

Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee

Approval Form

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Proposal Title: Religion in America

Sponsor(s): Profs. Grace & Ashton Dept.: Philospohy/Religion

Check one:  Course  Specialization  Concentration  Achievement Certificate  
 Certification Program  Major Program  Minor Change \_\_\_\_\_  
(please name: deletion or credit/title/catalog change)

Undergraduate  Graduate 3 Credit Hours

<p><b>Step 1 (Department)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved <u>2/6/89</u> Date</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved</p> <p>_____ Dept. CC Chairperson</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <u>2/9/89</u> Date</p> <p>_____ Chairperson, Dept.</p>	<p><b>Step 2 (Receipt)</b></p> <p>SCC# <u>88-89-27</u></p> <p>Proposal Received <u>2/6/89</u> Date</p> <p>_____ Chairperson, SCC</p>	<p><b>Step 3 (School CC)</b></p> <p>Reviewed <u>10/10/89</u> Date</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>_____ Chairperson, School Curr. Comm.</p>
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**Step 4 (Academic Dean) Comments:**

Reviewed 10/16/89  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Dean of School

**Step 5 (SCC)**

Open Hearing 11/13/89  Approved by Senate Curriculum Committee 11/13/89  
Date Date

Returned to sponsor(s) for the following reasons:

**Step 6 (Faculty Senate)**

Presented to Faculty Senate : 11/17/89  
Date

Approved  Not Approved

Notification to Vice-President Academic Affairs \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, SCC Chairperson

**Step 7 (Vice-President for Academic Affairs)**

Received 12/7/09  
Date

Approved  Yes  No

If no, reasons are as follows:

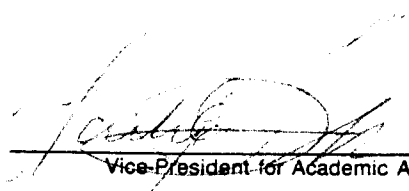
Student credit hours 3

Faculty load hours 3

Equalized credit hours 3

Official copy and approval sheet filed 12/15/09  
Date

Signature

  
Vice-President for Academic Affairs

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**Registrar**

Approved course description received \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Hegis Taxonomy and Course Number assigned \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Notification forwarded: Senate Curriculum Committee Chairperson, Department Chairperson(s), Academic Dean(s), Registrar, Sponsor(s).

## PROPOSAL FOR THE COURSE "RELIGION IN AMERICA"

### I. Details:

- A. Course Title: Religion in America
- B. Sponsors: Dr. James Grace, Dr. Dianne Ashton  
Philosophy/Religion, Philosophy/Religion Department
- C. Credit Hours: 3
- D. Course Level: Undergraduate (Freshman or above)
- E. Curricular Effect: This course will be a general education elective and will particularly complement courses such as American History, Minority Groups, Sociology of the Family, and American Literature
- F. Prerequisites: None
- G. Implementation:
  - 1. Time of implementation: Spring semester 1990
  - 2. Scale of implementation: At least one section of this course will be offered each year, depending upon student demand.
- H. Adequacy:
  - 1. Staffing: Beginning in Spring 1990, the Philosophy/Religion department will be able to teach one section of Religion in America each year. Greater student interest will indicate the need for future hiring.
  - 2. Library facilities and holdings: The Philosophy/Religion department is currently emphasizing the acquisition of additional books and journals on Religion in America. With these additions, that collection should be adequate for students enrolled in an undergraduate Religion in America course. The marked increase in new books and journals on American popular culture and American religion during the last decade leaves no shortage of materials from which to choose these new holdings. One selected configuration of course materials is Catherine Albanese's America: Religions and Religion as the main text, supplemented with a collection of short articles and stories which could be copied by the Glassboro bookstore and offered to the students as a packet for purchase. A sample list of books and supplemental readings is included in Appendices 1 and 2 at the end of this proposal. Appendix 3 offers samples of a syllabus and other material for possible use in this course
  - 3. Space needs: One classroom with blackboards and with seating for thirty students will be needed for either one or two courses each year, depending on student demand for this course.

## II. RATIONALE

Although Glassboro State College offers courses addressing the conditions of life and culture in America, none deals with the history, role, and impact of religion in American life. A central component of citizenship in the United States is the individual's coming to grips with pluralism, and with understanding how neighbors who believe differently contribute to the general welfare. As a state college, Glassboro rightly offers its students many courses in which to learn about America. Yet none deals directly with the influence and on-going history of religion in the development of American life. Our course will focus directly on religion and its impact in America and American history. The conditions of religious life in America have given rise to new variations of old religions, and have created a fertile environment in which new religions have been able to grow. Our course will also look at these new religions and new religious movements.

In addition to examining the changes in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism in the American context, the course will look at distinctive religions of various minority groups, like the Shakers, Mormons, Oneida Colony, and the Black churches. "Religion in America" will examine the power of mainstream Protestantism to weave a net of symbols and meaning that integrat minority religions into the overall religious climate. Popular movements, like the worship of nature and the fascination with the occult are also discussed in this course. By focusing specifically on the history and condition of religious life in America, the proposed course presents its own content field, in no way conflicting with currently offered courses like "World Religions."

### III. ESSENCE OF THE COURSE

#### A. Course Objectives: As a result of this course, students will:

1. Understand American pluralism and its sources and influence on religions
2. Know the central differences between the main religious groups in the American population
3. Understand the difference between a sect, cult, and "church"
4. Understand the main ways in which industrialization influenced religious life in America
5. Understand the impact of immigration and national origin differences on the growth of ethnic churches
6. Understand the differences in gender expectations imposed by religions in different historical eras of American life
7. Be able to express their knowledge in essay form
8. Be able to accomplish individual research projects and present their results to the class in oral reports
9. Expand their knowledge of religious groups other than their own

#### B. Topical Outline:

One possible approach to this course uses the method of history of religion to explore the development of religions in the context of American history. Readings would begin with Native American religions, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Afro-American religion. These were the religions that were present during the colonial experience. The religious changes of the nineteenth century, triggered by the disestablishment of religion in the United States, include new religions, new branches and organizational efforts by mainline religions, the occult and mental healing movements, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism in America. Finally, our "Public Protestantism," and its influence on American civil religion and cultural religion will be addressed. See Appendix 3. A research questionnaire is included as an example of what can be done with the course, although this proposal does not require that the same format be followed by every teacher.

#### C. Evaluation and Grading Procedure:

Students' grades will be comprised of evaluations of their work in several tasks. The mid-term and final exams will reflect their capacity to show their knowledge and understanding of the course material in essay form. Oral class presentations on their own research will show their ability to work individually and to express their understanding orally. Class participation will reflect their capacity to cooperate and contribute to the classroom experience.

D. Course Evaluation:

This course will be reevaluated by the Philosophy/Religion Department at least every other year, beginning with the first year of its implementation. The review will take into account student evaluations of the course and the views of those who have taught the course. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that Religion in America continues to satisfy the goals of general education, of the Department of Philosophy/Religion, and of the course itself.

IV. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

- a. Gary Hunter  
Department of History
- b. Jay Chaskes  
Department of Sociology
- c. Richard Scott  
Department of Geology

V. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:

Religion in America looks at the wide variety of religious styles that have existed and continue to exist in America. Mormons, Hare Krishna people, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, have grown up here along side the more traditional, historic religions. Women and men occasionally exchanged roles and the occult has often found adherents. Yet, we will see that a brand of Protestantism has integrated all of these into a culture that is distinctly American.



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Sociology Department

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1762 (609) 863-6077

February 11, 1984

Dr. Howard Cell, Chair  
Department of Philosophy/Religion  
Laurel Hall

Dear Howard,

I was delighted to read the proposal, entitled "Religion in America" and to offer my comments in support of this proposal. I believe this course will be a valuable addition to the curriculum. Students desiring to do better in their studies will find this course will complement my department's "History of the United States" as well as other courses that my classes do, such as "Introduction to Sociology," "Social Problems," and "Social Stratification."

I am very pleased that the course will utilize an historical approach. I consistently find that when I offer courses which do not come to class "to a rather skeptical understanding of how society. On the other hand, these same students tend to respond enthusiastically to the historical approach. There is certainly no need to expound on the virtues of this approach here.

I am also pleased with the topic content of this proposal. Although students have little knowledge of Eastern religious tradition and thought, almost half of the immigrants who come to our shores are from Eastern Hemisphere countries and are, essentially, members of these religions. By including religious, communal, social, and historical religious traditions, and the new religious movements, such as the more mainstream religions, this course represents the richness of the American religious experience. Finally, by treating subjects such as industrialization, immigration, and the American cultural hegemony, the course achieves considerable depth.

I believe this course will be a valuable addition to the college's course offerings for all students, not just those desiring to do better in the Social Sciences; also, just for the sake of their knowledge for them. I am looking forward to its approval by the Curriculum Committee.

Sincerely yours,

Jay Chaskas  
Associate Professor



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Psychology Department

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1763  
(609) 863-6016/6017

June 5, 1989

James Grace  
Philosophy and Religion Department  
Glassboro State College

Dear Jim,

I have received your new course proposal "Religion in America."

This looks like an excellent course, and, considering the growth in religious fundamentalism on a global scale, it appears to be a timely course as well. The topics look appropriate to me.

I know little about religion, but it does seem reasonable that religious expression in America would be influenced by a unique set of conditions not present in other places. For example, I think that the degree of cultural diversity found in America should result in distinctive religious expressions.

You can do a lot of interesting things with this course. You have my full support.

Sincerely,

John Frisone

JDF/les



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Economics Department

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1761 (609) 863-6014

May 10, 1989

Dr. James Grace  
Professor  
Philosophy and Religion  
Laurel III  
Campus

Dear Dr. Grace:

I have reviewed the course proposal, "Religion in America". It seems to me that the course is of great potential interest to contemporary college students, and it is certainly relevant to widespread contemporary sociological phenomena. The course is comprehensive, and I know that you are an outstanding scholar in this field. I fully support and recommend curriculum committee and college approval of "Religion in America".

Yours truly,

Ben Hitchner, Ph.D.  
Chairman



Howard,

Some suggestions for supplementary readings on the African American religious tradition

- ① Joseph Washington, Black sects and cults. A good short summary of mainstream and not so mainstream groups.
- ② ~~Alpert~~ Roboteau - Slave Religion - excellent
- ③ Gayraud Wilmore - Black Religion and Black Radicalism.  
Two old pieces that are still classics
- ④ Benjamin Mays, The Negro's Church
- ⑤ Carter Woodson, The History of the Negro Church

I would spell out the course themes a little more on the type of schedule of readings. But I support the idea and am surprised that this course has not been on the books or in class. If you want more detail on African American religion feel free.

Steve

265

*Handwritten notes:*  
1980  
-

APPENDIX 1

Sample list of books and supplemental readings which the Savitz Library either has or is currently purchasing for support of the course "Religion in America":

1. Albanese, Catherine. America: Religion and Religions, 1983
2. Andrews, William, Sisters of the Spirit, 1986
3. Bednarowski, Religion in America,
4. Bozeman, Protestants in the Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum Religious Thought
5. Buhle, Paul, ed. Popular Culture in America, 1987
6. Cross, Robert, The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America, 1968
7. Douglas, Ann, The Feminization of American Culture,
8. Edwards, Jonathan, Selections, Hill and Wang, American Heritage Series, 1962
9. Ewen, Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars, 1985
10. Feldstein, Stanley. The Land That I Show You, 1979
11. Fisher, Miles M., Negro Slave Songs in the United States, 1978
12. Gordon, Milton, Assimilation in American Life, 1964
13. Grose, Peter, Israel in the Mind of America, 1984
14. Hudson, Winthrop, Religion in America, 2nd ed, 1973
15. Howe, Irving, World of Our Fathers, 1976
16. Howe, and Libo, There We Lived, 1977
17. McDannell, The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1985
18. Moore, Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans, 1986
19. Morgan, The Puritan Family
20. Orsi, The Madonna of 115th Street, 1986
21. Porterfield, Feminine Spirituality in America,
22. Reuther and Keller, eds, Women and Religion in America, vols. 1 & 2
23. Royce, Ethnic Identity, 1982
24. Sarna, The American Jewish Experience, 1986
25. Sandeen, The Bible and Social Reform, 1982
26. Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, 1985
27. Weber, Max, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism Scribner's, 1958

Journals:

- Journal of the American Academy of Religion
- Journal of the Organization of American Historians
- Journal of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
- Modern Judaism
- Communal Studies
- Religious Research Review

APPENDIX 2: READINGS FOR THE COURSE "RELIGION IN AMERICA"

To be copied and prepared in a packet by the Glassboro Bookstore for purchase by students

Bierhorst, ed, IN THE TRAIL OF THE WIND, Doubleday, 1971 selections of Native American ritual orations and prayers

Brown, Dee, "Their Manners Are Praiseworthy", preface to BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE, 1971. 1-15

"A Woman's Ways. Interview with Judy Swamp" PARABOLA, 1961, 59-61 (interview with an Iriquois woman about current life on her reservation)

Glatzer, Nahum. "Aspects of Martin Buber's Thought" MODERN JUDAISM, 1981, 1/ 1-16

Gittelsohn, Natalie. "American Jews Rediscover Orthodoxy," New York Times, Sept, 30, 1984

Cross, Robert, "A Church of Energetic Individuals," THE EMERGENCE OF LIBERAL CATHOLICISM IN AMERICA, Quadrangle, 1968, 162-182

Whaley, Joachim, "The World That Luther Made" book review, New York Times Book Review, 1984

Calvin, John, "On Civil Government," ON GOD AND POLITICAL DUTY, Bobbs-Merrill, 44-71 excerpt

Edwards, Jonathan, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", SELECTIONS, Hill and Wang, 1962, 155-172

Hughes, Langston, "Salvation"

Greeley, Andrew, "In Defense of TV Evangelism," TV Guide, 1988, July 9-15

Pitts, Walter, "Keep the Fire Burnin': Language and Ritual in the Afro-Baptist Church". JAAR, 1988, LVI/1, 77-89

De Jong, Mary, "I Want to Be Like Jesus: The Self-Defining Power of Evangelical Hymnody." JAAR, 1985, LIV/3, 461-493

Bednarowski, Mary, "Outside the Mainstream: Women's Religion and Women Religious Leaders in Nineteenth-Century America," JAAR, 1980, XLVIII/2, 207-231

Qur'an, Sura 19

Smith, Jane, "Women in Islam: Equity, Equality, and the Search for the Natural Order." JAAR, 1979, XLVII/4 517-539

"Katha". UPANISHADS. Mentor, 1957, 13-25

## APPENDIX 3

### RELIGION IN AMERICA

Text: Albanese, Catherine. America: Religions and Religion  
Supplemental Readings Packet

This course will look at religious life in the United States from a number of perspectives. Overall, we will be taking an historical approach, dealing first with those religions which thrived here first. We will also try to understand the particular and distinctive ideas and styles of each of these religions.

Religion has always been a thriving enterprise and we will also look at the changes and popular movements that emerged in American society at various times, trying to understand their appeal. Finally, we will examine the distinctive style of religion that is uniquely "American" and examine its sources and growth.

Course requirements are:

1. A report on a visit to a religious service NOT OF YOUR OWN FAITH.
2. Midterm Exam
3. Final Exam
4. Each student MUST read the assigned material on time in order to have his/her questions answered during the appropriate class.

## RELIGION IN AMERICA

### Schedule of Readings:

1. Introduction
2. Native American Religions
3. Judaism
4. Roman Catholicism
5. Protestant Reformation (historical background)
6. Protestantism in America

### MIDTERM EXAM

7. Afro-American Religion
8. Nineteenth Century America and Its New Religions
9. Occult Movements and Mental Healing
10. Islam in America
11. Eastern Religions in America: Hinduism, Buddhism
12. Public Protestantism
13. Civil Religion
14. Cultural Religion

### FINAL EXAM

Classroom Reports Will Be Scheduled for the Second Half of the Semester

date:

name:

day of the week:

name of place:

name of religion:

this is a \_\_\_synagogue \_\_\_church \_\_\_mosque \_\_\_cathedral  
\_\_\_home \_\_\_other ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

first impressions:

style of architecture

style of decoration

formality

age and size of congregation

minister/rabbi/priest/lay leader?

languages used

activities after worship service

direction congregation faced

positions used by congregation & leader(s)

prayerbook or hymnal?

was there instrumental music?

ritual items prominently displayed in sanctuary

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

second impressions:

GENERALLY SPEAKING, was the service theocentric, anthropocentric, or ideocentric? Explain.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, what percentage of the service was done by the congregation as a group? what were they doing?

How much was done by the leader/clergy? what was he/she doing?

What activities, if any, were done by others?

What role did silence play, if any?

Did the people tend to talk among themselves or to be silent?

What sort of things did individuals announce during the service?  
Personal news? Congregational activities? Religious experiences? Religious perceptions? Explain.

If there was a sermon, who gave it? What was its theme?

What image or model of God, or of the universe, was presented in iconography, decorations, like stained glass windows or murals, or in the prayers?

What sort of relationship to God, or to the universe, was described in the prayers/hymns/meditations? Explain.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, what did the prayers/hymns/meditations talk about? Did they present a task for people? What was it?

GENERALLY SPEAKING, did the prayers or hymns or meditations ask for anything? If so, what was it?

Was there any group activity after the service? What was it?

What surprised you about your visit?

- POSSIBLE FINAL EXAM

Answer six of the following nine questions as completely as you can. Do not answer more than six.

1. Explain how Afro-American religion blended elements from traditional African religion, Protestant Christianity, and the experience of slavery. Why were the Baptist and Methodist forms of Christianity so great an influence on southern slaves?
2. Explain how industrialization and voluntarism in nineteenth century America changed religious life here.
3. Discuss the rise of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons.)
4. Explain the main distinctions between Eastern Orthodox and western styles of Christianity. How did Eastern Orthodoxy come to America? What were the main changes that occurred in Eastern Orthodox religion in America?
5. Show how Buddhism can be considered a reform movement within Hinduism. Why was Buddhism easily blended with other religions in America?
6. Why is Islam more difficult to maintain in America than in Saudia Arabia? How do Moslems adjust their religion to American life?
7. Discuss the religious style of Southern Appalachia. What do you expect to be the future of this religious style?
8. Explain the main ideas and holidays of American civil religion.
9. Discuss two mythologies of American cultural religion. Give examples to support your argument.