**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE**

**COURSE SYLLABUS: RST 304 (19609)**

**Women and Religion**

**Fall 2016**

COURSE SECTION: Sierra Hall 321, Mondays and Wednesdays 9:30a-10:45a

PROFESSOR: R. C. Rodman, PhD

FACULTY EMAIL: rrodman@csun.edu

OFFICE HOURS: M W & F in Santa Susanna 229 (x3940), 11am-12n

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will explore the charged intersections of gender and religion, privileging “women” as the lens through which to become familiar with some of the theoretical and methodological concerns in critical studies of gender and religion. Students will have the opportunity, through reading, writing, site visits, and viewing films to inquire into the complex relationship of women and religion. We will use a gender as a category of analysis to study religion in print, practice, and culture; we will also use religion as a category of analysis with which to think about gender (and, necessarily also race, ethnicity, class, power and privilege).

II. TEXTBOOKS AND REQUIRED MATERIALS : You must have these materials with you in class.

* *Women’s Studies in Religion: A Multicultural Reader* by Kate Bagley and Kathleen McIntosh (New York: Routledge, 2016) ISBN 978-014-108318
* *Selected Readings* (Online)

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ARTS AND HUMANITIES

***Student Learning Outcomes for Arts and Humanities:*** Students will understand the rich history and diversity of human knowledge, discourse and achievements of their own and other cultures as they are expressed in the arts, literatures, religions, and philosophy. Students will:

1. Explain and reflect critically upon the human search for meaning, values, discourse and expression in one or more eras/stylistic periods or cultures;
2. Analyze, interpret, and reflect critically upon ideas of value, meaning, discourse and expression from a variety of perspectives from the arts and/or humanities;
3. Produce work/works of art that communicate to a diverse audience through a demonstrated understanding and fluency of expressive forms;
4. Demonstrate ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development within the arts and humanities;
5. Use appropriate critical vocabulary to describe and analyze works of artistic expression, literature, philosophy, or religion and a comprehension of the historical context within which a body of work was created or a tradition emerged;
6. Describe and explain the historical and/or cultural context within which a body of work was created or a tradition emerged.

IV. COURSE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

**Familiarity with Moodle**: This class will employ Moodle for student assignments, class updates, and communication. It is your responsibility to learn and use Moodle. For information and instructions about Moodle, go to: http://www.csun.edu/it/studentmoodle-help/

**Attendance and Participation:**

* Attendance is mandatory. I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. The more absences you have, the lower your grade – PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN THIS CLASS, since we meet only once a week. Leaving during class, texting in class and being tardy will also lower this portion of your grade.
* Showing up isn’t enough. You must be fully prepared for each class. All assignments must be read prior to the class they are assigned, and all readings must be brought to class.
* You must fully participate in the class by asking/answering questions, fully participating in discussions, and fully engaging in any other activity of the class.
* Please make sure you attend to your personal needs before or after the class. You may not leave during class. No cell phones, texting, or Internet use for anything other than class work.

**Written Work:** All papers must meet basic scholarly standards appropriate for university level work. Not only does this include proper grammar, punctuation, and syntax, but also serious reflection on your topic. There are many sources to help you with your writing assignments. The most important is the Writing Program at CSUN’s Learning Resource Center, Room 408, Bayramian Hall, 818-677-2033 or go to: <http://www.csun.edu/lrc/writing.html>.

**Deadlines:** Because due dates are stated at the outset, all papers/assignments must be turned in or posted on Moodle on the date listed. Late work will be docked a point for each day late, as of the due date. Failure to show up on the day of presentations will result in forfeiting your ability to present and all the points that go with it.

**Plagiarism/Cheating:** Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a failing grade, certainly for the item plagiarized, but also for the course.Plagiarism is one form of cheating, but not the only one. Other examples include “borrowing” stealing, buying or otherwise procuring papers and exams, or having someone else take an exam or write an essay for which you take credit. All instances of cheating will result no credit for the assignment and follow up with the Dean’s office.

**Special Accommodations**: If you have a documented learning disability and/or a physical disability and need special accommodations in order to complete course requirements, please make sure the instructor is informed.

**Contact with the Professor:** My office hours are posted above. I look forward to working with each of you in class and on an individual basis. Therefore, I urge you to take advantage of my office hours. I am happy to discuss any aspect of this course with you, and help you with the assignments. I especially urge you to see me if you are confused about the course or an assignment. Really successful students ask questions! Please contact me by email, in class, or during office hours with your questions, comments, or requests.

OUR CLASS CONTRACT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What I Expect From You** | **What You Can Expect From Me** |
| You will treat everyone in class, including the professor, with respect and courtesy due all human beings. | I will treat you with the respect and courtesy due all human beings. |
| You will attend every class, give your full attention to the material, and conduct yourself in an appropriate manner. | I will attend every class, give my full attention to the material and conduct myself in an appropriate manner.  |
| You will agree to do the work outlined in the syllabus on time. | I will return your work in a timely fashion.  |
| You can ask for help. | I will assist you in any way I can, and make myself available to you via office hours. You can expect a response to email within 24 hours except in rare cases. |
| You will acknowledge that your perception of effort, by itself, is not enough to justify a distinguished grade. | I will not discriminate against you on the basis of your identity or your well-informed viewpoints. |
| You will prepare carefully for every class. | I will prepare carefully for every class. |
| You will not plagiarize, cheat, copy, or steal the work of others. | I will pursue the maximum punishment for plagiarism, cheating, and other violations of academic integrity. |
| You will not make excuses for your failure to do what you ought; you will accept the consequences – good and bad – of your actions. | I will keep careful records of your attendance, performance, and progress.  |

V. ASSESSMENT (Point System)

* Attendance & Participation: 15 points (.87 x 15). You lose partial points for: every absence; being late/leaving early; texting in class and not contributing in class.
* Class leadership: 10 points
* Papers: 75 points (3 x 25)

TOTAL: 100 Points

**Grading: Plus-Minus System will be used**

**Letter Grade Allocation**

* 94-100 A
* 90-93 A-
* 87-89 B+
* 83-86 B
* 80-82 B-
* 77-79 C+
* 73-76 C
* 70-72 C-
* 60-69 D

VI. SCHEDULE

*You should have read the materials assigned BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS. Warning: you will be asked about your reading/work! Please bring the materials assigned with you to class. We often read aloud from the books.*

**Do religion and politics mix? Should they? Aren’t they supposed to be separate?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **What to Read** **(You must have the readings done BEFORE coming to class)** | **Assignments**  |
| Sept. 2 | Introduction to the courseBuy the course textbook; become familiar with Moodle to find assigned readings there | Introduction to the course; read and understand the syllabus  |
| * Sept. 9
 | * Women’s Studies in Religion (*WSR*), vii-13
* Joan Scott, “Gender as a Useful Category of Analysis,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (Dec., 1986), pp. 1053-1075
* Meredith McGuire, “Everyday Religion as Lived: Rethinking Religious Identity, Commitment, and Hybridity” (*Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*, Oxford, 2008)
 | Bring the book and the readings to class |
| Sept. 16 | * “Why ‘Womanism’? The Genesis of a New Word and What it Means” by Justine Tally, 205-221 (online);
* “White Women’s Christ and Black Women’s Jesus” by Jacquelyn Grant in *WSR*, 48-55;
* Rosemary Radford Ruether’s “Sexism and God Talk,” 306-324 (online)
* Carol Christ, Why Women Need the Goddess, WSR 163-173
 | Class leadership |
| Sept. 23 | * Colleen McDannell, “Mormon Garments: Sacred Clothing and the Body” (*Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*, Yale University Press, 1995)
* Pamela K. Taylor, “I Just Want to Be Me: Issues in Identity for One American Muslim Woman” (*The Veil*, 2008)
 | Class leadership |
| Sept. 30th | * “Following Naked Dancing and Long Dreaming” by Chung Hyun Kyung, *WSR,* 19-34;
* Mikaela Murphy, Reevaluating Traditional Buddhist Patriarchy (online)
 | Class leadership |
| Oct. 7th | * Reverend Dorothy A. Austin, “The Cloistered Closet” (*One Nation Under God? Religion and American Culture*, M. Gerber and R. Walkowitz, eds., Routledge, 1999)
* Judith Plaskow, Toward a New Theology of Sexuality WSR, 211-219
 | Paper #1 due in class at the beginning of class (compare & contrast essay |
| Oct. 14 | **Site visit: Women’s Mosque or Angelus Temple – readings TBA** | Class leadership |
| Oct. 21 | * Kristy Nabhan-Warren, “Little Slices of Heaven and Mary’s Candy Kisses: Mexican American Women Redefining Feminism and Catholicism” (*The Religious History of Women: Reimagining the Past*, Catherine A. Brekus, ed., University of North Carolina Press, 2007)
* Luis León, "Borderland Bodies and Souls: Mexican Religious Healing Practices in East Los Angeles” (*Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture,* Gaston Espinoza, ed., Duke University Press, 2008)
* Sandra Cisneros, Guadalupe the Sex Goddess, WSR 163-173
 | Class leadership |
| Oct. 28 | * Laura Donaldson, On Medicine Women and White Shame-Ans (online)
* Hernandez-Villa, Mediations of the Spirit, WSR 55-64
 | Class leadership |
| Nov. 4 | * Frances E. Wood “Take My Yoke upon You”, *WSR*, 128-136.
* Darice Jones, Falling off the Tightrope onto a Bed of Feathers, WSR 137-142
* Riffat Hassan, Jihad Fi Sabil Allah, The Issue of Woman-Man Equality in the Islamic Tradition,” and
* JihadFiSabilAllah,” in both in WSR, 143-162
 | Class leadership |
| Nov. 11 | **No class, Veteran’s Day** |  |
| Nov. 18 | * “Violence Against Women in the Historical Christian West and in North American Secular Culture: The Visual and Textual Evidence” by Margaret R. Miles in *WSR,* 113-127.
* Slut-shaming, Pope Gregory the VI, and Mary Magdalene, Jane Schaberg
 | Paper #2 due: site visit essay |
| Nov. 25 | **No class, Thanksgiving** |  |
| Dec. 2 | * Bones of Contention (online)
* Jennifer Bleyer, From Riot Grrl to Yeshiva Girl, WSR, 176-181
* Pat Mora, Coatlicue’s Rules, WSR 182-3
 | Class leadership |
| Dec. 9 | **Last class meeting** | Paper workshop day  |
| Dec. 16 |  | Last day to turn in paper #3 |

**Last day of class is Dec. 9th.**

**Finals week is the week of Dec. 12th.**