



## Lahore University of Management Sciences

### SS 2418 – Religion after Modernity

Spring 2017

Instructor	Nauman Faizi
Room No.	239-D
Office Hours	2.30 pm – 4 pm (Fall 2016)
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TA	TBD
TA Office Hours	TBD
Course URL (if any)	

Course Basics				
Credit Hours	4			
Lecture(s)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week	2	Duration	110 minutes each
Recitation/Lab (per week)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week		Duration	
Tutorial (per week)	Nbr of Lec(s) Per Week		Duration	

Course Distribution	
Core	No
Elective	Yes
Open for Student Category	All
Close for Student Category	

COURSE DESCRIPTION
<p>This course familiarizes students with the ways that religion is conceptualized, examined, and discussed in the modern academy. It will introduce students to a broad range of debates germane to the study of religion and simultaneously engage them in the theoretical and methodological perspectives that the field of Religious Studies grapples with. The five modules of the course involve students in the various styles and concerns that have historically occupied scholars of religion and continue to shape contemporary inquiries. Questions such as the possible origins of religion; its psychological, social, and political functions; debates about how scholars should conceptualize the category of religion; the interplay of thought, experience, and practice in religious behavior; and controversies over “insider” and “outsider” perspectives in the study of religion are all taken up during the course. Apart from the work of classical theorists such as Eliade, Freud, and Durkheim, students will also wrestle with the work and concerns of more contemporary scholars such as J. Z. Smith, Talal Asad, and David Chidester among others.</p>

COURSE PREREQUISITE(S)
None



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COURSE OBJECTIVES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To help students appreciate the particularity and situatedness of the modern academic study of religion</li><li>• To enable and encourage students to take more advanced courses in the study of religion both as undergraduates and (potential) graduate students</li><li>• To aid students in navigating and thoughtfully examining discussions and debates involving religion in academic and every-day settings</li></ul>

Learning Outcomes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Familiarize students with the analytical tools and conceptual vocabularies employed in the academic study of religion</li><li>• Train students in strategies of “close” and “critical” reading in relation to scholarly work on religion, both in the shape of journal articles and monographs</li><li>• To aid students in making methodologically self-aware and perspectival arguments in relation to the assigned reading material</li></ul>

Grading Breakup and Policy	
Quizzes:	10%
Class Participation:	10%
Attendance:	5%
Two Response Papers:	20%
Midterm Examination:	25%
Final Examination:	30%

Examination Detail	
Midterm Exam	Yes Duration: 110 Minutes Exam Specifications: Paragraph length answers to assigned questions and one lengthier question
Final Exam	Yes Non-Cumulative Duration: 150 Minutes Exam Specifications: Paragraph length answers to assigned questions and one lengthier question



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### Detailed Course Requirements

#### **Participation and Attendance – 15%**

This course is designed to stimulate discussion and debate about the theorists and issues we shall take up during class. The success of the course depends largely on your careful preparation and substantive participation in our twice-weekly conversations. Consequently, attendance is mandatory. After 2 unexcused absences, you shall forfeit the 5% points that your attendance grade is worth. Your participation or discussion grade, which will constitute 10% of your final grade, will be based on your active contribution of thoughts, questions, and answers during class time. You must come to class having already read and reflected upon the reading assigned for that day. Here is my grading scale for participation:

- A: participates with original ideas and insights that show in-depth reflection on the reading material
- B: participates, but only by answering specific questions or repeating others' ideas
- C: present without substantial participation
- D: present with no participation F: absent, asleep, reading, disturbing others, etc.

#### **In Class Reading Quizzes – 10%**

I will occasionally administer a brief quiz before we begin our discussion. This is intended to be a straightforward check that you've done the reading. You will have the option to drop your lowest quiz score. There shall be a total of 6 quizzes. The specific sessions during which quizzes shall be assigned will be communicated to you a week prior to class

#### **Response Papers – 20%**

For two reading assignments throughout the semester, you shall compose a 4-5 page (double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font) textual analysis papers. You shall submit it at the beginning of the classes for which the readings have been assigned. Your basic task for these response papers shall be clarifying and examining the conceptions of i) religion, ii) the individual, iii) society, iv) knowledge, and v) reality that inform the reading. More detailed instructions on how to approach the response paper will be discussed during the first session of the semester.

#### **Midterm and Final: 25% and 30%**

During these exams you will have the opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned during the course of our semester-long study. The exams will be a combination of short-essay questions and one lengthier essay.

#### **A note on reading for this course**

For each session I shall send out questions that you should focus on as you do the assigned reading. An important purpose of the course is to enable you to read texts that may appear daunting or strange at first glance. We will only be able to acquire the ability to fruitfully engage with and develop in relation to the material of the course if you come to class after carefully reading the assigned material.



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Course Overview	
	<b>Part I: The Idea of the Sacred</b>
<b>Session 1</b>	Introduction to the Course  Optional Reading: “Religious Studies,” by Donald Wiebe in <i>The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion</i> , pp. 98–124.
<b>Session 2</b>	“The Reality of the Sacred: Mircea Eliade,” by Daniel Pals in <i>Nine Theories of Religion</i> , pp. 227-262.
<b>Session 3</b>	“Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred,” by Mircea Eliade in <i>The Sacred and the Profane</i> , pp. 20-65.
<b>Session 4</b>	“Special Things as Building Blocks of Religion,” by Ann Taves in <i>The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies</i> , pp. 58-83.
<b>Session 5</b>	“The Problem of the Holy,” by Robert Orsi in <i>The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies</i> , pp. 84-105.
	<b>Part II: Naturalizing Religion</b>
<b>Session 6</b>	“Theses on Method,” by Bruce Lincoln in <i>Theory and Method in the Study of Religion</i> , pp. 159-167.  “Evolutionary Anthropology: Edward Burnett Tylor” by J. S. Preus in <i>Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud</i> , pp. 131-153.
<b>Session 7</b>	“Psychogenic Theory: Sigmund Freud,” by J. S. Preus in <i>Explaining Religion</i> , pp. 178-204.
<b>Session 8</b>	“Sociogenic Theory: Emile Durkheim,” by J. S. Preus in <i>Explaining Religion</i> , pp. 157-177.
<b>Session 9</b>	“Religion as Alienation: Karl Marx,” by Daniel Pals in <i>Nine Theories</i> , pp. 113-142.
<b>Session 10</b>	Daniel Pals, “Religion as a Source of Social Action: Max Weber” in <i>Nine Theories</i> , pp. 143-184.
	<b>Part III: Conceptualizing Religion</b>
<b>Session 11</b>	“Religion, Religions, Religious,” by J. Z. Smith in <i>Critical Terms for Religious Studies</i> , pp. 269-284.



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<b>Session 12</b>	“The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category,” by Talal Asad in <i>Genealogies of Religion: Disciplines and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam</i> , pp. 1-54.
<b>Session 13</b>	Continued: “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category,” by Talal Asad in <i>Genealogies of Religion: Disciplines and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam</i> , pp. 1-54.
<b>Session 14</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
<b>Session 15</b>	<p>“Colonialism,” by David Chidester in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>, pp. 423-437.</p> <p>Optional Reading: “Introduction” and “Conclusion” by David Chidester in <i>Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa</i>.</p>
<b>Session 16</b>	“Religion, Religions, and World Religions: A Critique” by Timothy Fitzgerald in <i>The Ideology of Religious Studies</i> , pp. 3-32.
<b>Session 17</b>	<p>“Family Resemblance and the Definition of Religion,” by Benson Saler in <i>Understanding Religion: Selected Essays</i>, pp. 159-171.</p> <p>Optional Reading: “Ethnocentrism and Distanciation” by Benson Saler in <i>Conceptualizing Religion: Immanent Anthropologists, Transcendent Natives and Unbounded Categories</i>, pp. 227-264.</p>
	<b>Part IV: Post-Critical Approaches</b>
<b>Session 18</b>	“Uncritical Reading,” by Michael Warner in <i>Polemic: Critical or Uncritical</i> , pp. 13-37.
<b>Session 19</b>	<p>“Insider/Outsider Perspectives,” by Kim Knott in <i>Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion</i>, pp. 243-258.</p> <p>“Why has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern,” by Bruno Latour in <i>Critical Inquiry</i>, Vol. 30. No. 2, pp. 225-248.</p>
<b>Session 20</b>	<p>“Revised: Comparative Religious Traditions,” by Peter Ochs in <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>, Vol. 74. No. 2, pp. 483-494.</p> <p>Optional reading: “Re-socializing Scholars of Religious, Theological, and Theo-Philosophical Inquiry,” by Peter Ochs in <i>Modern Theology</i>, Vol. 29. No. 4, pp. 201-219.</p>
<b>Session 21</b>	“Religious Diversity and Comparative Theology,” by Francis Clooney in <i>Comparative Theology: Deep Learning Across Religious Borders</i> , pp. 1-40.



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<b>Session 22</b>	“Long-Term Disagreement: Philosophical Models in Scriptural Reasoning and Receptive Ecumenism,” by Nicholas Adams in <i>Modern Theology</i> , Vol. 29. No. 4, pp. 154-171.
	<b>Part V: Religion, Performance, and Materiality</b>
<b>Session 23</b>	“Religion as a Cultural System: Clifford Geertz,” by Daniel Pals in <i>Nine Theories</i> , pp. 293-324.
<b>Session 24</b>	“Practicing Religions,” by Courtney Bender in <i>The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies</i> , pp. 273-295.
<b>Session 25</b>	“The Evidence of the Senses and the Materiality of Religion,” by Webb Keane in <i>The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i> , Vol. 14. No. 1, pp. 110-127.  “Religious Language,” by Webb Keane in <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> , Vol. 26, pp. 47-71.
<b>Session 26</b>	“The Church of Baseball, the Fetish of Coca-Cola, and the Potlatch of Rock ‘n’ Roll: Theoretical Models for the Study of Religion in American Popular Culture,” by David Chidester in <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i> , Vol. 64. No. 4, pp. 743-765.
<b>Session 27</b>	“Snakes Alive: Religious Studies between Heaven and Earth,” by Robert Orsi in <i>Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them</i> , pp. 177-205.
<b>Session 28</b>	Recap and Review