

RSOC 9: Ways of Understanding Religion  
Fall Quarter, 2015  
Prof. Philip Boo Riley  
Office Hours: W, 3:30-4:30; TR 2:30-3:00

10:30-11:35 (27590) Kenna Hall 105  
2:15-3:20 (27591) Kenna Hall 310  
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### ***Course Description***

This RTC 1 course focuses on ways to think about religion, with a special interest in how religion plays out in public life. We read authors who write about that interest from within different traditions--Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and "Unaffiliated"—and develop categories through which to analyze those readings and think about the issues they raise. The course includes an independent project on religion in Silicon Valley that takes students off campus several times during the quarter.

### ***Texts***

- Gregory Boyle, S.J., *Tattoos on the Heart* (Free Press, 2010)
- Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, tr. J. Strachey (W.W. Norton, 1989)
- Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace Begins Here: Palestinians and Israelis Listening to Each Other* (Parallax Press, 2004)
- Martin Luther King, selections from sermons and speeches, posted on Camino
- Eboo Patel, *Acts of Faith* (Beacon Press, 2010)
- Elie Wiesel, *Night* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006)
- Other readings posted on Camino

While they do contain information, our readings are not textbooks, and so require a particular kind of engagement. Indeed, much of our time this quarter will be devoted to learning ways to engage texts like these and to use them as springboards for independent reflections. These texts reward multiple readings; if students have read one before (e.g. *Night*, or MLK's "Birmingham Jail Letter"), this course provides the opportunity to reflect on it in a new context.

### ***Outcomes***

A simple approach to outcomes is to pose a question, What will students get out of this course? Answers will vary.

The University has set outcomes for all RTC 1 courses, calling them "learning objectives":

- "Describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several traditions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions."
- "Use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence."  
(2015-16 Core Curriculum Guide, p. 11)

Although not a perfect match (For reasons we will discuss in the first week, we try not to study religions by isolating its "central ideas...and practices"), this course was designed to help students engage those objectives. For instance, we will compare how Martin Luther King and Thich Nhat Hanh, Christian and Buddhist respectively, used drew on their faith traditions to approach to public life. And the variety of categories and readings (including one that advocates removing religion from public life altogether) help students develop critical tools with which to think about religious and spiritual life.

The instructor has set outcomes for this particular course as well:

- Students will want to replace generalizations about religions with questions about particular religious persons.
- Students will engage the rich and complex religious landscape of Silicon Valley.
- Students will use this course to work on their writing practices.

Students are encouraged to develop their own outcomes for this course during the first week of classes and return to them, and those above, throughout the quarter.

### ***Engaging Those Outcomes***

Students realize the course outcomes in this class to the extent they engage in activities they have been doing since kindergarten: read, write, and talk. The “course requirements” are about those activities; they help direct students’ energy and activity and also ground the weighted grading system for this course. They are as follows:

- *Class Engagement:* Informed participation in class is expected and highly valued. In addition to class discussions, this includes drafting responses to preparation notes and category worksheets, meeting outside of class, and completion of online quizzes. 15% of final grade
- *Midterm Exams:* (two, weeks 6 and 11). Students demonstrate comprehension of the assigned readings and their mastery of the categories introduced in the preparation notes and in class. Midterms are drawn from quizzes, category worksheets, and class lectures and discussions. 40% of final grade
- *Monday Reflections* (eight + one). Students demonstrate they can analyze readings, identify salient issues, think critically and independently about them, and write clearly, succinctly and carefully—in short reflections (approximately 250 words) due prior to each Monday class and in one reflection due in the 10<sup>th</sup> week. 20% of final grade
- *Course Project:* A community-based independent project related to religion in Silicon Valley begun early in the quarter and completed in stages, including in-class presentations the 10<sup>th</sup> week. 25% of final grade

Students who wish to do so during the quarter can use this rough guide (based on the section on grades in the 2015-16 Undergraduate Bulletin, pp. 446) to transpose percentages to a letter grade: A range grades=90-100% (excellent); B range grades=80-89% (good); C range grades=70-79% (adequate), D range grades=60-69% (barely passing). (Earning a grade of F in this class is difficult but not impossible.) A letter grade for the course will be assigned at the end of the quarter based on weighted scores on the requirements students complete.

### ***Outside the Classroom Resources for this Class***

The Camino site for this course includes resources that students should use to prepare readings for class, study for midterms, and gauge their understanding of assigned readings: preparation notes, category worksheets, and quizzes. They are available in the module for each section of the course on Camino. Students are expected to use these resources regularly and actively on their own, and take the initiative to let the instructor know if they are having problems with them. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor outside of class to go over any of these materials (individually or in groups).

Students will also be introduced to a Library-generated page to support their work on the course project in the fourth week of the quarter.

Students have the opportunity to work on their writing through the weekly reflections and the course project. In addition to consultation with the instructor about their writing, students are strongly encouraged to utilize the Hub, SCU’s writing center ([www.scu.edu/provost/writingcenter/](http://www.scu.edu/provost/writingcenter/)).

### ***Attendance and Electronic Resources inside the classroom***

Students should come to each class prepared to 1) be present for the full 65 minutes we are together in our classroom, and 2) contribute to and support the learning community for which we are all responsible. These two statements guide the instructor’s approach to students’ attendance and use of electronic resources in this class.

### ***Feedback to Students***

Students receive feedback on the work they submit (quizzes, midterms, weekly reflections, course project) and in observations and suggestions from fellow students and the instructor during class discussions. Students are invited to discuss this feedback and solicit more from the instructor at any time during the course.

### ***Course Evaluation by Students***

Students will be asked to evaluate the course formally at the end of the quarter by completing surveys. In addition, students are encouraged to give the instructor feedback on what is and is not working for them throughout the quarter. Communication is an important responsibility we share; this is our course.

### ***Disability Accommodation Policy***

Students with DR approved academic accommodations should meet with the instructor during the first week of classes to discuss options or concerns in order to make appropriate arrangements. To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must register with and provide documentation of a disability to Disabilities Resources, located in Benson 216 (408 554 4109). For further information, consult [www.scu.edu/studentlife/disabilities/](http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/disabilities/).

### ***Academic Integrity Expectations***

We should all conduct ourselves in accordance with the academic integrity standards and policies Santa Clara articulates in numerous places, including the 2014-15 Undergraduate Bulletin (pp. 422-423) and the protocol available on the University website. [www.scu.edu/provost/facultydevelopment/teaching-advising/academic-integrity/](http://www.scu.edu/provost/facultydevelopment/teaching-advising/academic-integrity/)

### ***Camino Course Management System***

This course uses features of the University's course management system, Camino (*aka* Canvas). Each section in the course will include the resources referenced above. Patience and communication are needed as we learn how to best use this system throughout the quarter—so please, send the instructor an e-mail whenever things appear not to be working on Camino. The people who are trying to support faculty in using this system are in Media Services, ITRS ([www.scu.edu/mediaservices/itrs/](http://www.scu.edu/mediaservices/itrs/)), and can assist students as well.

### ***Schedule***

The schedule below is arranged by the weeks in the quarter and the sections of the course. For each class session students should have access to the preparation notes, category worksheets and the assigned readings for the week, along with any notes, questions or reflections they have prepared. Readings are listed on the day they will be discussed and thus should have been read; assigned work (submission via Assignments on Camino), quizzes, and exams are in **Bold Red font**. Monday reflections are due on Camino by Monday before class. Quizzes, which cover the reading for the entire week, M-F, are completed on Camino between Thursday, starting at approximately 5:30 p.m. and Friday, before class. Students should be able to access online readings through the links in the schedule; and Word or pdf versions of those readings, most with annotations, are also posted on Camino. The schedule is subject to change by the instructor; should that happen, students will be notified in class and/or on Camino.

<b>WEEK 1</b>	Introductions/Religion in Public Life: Perspectives, including Jesuits
<b>M 9-21</b>	Syllabus, Roster, Survey, Course Project
<b>T 9-22</b>	<b>Informal Reflection for Introduction: Location/Background and How I <i>think about</i> Religion (“Me and Religion”) (submit on Camino, Assignments, Informal Reflection)</b>
<b>W 9-23</b>	Religion and Public Life: 2 Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immanuel Kant, “What Is Enlightenment?” <a href="http://www.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/KantOnElighntenment.htm">http://www.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/KantOnElighntenment.htm</a></li> <li>McCutcheon, Russell, “Case Study: ‘Religion’ and the Politics of Classification” (excerpts; see Camino) from <i>Studying Religion: An Introduction</i>, Religious Studies Dept., University of Alabama <a href="http://www.as.ua.edu/rel/studyingreligion.html">http://www.as.ua.edu/rel/studyingreligion.html</a></li> </ul>
<b>TR 9-24</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 9-25</b>	Religion and Public Life: Solidarity and SCU’s Relationship with El Salvador <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ignacio Ellacuria, 1982 Commencement Address, SCU <a href="http://www.scu.edu/Jesuits/ellacuria.html">http://www.scu.edu/Jesuits/ellacuria.html</a></li> <li>Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “True Solidarity,” <i>America</i>, February 5, 2001 <a href="http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=1906">http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=1906</a></li> <li>Michael Eng, S.J., “The El Salvador Martyrs: Crosses To Liberate the Poor,” <i>Mission</i> (Spring 2010), p. 24 <a href="http://www.jesuitscalifornia.org/Document.Doc?id=424">http://www.jesuitscalifornia.org/Document.Doc?id=424</a></li> </ul> Recent Action on Refugees by Jesuits, US Catholic Bishops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesuit Refugee Services, “Praying with refugees in Iraq” <a href="http://jrsusa.org/Prayers_Detail?TN=DTN-20150904091755">http://jrsusa.org/Prayers_Detail?TN=DTN-20150904091755</a></li> <li>U.S. Catholic Bishops, “Archbishop Kurtz Calls for Welcoming of Refugees Fleeing Syria,” <a href="http://www.usccb.org/news/2015/15-127.cfm">http://www.usccb.org/news/2015/15-127.cfm</a></li> </ul> Silicon Valley Angle on the Solidarity Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jon Pedigo and Dana Magat: Clergy have a role to play in combating income inequality <a href="http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_26411273/jon-pedigo-and-dana-magat-clergy-have-role">http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_26411273/jon-pedigo-and-dana-magat-clergy-have-role</a></li> </ul>
	<i>COURSE PROJECT: sites and groups</i>

<b>WEEK 2</b>	Religion in Public Life: Race, Religion, Civil rights
<b>M 9-28</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>James Baldwin, “Letter from a Region in My Mind,” <i>The New Yorker</i> (Nov. 17, 1962), excerpts <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/11/17/letter-from-a-region-in-my-mind">www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/11/17/letter-from-a-region-in-my-mind</a></li> </ul>
<b>W 9-30</b>	Classic MLK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Martin Luther King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (April 16, 1963) <a href="http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/">http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/</a></li> </ul>
<b>TR 10-1</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 10-2</b>	More Classic MLK and a Sermon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Martin Luther King, “I Have a Dream Speech,” Washington, D.C. (August 28, 1963) <a href="http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_august_28_1963_i_have_a_dream/">http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_august_28_1963_i_have_a_dream/</a></li> <li>Martin Luther King, “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” Memphis, Tennessee (April 3, 1968) <a href="http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/ive_been_to_the_mountain_top/">http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/ive_been_to_the_mountain_top/</a></li> <li>Martin Luther King, “Loving Your Enemies,” Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama (November 17, 1957)</li> </ul>

	<a href="http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document_images/Vol04Scans/315_17-Nov-1957_Loving%20Your%20Enemies.pdf">http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document_images/Vol04Scans/315_17-Nov-1957_Loving%20Your%20Enemies.pdf</a>
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<b>WEEK 3</b>	Religion in Public Life: Further Explorations/ Thich Nhat Hanh's Peace
<b>M 10-5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>• Barak Obama, Keynote at the Call to Renewal's Building a Covenant for a New America Conference in Washington, D.C. (aka, "Speech on Faith and Politics") (2006) <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/28/us/politics/2006obamaspeech.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/28/us/politics/2006obamaspeech.html</a> (also available on YouTube: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tdoQr3BQ1g">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tdoQr3BQ1g</a>)</li> <li>• Barak Obama, Remarks at National Prayer Breakfast, 2/5/15, <a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/05/remarks-president-national-prayer-breakfast">https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/05/remarks-president-national-prayer-breakfast</a></li> </ul>
<b>W 10-7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thich Nhat Hanh, <i>Peace Begins Here</i>, Foreword, Introduction, Chs. 1-2</li> <li>• Martin Luther King, Nobel Prize Nomination letter for Thich Nhat Hanh (January 25, 1967) <a href="http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/025.html">http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/025.html</a></li> </ul>
<b>TR 10-8</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 10-9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thich Nhat Hanh, <i>Peace Begins Here</i>, Chs. 3-4</li> </ul> <p><b>Course Project: Stage One</b></p>

<b>WEEK 4</b>	Thich Nhat Hanh's Peace/ Greg Boyle's Tattoos
<b>M 10-12</b>	<i>Course Project: Workshop on Library Research and Developing a Topic (Library, Computer Lab 203)</i>
<b>W 10-14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection (on Wednesday!)</b></li> <li>• Thich Nhat Hanh, <i>Peace Begins Here</i>, Chs. 5-6</li> <li>• Thich Nhat Hanh. "In Search of the Enemy of Man (addressed to (the Rev.) Martin Luther King)." In Nhat Hanh, Ho Huu Tuong, Tam Ich, Bui Giang, Pham Cong Thien. <i>Dialogue</i>. Saigon: La Boi, 1965. P. 11-20. <a href="http://www.aavw.org/special_features/letters_thich_abstract02.html">http://www.aavw.org/special_features/letters_thich_abstract02.html</a></li> </ul>
<b>TR 10-8</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 10-16</b>	Boyle, <i>Tattoos</i> , Preface, Introduction, Ch. 1-2 (xi-60)

<b>WEEK 5</b>	Greg Boyle's Tattoos
<b>M 10-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>• Boyle, <i>Tattoos</i>, Chs. 3-5 (61-128)</li> </ul>
<b>W 10-21</b>	• Boyle, <i>Tattoos</i> , Chs. 6-7 (129-165)
<b>TR 10-22</b>	• <b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 10-23</b>	• Boyle, <i>Tattoos</i> , Chs. 8-9 (167-212)
	<i>Tentative: Midterm Review Session, 3:30 p.m., Religious Studies Department Office</i>

<b>WEEK 6</b>	Freud on Religion
<b>M 10-26</b>	<b>Midterm One</b>
<b>W 10-28</b>	• Freud, <i>Future of an Illusion</i> , Chs. 1-2
<b>TR 10-29</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
<b>F 10-30</b>	• Freud, <i>Future of an Illusion</i> , Ch. 3 (4 optional)
	<b>Course Project: Stage Two</b>

<b>WEEK 7</b>	Freud on Religion ...and a papal encyclical
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M 11-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>• Freud, <i>Future of an Illusion</i>, Chs. 5-6, 8 (7 optional)</li> </ul>
W 11-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freud, <i>Future of an Illusion</i>, Chs. 9-10</li> <li>• Carl Jung, <i>The Undiscovered Self</i> (1957), selections posted on Camino</li> </ul>
TR 11-5	<b>Quiz</b>
F 11-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter Laudato Si, On Care for our Common Home, chs. 3 and 6 <a href="http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html">http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html</a> (Pdf on Camino)</li> </ul>

<b>WEEK 8</b>	Eboo Patel's Identity
M 11-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>• Patel, <i>Acts of Faith</i>, Introduction and Chs 1-3</li> </ul>
W 11-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patel, <i>Acts of Faith</i>, Chs. 4-6</li> </ul>
TR 11-12	<b>Quiz</b>
F 11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patel, <i>Acts of Faith</i>, chs 7-8</li> </ul>
	<b>Course Project: Stage Three</b>

<b>WEEK 9</b>	Elie Wiesel's Memory
M 11-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monday Reflection</b></li> <li>• Elie Wiesel, <i>Night</i>, (main text in its entirety) (do not read foreword, preface, Nobel speech yet)</li> </ul>
W 11-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elie Wiesel, <i>Night</i>, Preface</li> <li>• Elie Wiesel, Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, included in <i>Night</i>, pp. 117-120</li> <li>• Francois Mauriac, <i>Night</i>, Foreword</li> <li>• Elie Wiesel, Congressional Gold Medal Award and Acceptance Speech (April 19, 1985) <a href="http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/RR4_19_85.html">http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/RR4_19_85.html</a></li> </ul>
TR 11-19	<b>Quiz</b>
F 11-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Samantha Power, <i>A Problem from Hell</i> (2002) (excerpts) <a href="http://www.amnestyusa.org/amnesty-magazine/summer-2002/a-problem-from-hell-america-and-the-age-of-genocide/page.do?id=1105427">http://www.amnestyusa.org/amnesty-magazine/summer-2002/a-problem-from-hell-america-and-the-age-of-genocide/page.do?id=1105427</a></li> <li>• Albert Camus, Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech <a href="http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1957/camus-speech.html">http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1957/camus-speech.html</a> (annotated version on Camino)</li> <li>• Elie Wiesel, Remarks at the Dedication of Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum (March 15 2005, Jerusalem, Israel) <a href="http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eliewieselyadvashemdedication.htm">http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eliewieselyadvashemdedication.htm</a></li> </ul>
	Course Project check in

<b>WEEK 10</b>	Course Project Presentations
M 11-30	<i>Project Preparation</i>
W 12-2	<b>Course Project: Stage Four PK SLIDES BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Course Project: Stage Four in class PK Presentations</b>
TR 12-3	<b>Monday Reflection: Reflection on Reflections due</b>
F 12-4	<b>Course Project: Stage Four in class PK Presentations</b>

<b>WEEK 11</b>	Finals Week
W 12-9	<b>Course Project: Revised Presentation with Recording; Optional Revisions of previous</b>

	<b>Submissions (due before 5:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>TR 12-10</b>	<i>Tentative: Midterm Review Session, 5:00 p.m., Religious Studies Department Office</i>
<b>F 12-11</b>	<b>Final Exam</b> ( <a href="http://www.scu.edu/studentrecords/upload/2015-2016-Final-Exam-template-10_22_14-4.pdf">http://www.scu.edu/studentrecords/upload/2015-2016-Final-Exam-template-10_22_14-4.pdf</a> )