

Latin@s and Lived Religion in the U.S.

Fall 2015

T-TH 12:10—1:50 pm

NOTE: This course fulfills Santa Clara's Core Requirement for RTC 1 and is an elective in the Latin American Studies Minor Program and in the Ethnic Studies Program

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 pm

Class: Kenna 214

REQUIRED BOOKS: *Bless Me Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to the ethnic and religious diversity among Latinas and Latinos living in the United States. Students will be exposed to the ways in which Latinos appropriate Christian, Indigenous, and Afro-Caribbean religions in everyday life. We will explore the ways that the materialization of Latina/o devotional practices, unveil how Latina/os make religion meaningful and palpable for themselves in the context of the trials and tribulations of life in the United States. Through case studies, this course explores religious and spiritual practices as shaped by colonialism, race/ethnicity, class, gender, and migration.



The study of lived religion is a relatively new area in the Sociology of Religion. It is the study of the ways people experience the sacred in their lives and how religious experience is connected to larger social structures, both religious and secular.¹ In this course students will analyze the ways that lived religion exists in the cultural, geographical and historical context of Latinas and Latinos in the U.S.² This course specifically focuses on the fluidity and malleability of religious practices and how they adapt to and at the same time shape life itself. Lived religion is a way of, as historians Anne S. Brown and David D. Hall so aptly put it, “being religious [in a fashion] that is responsive to the needs that arise within social life” (Brown and Hall 1997, 57).

¹ R. Marie Griffith, 1997.

² (Danielle Hervieu-Léger 1997).

CORE CURRICULUM LEARNING OBJECTIVES: [Adapted from Santa Clara’s Core Requirements for Religion, Theology, and Culture.]

This course fulfills Santa Clara’s Core Requirement for RTC 1.

1a. Students will be able to describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several religions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions. (Knowledge of Global Cultures; Complexity; Ambiguity)

1b. Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence (Critical thinking; Complexity; Reflection)

DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES: [adapted from RS “Description of the Three Levels”]

1. Students question and probe religion for what it reveals about human beings, their diverse societies, religions, convictions, and aspirations. Students use diverse materials and demonstrate formal postures of inquiry into religion and in order to go beyond simple description of religion to a reflective engagement with it.
2. Students propose and investigate the ‘big questions’—that is, the meta-reflective questions that ask how and why we ask the questions that we do about religion.

COURSE GOALS: Rather than providing students with an exhaustive exposure to the various religious traditions among Latina/os living in the United States; this course introduces students to the ways in which Latinas and Latinos appropriate Christian, Indigenous, and Afro-Caribbean religions in their everyday lives. More specifically, through case studies, this course explores religious and spiritual practices as shaped by colonialism, race/ethnicity, class, gender, and migration.

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT & GRADING AT A GLANCE

Attendance & Class Participation	10 Points Total
One group presentation	10 Points Total
Exam 1	20 Points Total
Family Religious Profile	10 Points Total
Ethnography Research Notes—Site #1	10 Points Total
Ethnography Research Notes—Site #2	10 Points Total
Ethnographic Research Final Paper	30 Points Total
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	100 POINTS

Grading Scale:

- 94 and above = A
- 90-93 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- 67-69 = D+
- 64-66 = D
- 61-63 = D-
- 60 and below = F

Feedback: Students will receive feedback from the professor through comments on papers. If you have any further questions please come and see me during office hours. **Students' papers will be turned in two-weeks from the day they are due.**

POLICIES:

- You are expected to attend every class session; participate in classroom and small group discussions; and demonstrate respect to your peers, people at your community placement, and the professor.
- **Assignments that are handed in late will be penalized ONE-THIRD GRADE per day (i.e. from an A to an A-, an A- to a B+, a B+ to a B, etc).**
- You must do well in all assignments to pass the course. The dates and material in this syllabus may be subject to change, so listen carefully to announcements in class.
- Santa Clara University strongly believes in academic integrity and honesty; therefore, cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course and the student may receive a failing grade. Please visit the following website for further information on Santa Clara University's policy regarding academic integrity:
<http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Academic-Integrity.cfm>
- **No laptops, electronic notebooks or i-pads allowed in class:** If your cell phone/pad, electronic device or book is on your lap or on your desk, even if you are not using it, you will lose credit for class participation that day, which will hurt your over-all participation grade. They must be physically turned

off and in a bag. **If you are expecting a call/text, due to a family emergency (someone at the hospital), you need to let me know at the beginning of class.**

- **No Talking in class.** If you are caught talking in class you will forfeit your attendance grade for the day.
- You are allowed to bring a drink and a snack as long as it does not disrupt classroom lectures and your participation in class discussions.
- Students requiring accommodations for disabilities must let the professor know on the first week of class. To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must be registered with Disabilities Resources, located in Benson 216. If you would like to register with Disabilities Resources, please visit their office in Benson 216 or call at 408-554-4109. You will need to register and provide documentation of a disability prior to receiving academic accommodations. For further instructions about the process to receive accommodations visit: <http://www.scu.edu/advising/learning/disabilities/>

PAPER EXPECTATIONS:

An **A** Paper is of high quality; that is, the student engages in a critical analysis by demonstrating knowledge of the **concepts** and **topics** covered in class. It introduces the reader to the topic before the in-depth analysis. **Every paper should have a thesis statement.** It integrates class readings and lectures in a clear, comprehensive, and creative way. The paper addresses **ALL** the points. It is spell-checked and all works are cited properly. It also has a separate page with the bibliography of the works cited. To save paper, you can have the bibliography on the back of the last page of your paper.

NOTE: Wikipedia, websites, magazines (i.e., Times Magazine, News Week, and the National Geographic), and newspapers **ARE NOT** considered scholarly sources and will not be counted as such. You may choose to use the above material **ONLY** as additional supportive evidence. By scholarly sources I refer to academic journal articles and books. Email me if you are not sure you are using the right sources.

YOU WILL LOSE POINTS IF I SEE THE FOLLOWING:

- **No thesis statement**
- Some of the statements are too general.
- Arguments are not complex and/or the student spends more time analyzing one aspect over the other.
- Outside sources are not fully integrated.
- **The paper consists of mainly quotes from scholars and the student's voice is lost.**
- Student relies on Internet sources and not on academic material.
- Sentences are circular and vague.

- Incomplete sentences.
- The analysis seems rushed and circular.
- Some arguments need further development.
- Personal opinions are not supported by academic evidence.
- The sources listed in the bibliography do not appear in the main text.
- Incomplete citations.
- The paper has no name.
- Paper is not stapled.
- Student waits until the end of the paper to integrate readings. This is not acceptable. **Remember you must weave your readings/academic sources throughout the paper.**
- Questions on the assignments **ARE NOT “FOOD FOR THOUGHT.” I expect you to answer every question.**

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

- I have come across many emails from students that begin with:
 - “Hey Prof.”
 - “Hey Professor” or “Mrs./Ms./Mr.”
 - **Or the message is not addressed at all.**

As a general rule, if you email your professors your message should start with: “**Dear Professor or Dear Dr. [Name of Professor],**” and make sure you spell the professor’s name correctly.

PLAN ACCORDINGLY

- Grandmothers or other relatives tend to get “sick” just around the time that papers are due. Computers crash or printers do not work; not to mention the cold and flu viruses that seem to kick in around the time assignments are due. Therefore, make sure you allocate the necessary time for each of your assignments. The instructions for all the assignments are included in your syllabus.

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT & GRADING: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION IS WORTH 10 POINTS (10% of total grade): I will take roll at random times during the quarter. Each time that you are absent on any one of those days you will lose a 1/2-point. Participation in class is an important component of the learning process. Therefore, **you will be evaluated on the extent to which you participate in class.** Students must come to class ready to participate in discussion and engaged everyday. Students who consistently do not participate, play on their electronic devices or are unengaged will lose ½ point from their “Attendance & Participation” grade. Students may be eligible for excused absences (no more than 2) should an emergency arise, but you must give the professor 24-hour notice.

Persistent tardiness and early departure from class will hurt your participation grade. **Staring out the window, sleeping** in class, **chattering** with neighbors when not in group discussion, and or putting your **head down** means **you will get no credit for attendance.**

If you miss class, you are responsible for getting the notes and handouts from a fellow student who is part of your group. Only if you have contacted all team members and no one has responded to you should you ask me for the material.

GROUP PRESENTATION (10 points): In this class we critically analyze the role of religion among U.S. Latinas/os. We do this through our readings, lectures, films, and class discussions. On assigned days we will begin our class with a ten-minute student presentation on the topic for the day. The ten minutes allowed includes both, your presentation and the Q&A. One of your main objectives is to engage the class in your presentation. Have extra questions prepared in case you have trouble engaging students in a class discussion. **REMEMBER EACH GROUP MEMBER MUST PARTICIPATE EQUALLY and ASK A QUESTION.** (Department Objectives 1 & 2). On Thursday I will bring the Presentation Format sheet.

FAMILY RELIGIOUS PROFILE (10 POINTS)— (4 FULL pages, this means that 3 ¾ pages is NOT 4 full pages): Family and Religion Profile (10 points). I will take points off if you do not meet the page requirement)

Assignment: Studies have shown that while older generations tend to practice a religious tradition, younger generations are more likely to not have a religious affiliation—some scholars refer to them as the “nones.” **Is this your experience?**

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to analyze your experience in light of our readings and class discussions. This assignment may require you to do some family research depending on how well you know the traditions of your family. **You need to cite 2 scholarly sources.** You may use any of the assigned class readings for the quarter. The sources you cite should support or contrast your experience, and you need to critically engage them. If you only mention the studies without any analysis you will lose points. Demonstrate that you understand the readings in light of what you are writing about your experience. It is very important that you do not wait until the last page or two to integrate the scholarly sources (doing so will cost you points). (Fulfills RTC1, 1b and Department Objective #1)

Please address the questions below in an essay format.

Grandparents

- What religion do your grandparents (on both sides) practice?
- If your grandparents do not practice any religious tradition, why is this the case?
- Is one set of grandparents more religious than the other? Why?
- Do the two sets of grandparents practice a different religious tradition?

Parents

- What religion do your parents/guardians practice?
- If your parents/guardians do not practice any religious tradition, why is this the case?
- If they practice a religious tradition, is the religion same or different from that of their own parents? Why?

You

- Do you practice a particular religion? Why or why not?
- If you do, is the religious tradition the same or different from that of your parents and grandparents? Why?/Why not?
- Are there religious traditions in your family you practice to this day? If so, please discuss.

*****EXAM #1 worth 20 points**

***** Ethnography Research Notes—Site #1 10 Points Total**

*****Ethnography Research Notes—Site #2 10 Points Total**

*****Ethnographic Research Final Paper 30 Points Total**

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1

Latina/o Lived Religion

September 22 Classes Begin – Class introduction and expectations

September 24 What is U.S. Latina/o Lived Religion and why is it important?

Week 2

Theorizing Latina/o Religious Experience

September 29 READING: Hispanic Theology and Popular Piety: From Interreligious Encounter to a New Ecumenism? By Virgilio Elizondo (Camino)

*****Family Religious Profile Due**

October 1 READING: La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Toward a New Consciousness in *Borderlands* by Gloria Anzaldúa (Camino)

READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters: Intro, 1, and 2*

Week 3

Our Mestiza and Mulata Catholic Mothers

La Morenita, La Negrita, y Cachita

October 6 READING: "Our Lady of Guadalupe as a Cultural Symbol" in *Mestizo Worship* by Virgilio Elizondo, p. 35-45 (Camino)

PRESENTATION 1

October 8 "La Negrita," Queen of the Ticos: The Black Roots of Costa Rica's Patron Saint (Camino) READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters: 3-5*

PRESENTATION 2

Week 4

Lived Religion and the Social Construction of the Latina Body

October 13 READING: "Growing up Female" by Aída Hurtado (Canvas)

Case Study: Real Women Have Curves

*****Site 1 Ethnographic Notes Due**

October 15

READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters: 6-8*

PRESENTATION 3 (On the reading for Tuesday Oct. 13)

Week 5

Cuban American Religious Experience

October 20 READING: "Santería: What is it?" in *Santería: The Beliefs and Rituals of a Growing Religion in American* by Miguel de la Torre (Camino/Canvas)

READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters: 9-10*

PRESENTATION 4

October 22 EXAM 1

Week 6
Sor Juana

October 27 READING: “The Historical Context for Understanding Sor Juana’s Her-Story”
PRESENTATION 5

October 29 READING: Chapter 4: “A Feminist Historical Reconstruction of the Biography of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz”

Case Study: *Yo, la peor de todas* (I the worst of all))

*****Site 1 Ethnographic Notes Due**

PRESENTATION 6

Week 7
Dia De los Muertos

November 3 Continuation of Case Study

READING: “Días de los Muertos: Public Ritual, Community Renewal, and Popular Religion in Los Angeles (CAMINO)

PRESENTATION 7

November 5 READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters:11-13*

Week 8
Latin@ Pentecostals

November 10 READING: “El Milagro Está en Casa: Gender and Private and Public Empowerment in a Migrant Pentecostal Church” by Lois Ann Lorentzen with Rosalina Mira (Camino)

PRESENTATION 8

November 12 READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters:14*

Week 9
Latin@s and Indigenous Religious Practices

November 17 READING: “Curanderismo in the United States” in *Border Medicine: A Transcultural History of Mexican American Curanderismo* by Brett Hendrickson (Camino)

PRESENTATION 9

November 19

READING: *Bless Me Ultima Chapters: 15-17*

Week 10
Ultima’s Sacred Ways

December 1 READING *Bless Me Ultima 18-22*

Case Study: *Bless Me Ultima*

December 3

Discussion of Case Study: *Bless Me Ultima*

Course Review

*****Ethnography Research Paper Due**

Felices Fiestas/Happy Holidays!