

Psychology of Religion
PSY 4339-01
Spring 2015

TIME: MWF 10:10-11:00am

PLACE: B114 Baylor Sciences Building

PROFESSOR: Wade C. Rowatt, Ph.D.

OFFICE/PHONE: A317 Baylor Sciences Building; 254-710-2961

OFFICE HOURS: Immediately before or after class; MTWR 2-3pm & by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide an in-depth review of psychology-of-religion theory and research. The required text provides a state-of-the-art review of classic theory and contemporary empirical research. Recent journal articles will be used to supplement the text. The following objectives will be assessed by examinations, class participation, and written papers.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Learn different theoretical perspectives on the psychology of religion (e.g., psychoanalytic, biological, cognitive, developmental, social-personality, etc.).
2. Learn about research on the development of religiousness/spirituality and varieties of religious experience.
3. Learn how dimensions of religiousness (e.g., intrinsic religious orientation, religious fundamentalism, secure attachment to God, etc.) influence human thinking, feeling, and behaving across situations and cultures. For example, how does religiosity affect moral behavior, helping behavior, prejudice, coping, mental or physical health, or other outcomes?
4. Develop or hone abilities to comprehend and evaluate primary sources of knowledge (i.e., psychology journal articles). By the end of this course a student should be able to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a quantitative psychology-of-religion research study.
5. Understand basic methodological procedures used to collect data in this sub-discipline.
6. Understand basic statistical procedures used to analyze data in this sub-discipline.
7. Learn to support conclusions with empirical evidence.
8. Be able to communicate clearly, concisely, and accurately about theory and research.
9. Develop (or sharpen) and practice a sense of intellectual humility and appreciation for differing points of view.

REQUIRED TEXT

Hood, R.H., Hill, P., Spilka, B. (2009). *The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach*. (4th Edition). New York: Guilford Press. ISBN: 978-1-60623-303-0



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Read & outline each assigned reading before the class during which the material will be discussed.
2. Complete the mid-term and final exams at the scheduled time (100 points each).
3. Complete 5 of 7 assignments/reaction papers (20 points each).
4. Co-lead class discussion one class period and participate regularly in class discussions.
5. Class participation (50 points).

Note: Students are expected to adhere to all current university policies. Please review these policies, particularly those regarding academic integrity, class attendance, and classroom conduct: http://www.baylor.edu/student_policies/

College of Arts and Sciences Attendance Policy:

Effective May 16, 2011, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences approved the following attendance policy. “To earn course credit in the College of Arts and Sciences, a student must attend at least 75% of all scheduled class meetings. Any student who does not meet this minimal standard will automatically receive a grade of “F” in the course. Any University-related activity necessitating an absence from class shall count as an absence when determining whether a student has attended the required 75% of class meetings. In addition to the College of Arts and Sciences Attendance Policy, faculty and students will be guided by the University Attendance Policy in the Undergraduate Catalogue.”

EXAM(S)

There will be one mid-term and one comprehensive final exam in this course. Exams may consist of multiple-choice, short-answer, essay, or fill-in-the-blank questions. Each exam is worth 100 points. Each student is required to take the exam(s) at the scheduled time. If an emergency arises (i.e. physician-documented illness, death of relative, or university-sponsored activity) notify the instructor or a department administrator (254.710.2961) as soon as possible before the exam. A comparable exam may be administered (only after sufficient documentation of the situation is provided to the instructor).

REACTION PAPER GUIDELINES

Each student is required to write 5 original reaction papers (about 2-pages each; worth up to 20 points each). You may complete the “religious experience activity” (see Assignment V) in lieu of one reaction paper. A quality reaction paper provides an in-depth review or exposition of a theoretical idea, research result, or human experience. Please go beyond a simple summary of the methods and results of a study reported in an assigned reading. Resist saying that you found *this* or *that* to be interesting. Rather, select a compelling topic of interest to

you and provide some analyses and constructive criticisms. It might help to imagine that a journal editor asked you to review the article for possible publication or reply. How would you evaluate this article? In your reaction paper/review you may choose to:

- summarize a strength or weakness of a particular research study
- discuss or question the rationale for an experiment or study
- compare or contrast competing theories
- critique a research method or data-analytic method (e.g., are there apparent threats to the validity of a research finding?)
- challenge an author's theory or conclusion about the way something works
- propose how a research question could be investigated
- sketch an idea for future research
- integrate a finding with what we know from other disciplines or from experience

GRADING

Mid-Term Exam	100 points
Reaction Papers:	100 points (complete 5 of 7; 20pts each)
Final Exam:	100 points
Class Participation:	50 points

(Note: Each absence will result in the deduction of about 2 class participation points)

The letter grade *you earn* in this class will be assigned using the following scale.

A = 315-350; B+ = 304.5-314; B = 280-304; C+ = 269.5-279; C = 245-269;

D = 210-244; F = 000 – 209.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS (will be in Documents folder on Blackboard)

Benson, H. et al. (2006). Study of the Therapeutic Effects of Intercessory Prayer (STEP) in cardiac bypass patients: A multi-center randomized trial of uncertainty and certainty of receiving intercessory prayer. *American Heart Journal*, 151, 934-942.

Gervais, W. M. (2013). Perceiving minds and gods: How mind perception enables, constrains, and is triggered by belief in gods. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

Granqvist, P. & Kirkpatrick, L. A. (2004). Religious conversion and perceived childhood attachment: A meta-analysis. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 14, 223-250.

Inzlicht, M., McGregor, I., Hirsh, J. B., & Nash, K. (2009). Neural markers of religious conviction. *Psychological Science*, 20, 385-392.

MacLean, K. A. et al. (2012). Factor analysis of the Mystical Experience Questionnaire: A study of experiences occasioned by the hallucinogen psilocybin. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 51, 721 - 737.

Pearce, L. D., Foster, E. M., and Hardie, J. H. (2013). A Person-Centered Examination of Adolescent Religiosity Using Latent Class Analysis. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 52, 57-79.

Preston, J. L., & Ritter, R. S. (2013). Different effects of religion and God on prosociality with the ingroup and outgroup. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 39, 1471-1483.

Rothschild, Z. K., Abdollahi, A., & Pyszczynski, T. (2009). Does peace have a prayer? The effect of mortality salience, compassionate values, and religious fundamentalism on hostility toward out-groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 816-827.

COURSE READING & EXAM SCHEDULE

Changes will be announced in class or by email to your Baylor email account

Jan. 12, 14, 16	Review syllabus, course overview, discuss how psychological scientists study dimensions of religiousness/spirituality Ch. 1: The Psychological Nature and Functions of Religion
Jan. 19	<i>MLK, Jr. holiday</i>
Jan. 21, 23	Ch. 2: Foundations for an Empirical Psychology of Religion Assignment I: Read Gervais (2013) and type a 2-page reaction paper
Jan. 26, 28 Jan. 30	Ch. 3: Religion and Biology Assignment II: Read Inzlicht et al (2009) and type a 2-page reaction paper.
Feb. 2, 4 Feb. 6	Ch. 4: Religion in Childhood Assignment III: Read Granqvist & Kirkpatrick (2004) and type a 2-page reaction paper.
Feb. 9, 11 Feb. 13	Ch. 5: Religion in Adolescence and Young Adulthood Discuss: Pearce, Foster, & Hardie (2013)
Feb. 16, 18, 20	Ch. 6: Adult Religious Issues
Feb. 23, 25, 27	Ch. 7: Religion, Aging, & Death Assignment IV: Read Rothschild, Abdollahi, & Pyszczynski, T. (2009) and type a 2-page reaction paper.
Mar. 2, 4	Ch. 8: Conversion, Spiritual Transformation, & Deconversion
Mar. 6	Mid-Term Exam
Mar. 16, 18, 20	Ch. 9: Relationships between Individuals and Religious Groups
Mar. 23, 25, 27	Ch. 10: Religious and Spiritual Experience Assignment V: Attend a religious service of a religion or denomination different than your own and type a 2-page reaction paper summarizing your own observations and perceptions. Before you attend it may be necessary to contact (and obtain approval from) the person or persons leading the service. Please use your best judgment when selecting a religious service to attend. Feel free to ask a friend, classmate, or other person or two to attend with you.
Mar. 30, Apr. 1 Apr. 8	Ch. 11: Mysticism Discuss: MacLean et al. (2012)
Apr. 10, 13, 15 Apr. 17	Ch. 12: Religion, Morality, & Prejudice Assignment VI: Preston & Ritter (2013) and type a 2-page reaction paper.
Apr. 20, 22, 24	Ch. 13: Religion, Health, Psychopathology, & Coping

Assignment VII: Read Benson et al. (2006) and type a 2-page reaction paper.

Apr. 27, 29, May 1

Ch. 14: Epilogue

Final Exam:

4:30-6:30pm Thursday, May 7