments of varying length (usually one or two questions) about the readings. These assignment due dates are listed in the syllabus. These will be posted several days before they are due.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quizzes: 25% of your final grade</th>
<th>Exams: 40% of your final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays: 25% of your final grade</td>
<td>Total 10% of your final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong> 100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading:**
- **A/A-** = Consistently outstanding achievement in the course.
- **B+/B** = Work of good to very good quality, but not consistently outstanding. If you answer a question correctly but your answer is poorly constructed, poorly written, or poorly argued you will get a B.
- **B-/C+/C** = Acceptable level of competence and basic understanding of material.
- **C-/D+/D** = Minimally adequate; student may not be ready for further related coursework.
- **F** = Unsatisfactory and unworthy of credit.

**Final Grade:**
1) Your grade will NOT be based on how hard you worked. While your participation grade will reflect effort that you put into class discussion, the other aspects of your grade are based on quality and comprehension, not effort.
2) Do not contact me after the final grades have been submitted and ask me to change your grade. *I will NOT change your grade just because you need to get into dental school or pharmacy school under any circumstances.* You know at the start of the semester that you need particular grades to get into graduate school, start working towards those grades now rather than asking for charity after the fact. Any such requests will simply be ignored as you have been made aware of course policy. Unless you feel there has been a mathematical error in the calculation of your grade do not ask for a grade change.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Class 1 / Tuesday, Jan. 17: Introduction to Course and Instructor**
- Review syllabus and course Blackboard site.

**Class 2 / Thursday, Jan. 19: What is Religion? What Are Religions?**

*Recommended Additional Reading*

**Class 3 / Tuesday, Jan. 24: Lived Religion**

**Class 4 / Thursday, Jan. 26: Tylor and Frazer**

**Class 5 / Tuesday, Jan. 31: Durkheim**

Quiz #1

**Class 6 / Thursday, Feb. 2: Freud**

**Class 7 / Tuesday, Feb. 7: Marx**

**Class 8 / Thursday, Feb. 9: Cultural Materialism**

**Class 9 / Tuesday, Feb. 14: Magic and Religion**
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1955. “Rational Mastery by Man of His Surroundings.” From his *Magic,
Class 10 / Thursday, Feb. 16: Class Rituals of Transition
- Quiz #2

Class 11 / Tuesday, Feb. 21: Discussion on Rituals of Transition

Class 12 / Thursday, Feb. 23: Review for Mid-Term Exam
- Rites of Passage Essay Due

Class 13 / Tuesday, Feb. 28: In-Class Exam

Class 14 / Thursday, Mar. 2: The Anthropology of World Religions

Class 15 / Tuesday, Mar. 7: Modernization, Secularization and the Decline of Religion?

Recommended additional readings:

Class 16 / Thursday, Mar. 8: The Anthropology of Atheism

Recommended additional readings:

Spring Recess March 11 - 19

Class 17 / Tuesday, Mar. 21: Religious Fundamentalism: What Does It Mean?
Class 18 / Thursday, Mar. 23: Gender and World Religions
• Selected media pieces on veiling posted on Blackboard.

Class 19 / Tuesday, Mar 28: Religion and Violence

Class 20 / Thursday, Mar. 30: Religious Extremism In The Age of Globalization
• Beyond Fundamentalism, Read Introduction, Chapter 1 and 2.

Quiz #3

Class 21 / Tuesday, April 4: Religious Extremism: Israel and Palestine
• Beyond Fundamentalism, Chapter 3.

Class 22 / Thursday. April 6: FILM: Faith and Politics: The Christian Right
• Beyond Fundamentalism, Chapter 4.

Recommended additional readings:

Class 23 / Tuesday, April 11: Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization
• Beyond Fundamentalism, Chapter 5

Class 24 / Thursday, April 13: Religious Extremism and Globalization: Islam in the West

Quiz #4

Class 25 / Tuesday, April 18: Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah
• Class Discussion

Class 26 / Thursday, April 20: Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah
• Class Discussion

Roy Essay Due

1. Class 27 / Tuesday, April 25: Religious Extremism In The Age of Globalization
• Beyond Fundamentalism, Chapter 6-7

2. Class 28 / Thursday, April 27: Last Day of Class: Review for Final Exam

>>Final Exam Due May 9, 11:30 AM<<
The Fine Print

I reserve the right to change course readings or the class schedule throughout the course of the semester.

Readings for this course in no way reflect the opinions of the instructor, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, or Rutgers University-Newark. Readings have been selected to show a diversity of views on the topics under discussion and to enhance discussion.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: In this class we will discuss complex issues about which some class members may have strong feelings. However, this class is for learning about these issues, not trying to convince other students that your viewpoint is the correct one or that theirs is the wrong one. Discussion is not a platform for you to denounce religions other than your own, or religion in general, rather it is aimed at discussing the topic at hand to enhance our mutual understandings of complicated issues from a variety of nuanced perspectives. To encourage broad participation and in the name of creating a comfortable and secure academic environment in which all class members feel free to express their reasoned opinions in class, I will have a zero tolerance policy for the following behaviors:

• Hate speech of any kind
• Violent, threatening or disruptive behavior
• Any other violations of the University's Code of Conduct.

Any students I deem to be violating this code of conduct will be removed and dropped from the class. If you have any questions regarding this policy please contact your dean.

ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments are due at the time posted. Assignments submitted after the deadline will be considered one day late. Except in the case of emergencies, you should notify me before rather than after a late assignment is due. Late papers unaccompanied by a letter from a doctor, counselor, or funeral director will be penalized a third of a grade (an A- becomes a B+, etc.) for each 24 hour period after it is due. To be clear, turning in an assignment any time during the first 24 hours after it is due is penalized a third of a grade, between 24 and 48 hours two thirds of a grade, etc. Materials submitted more than 7 days after the due date will receive a grade of F, even with a letter from a doctor, counselor, or funeral director. All assignments will be submitted on-line.

Communication with Instructor:
• Please include your name in all e-mails that you send me. Unsigned e-mails will not be answered.
• Do not expect me to answer e-mails sent after 7pm until the next day.
• All course relevant e-mails will be sent to your rutgers.edu accounts. You are responsible to check this account for any course updates.

WITHDRAWALS AND INCOMPLETES: It is the student's responsibility to inform the professor if they are withdrawing from the class or seeking an incomplete. See University policies on withdrawals.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: The Department of Sociology and Anthropology abides by the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not that effort is successful. The academic community
regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. *It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism.* Claiming to not understand what constitutes plagiarism will not be accepted as an excuse and you will fail the class.

You may not submit a paper written for another class, or a previous version of this class, to meet the requirements for this course. If you do you will, minimally, receive a zero on that paper, and could receive an F for the course, as well as be referred to the dean’s office for further sanctions.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact the Paul Robeson Campus Center Office of Student Life, services for students with disabilities for information regarding its services or its.