



## Religious Studies 32: Religion in America Santa Rosa Junior College, Fall 2019

**Course Description:** This course will explore and analyze the history of and interaction among diverse ethnic and cultural groups in the shaping of American religious discourse and institutions and the encounter between secular and religious forces. It will survey the many multi-cultural personalities, ideas, and movements of the past 400 years.

Section: 1538  
Times: W 6:00pm-9:00  
Location: Emeritus 1519

Course dates: 08/21/19 – 12/11/19  
Final Exam: 12/18/19  
Course website: <https://canvas.santarosa.edu>

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Office hour: **TBA**  
*or by appointment*  
Mailbox: Emeritus 1551, Service Center

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify and analyze the spectrum of American religious culture in its historical development.
2. Compare & contrast the diverse cultural and ethnic roots of religious expression in America.
3. Describe & give examples of the historical, social, & psychological processes that involved in the creation of new religions.

### **Required Books:**

- Julia Corbett-Hemey, [\*Religion in America\*](#), 7<sup>th</sup> ed (2016) ISBN 9781138188075
  - Available at the [library](#) Doyle Reserves BL2525 .H464 2016 (4<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Michael Pasquier, [\*Religion in America: The Basics\*](#), (2016) ISBN 9781138805576
  - Available at the [library](#) Doyle Reserves BL2525 .P355 2017 (4<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Other readings will be posted on Canvas
- Online booksellers often have the best prices for new & used books. Please contact me ASAP if book costs exceed your budget. I can probably help figure something out.

### **Required Materials**

- Paper & pen/pencil for taking notes & doing in-class work from time to time
- Binder and/or folders. Keep all materials from this course until your course grade is filed.
- Access to a computer, printer, and the internet
- A dictionary. I recommend the Merriam-Webster Dictionary or their [website](#) or the [app](#).
- [SRJC Student ID/Library Card](#) (available at Student Services, Bertolini).

**Course Requirements & Grade Breakdown:**

75 pts: Discussion board posts & responses, 5 points each

100 pts: 10 quizzes, 10 points each

100 pts: 4 reflection papers, 25 points each

100 pts: Midterm Exam

150 pts: Final Exam

**525 pts: Course Total**

**Discussion posts & Responses:** 15 times you will respond to a prompt in a discussion board on Canvas by 5:00pm Wednesdays (3 points). Posts should be about 100 words long. Then you'll respond to someone else's post by 11:00pm Fridays (2 points). Responses should be 50-100 words. Partial credit will be given to late posts & responses, no credit after 5 days late.

**Quizzes:** 10 timed quizzes on Canvas, each worth 10 points. The quizzes will be open on Canvas for one week. You get 2 tries & your highest score will count. Material from any of the readings, lectures, or class discussions for any previous classes up to the day the quiz opens could be on the quizzes. Quizzes will emphasize names, dates, terms, & key points.

**Reflection Papers:** 4 papers of 2-3 pages (600-750 words), each worth 25 points. You'll get a choice of prompts that will ask you to be familiar with & engage with course materials. These are not research papers. The assignment will be open one week before the due date, & there is an automatic grace period of one week.

**Midterm Exam:** The midterm exam will be an in class exam on W 10/9. It will likely consist of terms identifications, short answer, and an essay question. A study guide will be provided a week in advance.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will consist of an in class exam on W 12/18. The in class exam will likely consist of multiple choice, terms identifications, short answer, and an essay question. A study guide will be provided a week in advance.

**Grade Scale:**

90% & above	A / P (Excellent & exceptional work)
80-89%	B / P (Good work, more than minimum requirements)
70-79%	C / P (Acceptable college work, meets minimum requirements)
60-69%	D / NP (Work does not meet the standard for college work)
59% & below	F / NP (Work does not meet standards for college, is incomplete or missing)

**Late Work, Exam Make-Up Policy, and Incompletes:** Life happens. If you're having a rough time with school, work, or personal life please check in with me. Physical & mental healthcare are important. I don't need to know all your details. I can help point you to resources & I can help you navigate the school side. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations. Contact me by email as soon as possible if you have an emergency. Don't be a jerk by abusing the category "emergency."

**Attendance & Participation Policy:** Attendance and participation in class activities are mandatory. Attendance will be recorded. Participation means being in class the whole time, demonstrating engagement, not disrupting class, and not distracting me or your classmates. Come on time. Stay until the end. Keep your coming and going to a minimum. Missing 4 classes (over 20% of the semester) will likely result in failure. Check in with me if you miss 3 classes!

**Reasons to miss class:**

- *Physical or mental health.* Don't risk your health. Don't risk the health of other by bringing your germs to class.
- *Family/Friend/Other Emergencies.* Don't be a jerk & abuse the category "emergency."
- *Special events that are unreasonable to ask a human to miss:* weddings, funerals, graduations, *significant* religious/cultural events, that you are not responsible for scheduling. Don't be a jerk & abuse the category "significant."
- *Outside appointments* should be scheduled outside of class time, when possible.
- *Vacations* should be scheduled during between semesters or over the summer.
- *School-sponsored events.*

**Child Care Emergencies:** Kids & babies who can mostly sit still are welcome in an emergency. However, the college classroom is a place in which adult topics are discussed, and might not always be appropriate for a child/teen. Give me heads-up by email or call my office, if possible.

**Students with disabilities, chronic illness, or other situations that might necessitate frequent absences, late work, or alternative exams: please speak with me privately (and confidentially) as soon as possible – before a potential situation becomes a real situation.**

**Students with Disabilities:** It is SRJC policy to provide equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities, according to state and federal laws. It's your right! Please contact me ASAP about disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and register with the [Disability Resources Department](#) for facilitation. If you have accessibility concerns or suggestions, please share them with me. I'm trying to improve course accessibility.

**DON'T CHEAT OR PLAGIARIZE.:** Students are expected to do their own work. Examples of cheating include (but are not limited to): turning in someone else's work as your own, using unapproved cheat sheets on exams, or forging attendance records. Plagiarism includes copying another author's work or ideas, whether word for word or in paraphrase, without giving proper credit to the original author by citation. **Your continued enrollment in the course indicates that you have read [the statement on academic integrity](#), [the statement on academic integrity and your grades](#), and that you will consult the instructor if you do not understand what cheating and plagiarism are.**

**Communication Policy:** I generally respond to emails in 24-48 hours M-F. Check the syllabus, Canvas, & check with a classmate before emailing me to get information that's already on the syllabus, on Canvas, or was covered in class. Please review [Questions You Should Never Ask Your Professor](#) and [How to E-mail a Professor](#). Check your email and check in on Canvas regularly. Please keep the email on file in your Cubby updated. I strongly encourage [registering](#)

[for your SRJC student email](#). You can use it for student matters and they're rarely caught in SRJC spam filters.

**Office Hours:** TBA & by appointment. Office hours are times faculty reserve for seeing students privately, in their offices. My office hours are drop-in; just come by! If you can't make my office hours, we'll make an appointment. My availability outside of scheduled office hours is limited, but phone/Skype appointments are possible. **Office hours are for STUDENTS. I want to see you! Don't feel bad about interrupting me during office hours.** See the [Office Hours Handout](#). (Also on Canvas.)

To encourage office hour visits, I will give you 10 points for a 5-10 minute chat once before the midterm and once after the midterm. This can be in office hours, by appointment or by phone/Skype. Additional office hour visits are welcome & encouraged, but you max out at 20 extra credit points for this for the term.

**Golden Rule & Class Culture:** Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

- Act like an adult. Don't be a jerk.
- If you can't say something in a mature and respectful way, keep it to yourself.
- Questions are always ok, so please ask – in class, office hours, or by email
- We learn together. Do the reading & to come prepared to help the entire class learn together.
- Bring the readings to class, in hardcopy or electronic form (or arrange to share with a classmate).
- Attendance is mandatory. Come on time. Stay until the end. Limit your coming & going.
- It is disrespectful to instructors and to classmates to cause distraction in the classroom.
- Use your electronic devices only for class-related work.

**On the Study of Religions:** This course is about the academic study of religions according to secular academic methods. We seek to be **descriptive** of human experience, not **prescriptive**. We try to describe what people **actually do/did** and **think/thought** as religious agents, not whether they have “true” myths or the “right” religion.

Since this is a state school, the First Amendment to the Constitution does not allow this course to be “Sunday school.” It does allow the secular, academic study of the history, material culture, texts, beliefs, and practices of religions. You **do not** have to agree with the religions we read about **or** with contemporary scholars, but you do to learn what they say. The classroom is **not** the place for preaching or for trying to get someone to join your religion. Every religion has made both positive and negative contributions to the human experience.

**Content Warning:** This course is about religions & the academic study of religions. It may include topics of upsetting/distressing nature related to: the meaning of life, death & mortality, suffering, violence, sacrifice, sexual violence, slavery, sexuality, gender roles, anti-LGBTQ and/or anti-woman ideologies, and religious, ethnic, racial, or ability prejudices. Learning about the human experience can often be uncomfortable or unpleasant. That's ok. That means we're thinking about things that matter. But: please come speak to me if you think something might trigger an extreme emotional or physical reaction (PTSD, panic attack, etc.). I can help warn you, make alternative readings available (within reason), or point you towards appropriate services. I

can not possibly imagine all of the materials that might trigger these kinds of reactions in advance, but I encourage you to speak with me, confidentially, if you're aware of the kinds of things that are triggering for you so that I can point to the relevant material in the syllabus.

**Statement of Inclusivity:** People of all races, religions, sexual orientations, gender presentations, ability, and immigration status will be present and are welcome in the classroom.

**What it Means to Have an Adjunct as an Instructor:** [read statement](#) (also posted on Canvas)

**Food & Housing Insecurity:** Many students struggle to afford food & rent. Many are hungry, homeless or couch-surfing. If you're one of them, I can help you find campus & community resources. See also: The "Campus & Community Resources" Page on Canvas.

**Credit Hours and Workload:** This is a 3 unit course. A unit at SRJC is defined as "One lecture hour and two hours of outside work throughout the semester." [See page 19 of the College Catalog for more information.](#) The expectation for this course is that you will spend **about 3 hours per week in class** & you will spend **about 6 hours per week studying and completing assignments** for this course. Your reading speed will affect the actual time it takes you to complete readings. In other words, the SRJC suggests:

If you are taking:	Time in class/lab or reading/studying:	Limit jobs & activities to:
12-15 units (4-5 courses)	36-45 hours per week	8-15 hours per week
9-12 units (3-4 courses)	27-36 hours per week	15-20 hours per week
3-9 units (1-3 courses)	9-27 hours per week	20-40 hours per week

**Your continued enrollment in the course indicates that you have read the syllabus and that you will consult the instructor if you do not understand the major components of the course or course policies.**