This course is an overview of anthropological approaches to the study of religion. The primary emphases are on the manner in which anthropologists engage religion in the field and on understanding religious practice in cross-cultural perspective. Ethnographic methods will be highlighted throughout the course, and such methods will be linked to the theoretical approaches that have shaped and continue to shape the anthropology of religion. Cases studies will demonstrate ethnographers at work in the study of what some have called “great” and “little” traditions, and these will be contrasted with interdisciplinary work on transnational religion, especially in the Americas. The articulation of practice with religious discourse in both local and global context will serve as a basis for interpreting religion in anthropological perspective.

The goal of the course is to provide students with a working knowledge of current issues in the anthropology of religion. The class will alternate between lecture and discussion of readings and contemporary issues pertinent to understanding religion in practice. Participants will also complete a brief research project that will provide experience in doing ethnography in the context of public religious gatherings.

Learning Outcomes –
Upon completion of this course students will be able to

• Provide a basic outline of how different approaches to understanding the role of religion in human society have developed since the nineteenth century;
• Critically assess the manner in which anthropological theories of religion articulate with constructivist perspectives in the social sciences that view human beings as creators of the world they inhabit;
• Articulate in both oral and written discourse a sense of how anthropology as a discipline values pluralistic expressions of religious practice embodied in the actions of the people who adhere to different religious traditions;
• Develop an interpretive frame for analyzing how religion impacts the multiple identities of adherents in local and transnational frameworks, particularly in relation to ethnicity, gender, and national belonging.
Texts—
The following are the required texts for this class. All texts are available in the Davidson College Bookstore.


Selected articles from various journals and other publications

Attendance—
The primary student responsibilities in this course are to show up, ask good questions while participating in class discussions, and complete assignments in a timely fashion. Although attendance will be taken on an irregular basis, students are responsible for all material covered in the class and for readings and out of class assignments made in the course. If you have a documented medical or family emergency or a legitimate university reason (e.g., athletics or religious observance) for missing class, I will be happy to work with you on material that you may have missed. Otherwise, please check your assignments or obtain notes from a classmate. Video materials utilized in the course are considered integral to the course, and their content is fair game for examination questions. Texting and multitasking in this or any class is inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity and the Davidson Honor Code—
As a student at Davidson College, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. For this community of learning, these standards are embodied in the Honor Code, and any violation of that code will be dealt with as stipulated. Should an ambiguous situation arise in your writing or other assignments, by all means seek clarification before determining a course of action. You may submit written assignments for help with editing (i.e., grammar and punctuation), but all written work should be your own or properly documented as having come from another source.

Course Requirements, Grading, and Attendance—

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance, participation, and discussion leadership</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Midterm review</td>
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<td>Reflection Papers</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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<td>Ethnographic Paper</td>
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In addition to the above comments regarding attendance, students should be engaged, on a daily basis, with the course material, classmates, and the instructor. To that end, you are also asked to raise issues related to religion and current events gleaned from various media sources as you are moved to do so.

The discussion leadership portion of your grade will come from initiating our class discussion on assigned chapters in *Across the Boundaries of Belief, A Peaceful Jihad*, or one of the articles assigned on an occasional basis. Beginning the third week of class, students, in pairs, will identify a chapter for discussion and prepare a 10 to 15 minute introduction to the chapter that will be presented in class. This summary will identify the approach to the anthropology of religion taken in the chapter and highlight significant questions for class discussion. Creativity is helpful in this assignment, and outside material may be brought in to enhance the presentations. The intent of this assignment is to involve students directly in the analysis of course material. Presenters will provide a one-page outline of their presentation upon completion of the assignment.

A significant portion of your semester grade in this course will come from writing assignments—two reflection papers (3-4 pages) designed to provide students with the opportunity to engage current research in the anthropology of religion and in an ethnographic field project. The first will address basic issues in the anthropology of religion from the first three weeks of the course, and the second will involve critical reflection on a theme from our readings and how that theme relates to the broad field of the anthropology of religion. The due dates are in the course outline below, and specific requirements will be provided about 4 days before the due date. For the ethnographic project, students will complete observations of religion in practice in a site of their own choosing and write an 8-page essay with a description and interpretive summary. I will provide more details on this assignment at appropriate intervals as we progress through the course. For the ethnographic project *(due 7 December at the end of the day)*, a single-page preliminary proposal, including bibliographic references, is due on 28 September.

**N.B.:** All written work should be provided in hard copy and posted on Moodle no later than 5:00 on the due date. Text should be in a regular 12 point font, and papers should have 1-inch margins on each side (you may need to use the custom settings in Microsoft Word). In-text (parenthetical) citations are required in written work, which should also be written in conformity with the author-date system of *The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition* (2010). The Chicago style, sometimes known as the Turabian system, is explained most fully for students in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (The University of Chicago Press, 2013). I highly recommend placing a copy of this by your desk, although you can find a summary page at [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/manual/index.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/manual/index.html).

**Student Accommodations—**

Students with disabilities are protected under the American Disabilities Act, and Davidson College provides support services for students with disability concerns. To address specific accommodations, contact the Office of the Dean of Students and make an appointment with your instructor at your earliest convenience.
Davidson is also committed to respecting religious diversity. If a religious obligation prevents you from completing an assignment or meeting a class, please communicate with your professor in advance to make alternative arrangements. Furthermore, the college works to create an environment safe from sexual misconduct. For resources in this area see the website at http://www.davidson.edu/offices/dean-of-students/sexual-misconduct.

Course Schedule (note: This outline will be modified if the course will benefit from adjustments.)

Week of August 22 – Anthropological Approaches to the Study Religion and Colonial Legacies
   M – Introductions
   W – Martin, chapters 1 and 2; Klass, Introduction and Introduction to Part 1 (pp. 1-10)
   F – Klass, chapter 1

Week of 29 August – Religious Change and Religious Specialists
   M – Film – “Asmat Religion”
   W – Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System”
   F – Klass, chapters 2 and 3

Week of 5 September – Ethnography, Myth, and Religion
   M – Myerhoff, preface and chapter 1
   W – Myerhoff, chapters 2-3
   F – Martin, chapter 3

Week of 12 September – Ritual, Pilgrimage, and Community
   M – Martin, chapter 4; Myerhoff, chapter 4
   W – Myerhoff, chapter 5
   F – Myerhoff, chapter 6

Week of 19 September – Gender, Sexuality, and the Anthropology of Religion
   M – Klass, pp. 81-83, chapter 5
   W – Klass, chapter 7
   F – Covington, prologue and chapters 1-2

Week of 26 September – Religion and Identity
   M – Covington, chapters 4-5; additional reading, TBA
   W – Covington, chapters 6-8
   F – Covington, chapters 9-10; Klass, chapter 8
   – Project Proposal Due – 28 September –

Week of 3 October – Pentecostalism, Fundamentalism, Trance, and Social Change
   M – Covington, chapter 11 and afterward; article by K. Armstrong on religious fundamentalism
Week of 10 October – Religion and Social Change, continued
FALL BREAK – 10-11 October
W – Film– “Precarious Peace”
F – Samson, “The Martyrdom of Manuel Saquic” (Moodle); Martin, chapter 5

Week of 17 October – 'World' Religions, Religious Pluralism and the State
M – Lukens-Bull, chapters 1 and 2
W – Lukens-Bull, chapters 3-4; Martin, chapter 6
F – Catch-up day

Week of 24 October – 'World' Religions and Islam
M – Lukens-Bull, chapters 5-6
W – Martin, chapter 7
F – article on religious violence, TBA
– Reflection Paper 2 Due–28 October –

Week of 31 October – 'World' Religions and Border Crossings
M – Lorentzen et al., preface
W – Lorentzen et al., “Devotional Crossings” and “El Milagro Está en Casa”
F – Lorentzen et al., “Immigrant Religious Adaptation”

Week of 7 November – Ritualization and New Religious Movements
M – Victor Turner, “Liminality and Communitas”
W – Martin, chapter 8; Klass, pp. 325-328, chapter 18
F – Klass, chapter 20; supplemental articles on Elvis, Selena, and Ché as saints

Week of 14 November – The Local and the Global in Practice—Transnationalism and Hybridity
M – Lorentzen et al., “Creating a Transnational Religious Community”
– Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association –

Week of 21 November – The Local and the Global in Practice, continued
M – Lorentzen et al., “Ahora la Luz” and “Transnational Hetzmek”

THANKSGIVING BREAK – 23-25 November

Week of 28 November – Conclusion and Evaluation
M – Lorentzen et al., “Why We Do Not Bowl Alone”
W – Lorentzen et. al., “Counterhegemony Finds a Place in a Hegemon”
F – Conclusion and Evaluation

Optional Classes – 5-7 December (Classes End)
Final Ethnography Paper Due 7 December

Reading Day – 8 December

Examination Period – 9-15 December (No Sunday Exams)