



### **REL 3148: RELIGION AND VIOLENCE, Fall 2018**

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Schedule: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:45-12:35  
Office Hours: Wednesdays and Friday 12:45-1:45 and by appointment

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The relations between religion and violence has long posed challenges both for ordinary life and for the academic study of religion. Religions sometimes contribute to violence or justify it, but they can also help achieve peaceful solutions to violent conflicts. Religious rituals themselves can be extremely violent, and some scholars argue that violence lies at the heart of religion itself. This class explores violence within religion, religiously motivated violence, religious justifications of political violence, and religious rejections and resolutions of violence. Throughout the course, readings will address a variety of religious traditions in different regions and historical periods. We will also explore a variety of approaches to religious studies and to comparative ethics, including both descriptive and normative studies.

## REQUIRED BOOKS

The following required books are available at area bookstores and on reserve at Library West.

John Pahl, *Empire of Sacrifice: The Religious Origins of American Violence* (NYU, 2012).

Lisa Cahill, *Love your Enemies* (Augsburg, 1994)

John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (Harvard, 2009)

Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (California, 2003)

Other readings will be posted on the canvas website:

John M. Ingham, "Human Sacrifice at Tenochtitlan." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, No. 3 (Jul., 1984), pp. 379-400.

Kay A. Read, "The Fleeting Moment: Cosmogony, Eschatology, and Ethics in Aztec Religion and Society." *The Journal of Religious Ethics*. 14, No. 1 (Spring, 1986), pp. 113-138.

Michel Graulich, "Aztec Human Sacrifice as Expiation." *History of Religions* 39, No. 4 (May, 2000), pp. 352-371.

Michael Harner, "The Ecological Basis for Aztec Sacrifice." *American Ethnologist* 4, No. 1, Human Ecology (Feb., 1977), pp. 117-135.

Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The MetaEthics of Radical Feminism* (Beacon Press, 1990), Chapters 3 and 6.

## POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Place all papers in my mailbox in the Religion Department, 107 Anderson Hall. DO NOT slip them under the door or leave them on the door of my office, the main department office, or the teaching assistant's office. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.
2. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may take an exam early or receive an extension on an exam or essay assignment *only* in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
3. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing any assignment or requirement.

4. *Attendance and Participation*: Class attendance is required. Do not register for this class if you cannot arrive on time. Students should arrive on time and prepared to discuss the day's readings. Tardiness harms your understanding of the material and disrupts the class. After the first late arrival, the instructor reserves the right to mark you absent. The instructor will *not* provide notes or discuss material that has already been covered for students who arrive late, barring extraordinary circumstances (which do not include failing to find a parking place or sleeping in).

5. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer, although the instructor reserves the right to ask you to turn off the computer if circumstances warrant. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class. If that occurs, the student will be marked absent for the day.

6. *Honor Code*: On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.

7. *Accommodation for Disabilities*: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

8. *Counseling Resources*: Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

9. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

## **REQUIREMENTS AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

This class fulfills the **Gordon Rule** writing requirement (GR2). You must complete at least 2000 words of writing during the semester, which will be fulfilled by the two short essays.

Important: All written assignments should be handed in during class or left in my mailbox in 107 Anderson Hall. Under *no* circumstances should papers be left in my office (taped to the door, slid under the door, etc.).

1. Active participation in class discussions, based on timely and close reading of all assigned texts (10% of final grade)
2. Short in-class essay on Aztecs on Sept. 5 (15% of final grade)
3. First essay, on Pahl and Daly (minimum 1000 words), due by 5 pm Sept. 26 (30%)
5. Second essay, Cahill and Kelsay (minimum 1000 words), due by 5 pm November 7 (30%).
6. Modular debate on contemporary ethical issues, to be held in class on Dec. 5. Every student will write a short (1-2 page) position paper in addition to participating in the debate. The debate paper and participation will be 15% of your final grade.

## **SCHEDULE**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>ASSIGNMENTS</u></b>
Wed. 8/22	Introduction to the class; code of conduct

### **I. RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN MESOAMERICA**

Friday 8/24	Ingham article
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Mon. 8/27	Read article
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Wed. 8/29	Graulich article
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Friday 8/31	Harner article
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Monday 9/3	LABOR DAY - no class
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Wed. 9/5	In-class essay
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### **II. RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN THE U.S.**

Friday 9/7	Pahl, <i>Empire of Sacrifice</i> , Introduction
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Mon. 9/10 Pahl, Ch. 1  
Wed. 9/12 Pahl, Ch. 2  
Friday 9/14 Pahl, Ch. 3  
Mon. 9/17 Pahl, Ch. 4  
Wed. 9/19 Daly chapter 3 (on canvas)  
Friday 9/21 Daly chapter 6 (on canvas)  
Mon. 9/24 Pahl, Ch. 5  
Wed. 9/26 Reading day: Paper due in my box in the religion department office (107 Anderson) by 5 pm

### **III. THE ETHICS OF WAR AND PEACE**

Friday 9/28 Cahill, *Love Your Enemies*, Ch. 1  
Mon. 10/1 Cahill, Ch. 2  
Wed. 10/3 Cahill, Ch. 3  
Friday 10/5 Cahill, Ch. 4  
Mon. 10/8 Cahill, Ch. 5  
Wed. 10/10 Cahill, Ch. 6  
Friday 10/12 Cahill, Ch. 7  
Mon. 10/15 Cahill, Ch. 8  
Wed. 10/17 Cahill, Ch. 11 (SKIP Ch. 9-10)  
Friday 10/19 Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam*, Introduction  
Mon. 10/22 Kelsay, Ch. 1  
Wed. 10/24 Kelsay, Ch. 2  
Friday 10/26 Kelsay, Ch. 3

Mon. 10/29 Kelsay, Ch. 4

Wed. 10/31 Kelsay, Ch. 5

Friday 11/2 HOMECOMING, no class

Mon. 11/5 Kelsay, Ch. 6

Wed. 11/7 Reading day: Second essay due at 4 pm in my mailbox

#### **IV. RELIGIOUS TERRORISM**

Fri. 11/9 Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, Ch. 1

Monday 11/12 VETERANS' DAY, no class

Wed. 11/14 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 2

Fri. 11/16 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 3

Mon. 11/19 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 4

Wed. 11/21- Friday 11/23 Thanksgiving break – no class

Mon. 11/26 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 5

Wed. 11/28 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 6

Fri. 11/30 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 7-9

Mon. 12/3 Juergensmeyer, Ch. 10-11

Wed. 12/5 Modular debate in class