

# Psychology of Religion

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## 1 BASIC INFORMATION

- Term: January 2018
- Course: Philosophy of Religion
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- Course Materials: [randyridenour.net/ghana/](http://randyridenour.net/ghana/)

## 2 COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course is an exploration of topics in the psychology of religion. The primary goal of the course is to help ministers and seminary students understand the psychological influences on religious belief and behavior. We will discuss the major approaches to the psychological study of religion and apply those approaches to particular issues within religious practice and belief.

These are some of the topics we will be examining this term:

- Psychological development and the stages of life
- The psychological nature of religious experience
- How psychology affects conversion and loss of belief
- The effect of religion on mental and physical health
- Religion and individual morality

### 3 COURSE REQUIREMENTS (100 POINTS TOTAL)

#### 3.1 QUIZZES (10 POINTS EACH)

Each week, there will be a quiz over the material for that week. The quizzes will consist of a variety multiple-choice and short answer questions. Sample questions will be provided to help students prepare for the quizzes.

#### 3.2 PAPER (20 POINTS)

A short reflection paper on the following topic: “Every church contains various groups at different levels of spiritual and psychological development. How does your study of the developmental processes in the psychology of religion help you to design effective ministry to these groups?”

#### 3.3 FINAL EXAM (60 POINTS)

A comprehensive final exam will be completed after the end of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions covering material from readings, lectures, and class discussion.

### 4 ACADEMIC POLICIES

As this is a seminary course preparing students to fulfill their roles in vocational ministry, students will be held to highest standards of academic conduct. Regular attendance is expected, and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, and giving assistance on an exam or assignment when forbidden by the instructor. Plagiarism occurs whenever one uses the passages or ideas of another person without giving that person credit. Two common instances of plagiarism are failure to use quotation marks and failure to document sources. Quotation marks must be used when directly quoting a source. Sources must always be documented, even when they are not directly quoted. Anytime one uses an idea of another person, the source must be cited.

Students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of the course. Persistent absences will be reported to the administration. Excused absences require written notification of the professor in advance of the absence.

Some work may be completed outside of class. Unless instructed otherwise, students will not discuss the material on the assignment with anyone but the instructor.

## 5 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Jan 8	Introduction
Jan 9	Psychological Theories
Jan 10	Logic and Methods in Psychology
Jan 11	Developmental Processes
Jan 12	Religion and the Individual
Jan 13	Psychology of Conversion
Jan 15	Religious Experience
Jan 16	Religion and Health
Jan 17	Religion and Behavior
Jan 18	Conclusion

*The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as required.*