

Reli 067
Nature, Culture, Self-Identity:
Religion in the Construction of Social Life

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Fall 2023

Class meets Tu/Th 2:00-3:15pm
Carolina Hall 104

Prof. Lauren Leve

My office is 121 Carolina Hall.
My email is leve@email.unc.edu
My pronouns are she/hers.

Office hours: by appointment, Wednesdays 1:30-2:30. Other times are also available if you email me a request. Sign up at: <https://calendly.com/laurenleve/officehours>. When you sign up for a meeting, you'll be asked if you prefer to meet in person or on Zoom. If you select a virtual meeting, please use this link: <https://unc.zoom.us/my/laurenlevemeetingroom>

Course Description:

This course studies the ways that different religious traditions conceive of human nature and of society, and the ways that these understandings are reflected in diverse forms of personal identity and public life. How are Judeo-Christian ideas connected to American understandings of democratic citizenship? What does it mean to say that there's no such thing as a self, as Buddhism teaches? What can we learn about culturally and historically diverse ways of imagining relations between personal identity and society by acquainting ourselves with Brahmanical Hinduism? Have all people, always, perceived themselves as individuals? How do the ways people understand themselves shape the common worlds, and unique lives, we build? And what role does religion play in shaping these understandings?

This First Year Seminar examines how different religious and cultural traditions answer the question "what is a human being?" and the ways that these understandings are reflected in diverse forms of personal identity and public life. Readings will include historic and contemporary texts, and case studies from places including India, Nepal, and the USA. By the end of the course, students can expect to have improved their critical reading and analytical skills, and to have developed a detailed appreciation of the ways in which ideologically constituted understandings of what it is to be human shape civic institutions and self-identity.

We will structure our inquiries around three major questions:

- a) How do religio-cultural beliefs and practices shape the way that societies understand what it is to be human?
- b) How are these understandings reflected in individual actions and in cultural life (i.e., personal aspirations, gender ideals, behavioral norms, forms of morality, etc.)?
- c) How do we know what we know about this—i.e., what theories and methods do scholars use to understand other societies and, also, their own?

Throughout the semester, we will be careful to bear in mind that no religious tradition or society is ever uniform (that is, all people who belong to it do not always agree), that both are always changing over time, and that such change may inspire self-reflection and/or public contestation and debate.

Target Audience and Prerequisites:

Enrollment is reserved for first year students and new transfer students. There are no prerequisites.

Course Specific Learning Goals:

By the end of the course, students can expect to have:

- (1) Deepened their understanding of the ways in which religiously constituted ideas and values shape self-identity and public institutions.
- (2) Refined their ability to identify and analyze implicit assumptions about human nature and culture on which public arguments about personal identity and/or civic life rest; to evaluate these with respect for evidence as well as cultural context; and to assess what such insights mean for their own ethical lives.
- (3) Improved their critical reading and analytical skills equip them for future work at the university level.
- (4) Gained experience of doing research (posing research questions, generating, and analyzing original data, critically evaluating arguments and evidence) and communicating their discoveries in written and oral form.

As the course proceeds, you will learn a lot about the unique religions and social worlds we will be examining. However, while it's important to get the facts about these traditions right, the main goal of the class is not to teach the beliefs and practices associated with each tradition per se, but to help you learn to make connections and sharpen your analytical skills. Specifically, I hope this course will inspire you to use the insights gained from comparing diverse worldviews to be more self-conscious of your own assumptions, to critically consider the implications of arguments that you encounter in public life, and to be aware and intentional in the worlds you build through your own life practices.

By the end of the course, students will be able to identify, understand and articulate the ways in which ideological understandings of what it is to be human shape social and culture norms, public institutions, and self-identity for diverse people in different parts of the world.

IDEAS in Action General Education Fulfillment:

This course has been approved for the following focus capacities in the Ideas in Action General Education Curriculum: *Ethical and Civic Values* and *Ways of Knowing*. It also fulfills the requirement for *Research and Discovery*. For detailed descriptions of the goals and learning outcomes of each of these designations, see Appendix 1 at the end of this syllabus.

Texts:

The following required book has been ordered at the university bookstore.

- Parish, Steven. Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City

All other assigned readings are available online through Canvas.

Requirements and Expectations:

- Class Participation - 10%
- Pre-Class Reading and Analysis Exercises - 15%
- Position Papers/Presentations (2) - 30%
- Research Project Sub-Steps - 45%
 - Interviewee proposal - 2%
 - Interview transcript and recording - 7%
 - Preliminary analysis & source list - 7%

- Podcast outline - 7%
- One minute recording - 2%
- Final podcast & presentation - 20%

This First Year Seminar has been designed to promote active learning and critical engagement. Over the course of the semester, students are invited to explore new and old ideas, engage with complex issues, and become active participants in their own intellectual growth through inquiry, analysis, discovery, and action. For this format to work, it is imperative that you engage the readings, think critically about them, and share your thoughts and questions during class. All assignments must be turned in on time. Students must show up to class, and show up fully (i.e., in spirit, voice and intention as well as physically).

To build community and ensure that students benefit from the opportunity of engaging with diverse positions and ideas, the class will include group projects in addition to single-authored work. Students are expected to invest fully in collective projects, bringing their best efforts to the table and supporting and respecting those of their classmates. Group project present important opportunities for collaborative learning. Please commit to them for the benefit of yourself and others.

Participation

All students are expected to attend all class meetings unless they have an official excused absence. See the university attendance policy in Appendix 2 at the end of this syllabus.

All readings must be completed by the date listed on the syllabus and students should come to class prepared for discussion. Contributions to classroom discussions are expected to be informed by careful reading of assigned materials and serious consideration of the questions the readings raise. There may be times in the class when students disagree. This is to be expected when people talk seriously about ideas, and students are encouraged to ask questions of others, to voice their thoughts, and to defend them in a spirit of collective engagement and mutual respect.

You are strongly encouraged to look one or two classes ahead on the syllabus throughout the semester. Days for which fewer pages of reading have been assigned are often followed by heavier reading loads (and vice-versa). It is recommended that students plan their reading accordingly.

Participation grading criteria include class attendance, frequency, and thoughtfulness of contributions to class discussions, depth of engagement with the readings, active listening, and engagement with other students in class discussions, and contributions to group work. While I understand that some students are very comfortable speaking in class and other students are less so, adding your voice to a discussion lets others in the class know you what you are thinking (including that you are not holding back because you are judging them); it's a gift that we offer our peers as well as ourselves. Students wishing to receive a B or above for participation should make sure to speak at least once every class, even if it's only to say that you agree with someone else and explain why in your own words.

As someone who has been teaching for some time, I also understand that students have complex lives and may face physical, mental, or other kinds of challenges that make it hard or impossible for them to show up for class on some days or, occasionally, to be fully present even when they attend. Public health emergencies may complicate this even more. If you find yourself experiencing a situation that makes it difficult for you to meet expectations regarding attendance, participation, or focus, please reach out to me so that we can work together to make a plan that will allow you to complete the work in a way that is achievable given your circumstances. My goal is for every student to be able to succeed in this course.

Pre-Class Reading Questions and Analysis Exercises

To guide you identify the key themes and arguments in particular readings, you will find reading questions posted on Canvas. For sessions where we will be focusing on research methods (data collection and/or analysis), the questions will help you prepare for discussion and/or problem-solving in class. You are required to answer the questions in writing before class. On unannounced date throughout the semester, I

will collect your responses. If you have already submitted them online, your work is done. If you have not, you will need to upload your responses immediately when I call for them. If I call for them on a day when you are not present in class and have not submitted the reading questions online, or if you are unable to post your written response at the time that I request them, any later submission will be considered late.

- Each student is allowed to skip one submission without negative consequences (i.e, 1 freebie)
- Students who upload their answers to the reading questions before every class, regardless of whether I formally collect them or not, will receive 2 points added to the top of their final grade in the course.

Your answers to these questions do not have to be long (250-300 words will usually be sufficient although you are welcome to write more, and you will find that leaning into them more deeply does indeed deepen your understanding and prepare you for class). They also do not need to be excessively formal—the goal is to help you to focus your reading and organize some thoughts before we meet in class. They will be graded based on completeness, inclusiveness of assigned materials, and evidence of meaningful engagement with the question and text(s).

To make the most of the reading questions, I recommend that you read them before you begin an assigned reading and that you keep them actively in mind as you read. We will often draw on these questions in class discussions, so preparing answers ahead of time is an excellent way to ensure that you are fully prepared to participate. Coming to class with prepared answers can also be a great way for students who are shy or otherwise nervous speaking “on the spot” to help themselves feel ready.

To ensure that you reach the learning objectives associated with this class, the use of AI to answer the pre-class reading questions is prohibited.

- You **must** do the assigned reading yourself.
- You **may not** ask an AI any question that is similar to, nor in any way echoes, an assigned reading question or any part of it.
- Anything you write should be written and submitted **without the use of AI in any way** unless you ask for and receive specific individual permission from the instructor.
- You **may** use AI to ask for general/contextual information about ideas and/or events that are referred to in the readings but that are not directly related to or reflected in the pre-class reading questions (e.g., “What is Calvinism?”; “How was the political structure related to the social structure in pre-revolutionary France?”; “What does the word “civic” mean?”).

If you do consult AI in relation to any of our readings, you must keep a record and provide links to all conversations. You should include this at the bottom of the reading questions submission page, along with your usage attribution. This can help your professor understand what background knowledge you are bringing to the texts (or not), what you think you need to know to best make sense of them, and how to most effectively support your learning. It is also to protect you because AI is known to provide false information at least 15% of the time and, even when not wrong in an absolute sense, AI responses may reflect biases that you cannot recognize and thus distort your understanding and beliefs without you being aware that your new knowledge is questionable.

Position Papers & Oral Presentations (2)

At the end of each of the first two sections on the course, students will be presented with a question that cuts across the issues and materials that we have been discussing. Working in groups, students will prepare a position paper (1250-1500 words) that addresses the question, drawing on the materials and ideas assigned in the course. These papers will (1) summarize and discuss the question; (2) propose and support a particular response; (3) identify and briefly consider alternate positions or critiques of your own. The influence of course readings and discussions, and the ways you are applying them to the assigned question, should be readily apparent and reflected through specific citations.

Each working group will present their analyses to the class on the day that the paper is due. After the presentations, students will vote to decide which group has offered the most compelling argument. All members of the winning group will receive 3 points added to their final participation grade. This assignment is intended to help foster the skills of critical analysis, self-expression, and public presentation, and to solidify students' understandings of the assigned readings and the concepts introduced in a particular unit or throughout the course by asking them to apply these ideas to a related but slightly different context or problem.

Again, the use of AI to answer these questions or write these papers or is prohibited. The thought that you present must be your own and asking an AI to brainstorm approaches or suggest answers to questions like these is a powerful way to inhibit your own creativity and ability to handle complex ideas (even if you plan to review the suggestions yourselves afterward). You should come up with an answer by sharing thoughts/ideas within your groups and continuing to refine your ideas/arguments/insights as you proceed.

Once you have settled on a preliminary argument and identified reasons that you think this is correct based on the assigned unit readings, you are permitted to use AI to:

- Ask for more information or general information/background/context related to an idea you had in your group.
- Help you organize your ideas into an outline for your paper or presentation.
- Help you edit drafts of your work by identifying redundancies, suggesting ways of saying things more clearly, helping you to sharpen your thesis or topic sentences, or otherwise giving you feedback on drafts of things that you have already written.
- Help you to compile your references in proper bibliographic format.
- Help you to create a dynamic presentation that presents the analytical work that your group did.
- **Do not ask an AI to write a first draft for you. And do not turn in any edits to your work that an AI might make without considering each suggestion carefully.**

Again, if you do consult AI in relation to any of our readings, you must keep a record and provide links to all conversations. Your documentation must make the process transparent – the submission itself must meet the relevant standards of attribution and validation.

Research Project

This course offers students an opportunity to begin their college experience by designing and executing a research project and presenting their results to the class. For this project, students will conduct a life history interview focusing on their beliefs, upbringing, major events in their lives, and choices they have made that have led to the lives they are living and the beliefs they hold about civic issues. You will then analyze the interview data using methods and tools introduced in the class and using scholarly literature to deepen your understanding. The research process will be broken down into sub-steps that distribute the work across the semester. Your final product will be a 10–12-minute podcast episode that uses your interviewee to demonstrate how a person's beliefs about human nature and personhood shape the decisions they make and, therefore, the shape of their lives—and also how external circumstances and events may influence a person's understanding of personhood, self, and society over time. You may undertake this project individually or in pairs. We will share our work with one another during the final exam period.

In developing and executing this project, you will have the support of a Graduate Research Assistant, in addition to the instructor. **The GRC for this course is Rosemary Gay (rosegay@email.unc.edu).**

The GRC Program is sponsored by the Office for Undergraduate Research. You may be able to use your research-exposure in this course to meet a requirement of the [Carolina Research Scholar Program](#). Please visit the OUR website to learn about how you might engage in research, scholarship, and creative performance while they are at Carolina. From the OUR homepage, you can also “like” the OUR [Facebook page](#), or follow their [Twitter feed](#).

Rules for AI use on the final project will be similar to those for the other assignments in this class. More information will be made available as we move ahead with the work.

Policy on Late Work:

- Late work will be docked 1/3 grade per day late—i.e., an A paper, one day late= A-; 2 days late=B+; 3 days late=B etc. Pre-class reading questions will receive no more than 80% credit if turned in late.
- Extensions will not be granted the day before an assignment is due or on the day of the deadline. If you have a good reason to request a different deadline, think ahead and contact me.
- Oral presentations must take place on the day scheduled and all members of the group are expected to be present and participate.

Grading:

Overall course grades will be calculated according to the following metric: A+ = 97-100, A = 94-97, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, and so on.

The following definitions will be used as a guide for the assignment of grades:

A	Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment.
B	Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment.
C	A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment.
D	A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment.
F	An unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content.

Honor Code:

The [University Honor Code](#) cites **General Responsibilities** for every student at Carolina to:

1. Obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code;
2. Refrain from lying, cheating, or stealing;
3. Conduct themselves so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community; and
4. Refrain from conduct that impairs or may impair the capacity of University and associated personnel to perform their duties, manage resources, protect the safety and welfare of members of the University community, and maintain the integrity of the University.

It also defines **Academic Dishonesty** as: It shall be the responsibility of every student enrolled at the University of North Carolina to support the principles of academic integrity and to refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, the following:

1. **Plagiarism** in the form of deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.
2. **Falsification, fabrication, or misrepresentation** of data, other information, or citations in connection with an academic assignment, whether graded or otherwise.

3. **Unauthorized assistance** or **unauthorized collaboration** in connection with academic work, whether graded or otherwise.
4. **Cheating**, in the form of gaining or attempting to gain an undue advantage on examinations or other academic work, whether graded or otherwise, including but not limited to the following: a. Using unauthorized materials and methods (notes, books, electronic information, telephonic or other forms of electronic communication, or other sources or methods), or b. Representing another's work as one's own.

For more on the UNC Student Conduct and Honor System see <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/honor-system/>.

Use of Generative AI:

See the assignment descriptions for specific guidelines for use of AI. Unless I explicitly grant permission, the utilization of any type of generative artificial intelligence tools or resources (including ChatGPT) is prohibited on all the assignments for this course.

Communicating with the Instructor

Email is often the most efficient line of communication with faculty. Under ordinary circumstances, I will respond to most email within 24 hours. When communicating with any of your professors, it will serve you well to keep the interaction professional. For example, use a professional greeting such as "Hello Professor Leve" or "Dear Dr. Leve." Be clear, concise, and courteous in your emails. Finally, carefully consult the syllabus before asking a question that is answered in it! If the answer to your question is clearly indicated in the syllabus, I will simply refer it back to you.

For some questions, it may be more efficient or more comfortable meet with me in person (or in person, virtually). I will gladly work with you on a reading you do not understand or a concept we have covered in class. I will happily clarify assignments. And I am available to discuss your class performance. I also welcome the opportunity to get to know you better and answer any questions you might have about Religious Studies, graduate school, research opportunities, or related topics. To meet with me during office hours, please use the Calendly sign up link at the top of this syllabus. If you are not available during my office hours, email me for alternate times.

Commitment to Students:

As the instructor for this course, I am committed to supporting all students in their efforts to succeed in this class. If you find you are having difficulties of any kind that get in the way of your ability to perform well in class, including physical or mental health challenges, learning issues, housing or food insecurity, or family needs, please come talk to me.

Syllabus Changes

It sometimes happens that course material takes longer (or less time) than expected to cover sufficiently. In that situation, the class may end up running behind the dates given on the syllabus. To manage this or other unanticipated events, the professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including to project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible, and an updated syllabus may be presented. Similarly, if it becomes clear that some structural feature of the course is not working in a way that best supports your learning, the professor reserves the right to make organizational changes.

**See Appendix 2 for a full list of
University Student Support Resources and Policies**

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COURSE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Note: This syllabus is provisional, and the schedule, topics, and readings may be subject to change.

August 22: Course Orientation

August 24: Introductory Concepts: What is “Personhood”?

- Genesis Chapter 1
- “Hymn of the Cosmic Man”

August 29: Class Canceled

August 31: Class Canceled

September 5: Wellness Day

September 7: Introductory Concepts: Ideologies of Personhood and Public Life

- No new reading.

UNIT 1: RELIGION, DEMOCRACY & “THE INDIVIDUAL” IN AMERICAN HISTORY AND IDENTITY

September 12: Socialization and Sacralization of American Personhood: The Individual and Individuality

- Thoreau, Henry David. “Walking” (read the excerpt provided on canvas – you do not need to read the whole essay)

September 14: Democracy, Equality and Individualism

- De Tocqueville, Alexis. Democracy in America, excerpt.

September 19: Re-Reading Religious Freedom and the Separation of Church and State

- Wood, Gordon. “American Religion: The Great Retreat” NY Review of Books June 8, 2006.
- Hamilton, Marci. “The Calvinist Paradox of Distrust and Hope at the Constitutional Convention.” In Christian Perspectives on Legal Thought. pp. 293-306

Optional but recommended: Lambert, Frank. The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America, pp. 1-15.

UNIT 2: CASTE AND PERSONHOOD IN THE BRAHMANICAL HINDU WORLDVIEW

September 21: Sociological Apperception (“It is society that thinks in me!”)

- Dumont, Louis. 1980. Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications. pp. 1-20

September 26:

- Dumont, Louis. 1980. Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications. pp. 65-67.

- Mines, Mattison. 1994. "Introduction: Individuality in South Asia" in Public Faces/Private Voices. pp.1-23.

September 28:

- Parish, Steven. 1994. Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City. pp. 15-70.

October 3:

- Parish, Steven. 1994. Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City. pp. 71-122.

October 5:

- Parish, Steven. 1994. Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City. pp. 125-187.

October 10: Introduction to Life History Research 1

- Cole and Knowles. "What is Life History Research?" (pp. 11-23) and "Doing Life History Research" (pp. 70-81) in Lives in Context: The Art of Life History Research, pp. 11-23.

 Interview proposal due before class

October 12: Position Presentations #1

 Papers due on Canvas before class

***October 17: Introduction to Life History Research 2**

- Levy, Robert and Douglas Hollan. "Person-Centered Interviewing and Observation" in Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology, pp. 333-364
- Spradley, James. The Ethnographic Interview. Waveland Press, 2016.

October 19: Fall Break

October 24: Introduction to Life History Research 3 (Workshop)

 Preliminary interview questions due before class.

October 26: Library Resources and the Search for Sources

Meet with Sarah Morris, Religious Studies Reference Librarian
Davis Library, Room 247 (second floor, by the GIS computers)

October 31: Interview Interpretation and Analysis

- Readings TBA

UNIT 3: BUDDHIST PERSONHOOD/REIMAGINING SOCIETY

November 2: Buddhist Personhood 1: Karma, Cosmology, Morality and Time

- Harvey, Peter. An Introduction to Buddhism, pp. 9-14

November 7: "Core Buddhist Doctrines"

- Mitchell, Introducing the Buddhist Experience. Chapter 2, pp. 33-64

November 9: Buddhist Personhood 2: Not-Self & Emptiness (Interdependence)

- Milinda and the Chariot"
- "Vajira's Reply to Mara"

- “The Man Who Lost His Body”
 Interview transcript and recording due.

November 14: Identity and Affect

- HH Dalai Lama. “Part II: An Altruistic Outlook and Way of Life” in The World of Tibetan Buddhism: An Overview of its Philosophy and Practice. pp. 57-90
- Optional: HH Dalai Lama. “Dependent Origination and the Nature of Reality” in Ethics for the New Millennium. pp. 35-47

November 16: Buddhist Identity & the Natural World

- Macy, Joanna. “The Greening of the Self” in Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology, pp. 53-63
- Roberts, Elizabeth. “Gaian Buddhism” in Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology, pp. 147-154

November 18th (Saturday) at 11:59pm:

-  Preliminary analysis and source list due.

November 21: Creating Podcasts in Audition Workshop


Meet in Undergrad Library room 205.

Before class, be sure that you have registered for Adobe Creative Cloud and installed Adobe Audition on your laptop. Also, select one or more audio clips from your interview and come ready to work with this in class.

You can register for Adobe CC through ITS at <https://adobe.unc.edu>. It can take up to 1-5 days for registration to complete.

UNIT 5: CONTEMPORARY CONUNDRUMS OF INDIVIDUALISM AND IDENTITY

November 28: Reimagining Personhood and Racial Justice

- Badal, Julie Flynn. “America’s Racial Karma: Interview with Larry Ward” in Tricycle Buddhist Review 9/22/2020. (https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/larry-ward-racial-karma/?utm_source=Tricycle&utm_campaign=34279ad84e-Newsletter_20_09_26_Sub_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1641abe55e-34279ad84e-307597057)
- Willis, Jan. “We Cry Out for Justice.” Lion’s Roar. May 29, 2020.
 Podcast outline due.

November 30: Individualism/Equality/Democracy Redux

- Di Angelo, Joanna. “Why Can’t We All Just Be Individuals?: Countering Discourses of Individualism in Anti-Racist Education” InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies, 6:1 (Jan. 2010)
- Al Bassam, Darim. Racism and the Conundrum of American Individualism. Gulf Times June 22, 2020 (<https://www.gulf-times.com/story/666724/Racism-and-the-conundrum-of-American-individualism>)

December 5:

- ****Position Presentations #2 in class****
- **Papers due on CANVAS BEFORE CLASS**

FINAL PROJECTS DUE: Tuesday, December 12th at 12pm
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS on 12/12 from 2pm-3pm (scheduled exam time) in our usual classroom



UNC Religious Studies

The Department of Religious Studies is dedicated to the study of religions as historical and cultural phenomena. It examines the history, texts, artifacts, beliefs, values, and rituals of a variety of religious traditions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Inherently interdisciplinary in its approach, religious studies explores religions in light of related fields in the humanities and social sciences such as anthropology, classics, archaeology, sociology, philosophy, and history. We offer a wide variety of undergraduate courses ranging from large introductory classes to advanced seminars, as well as independent studies and an honors thesis program for qualified students. Follow us on social media and learn more about [majoring or minoring in Religious Studies!](#)



Website

<https://religion.unc.edu>

Facebook: @unc.reli

<https://www.facebook.com/unc.reli>

Instagram: @reliunc

<https://www.instagram.com/reliunc>

Twitter: @reliunc

<https://twitter.com/reliunc>

YouTube: UNC Religious Studies

<https://www.youtube.com/c/UNCReligiousStudies>

APPENDIX 1: IDEAS in Action General Education Fulfillment

This First Year Seminar has been approved for the following focus capacities in the Ideas in Action General Education Curriculum: *Ethical and Civic Values* and *Ways of Knowing*. It also fulfills the requirement for *Research and Discovery*.

Ethical and Civic Values:

Students develop their capacity to think carefully and critically about how to make and justify private and public decisions.

Questions for Students

1. How can people think fruitfully (individually and together) about how they should live their lives?
2. What is required to judge a standard or value as worthy of support?
3. How should we distinguish between prejudices and reasonable grounds for value judgments?
4. What considerations – stories, reasons, testimony, documents, data, etc. – can justify our values and commitments, whether personal or social?

Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the contexts in which questions of justification arise.
2. Assess ethical values in terms of reasons offered.
3. Recognize different ethical perspectives and the distinctive approaches these perspectives bring to questions of value, evaluating ethical justifications for different ways of organizing civic and political communities.
4. Analyze the differences between personal ethical decisions and those bearing on the public and civic spheres.

Ways of Knowing

Students develop intellectual humility, learning to question assumptions, categories, and norms that structure their worldviews and to understand the sources and effects of biases. They learn, use, and distinguish strengths and weaknesses of one or more approach(es) to knowledge of the unfamiliar, such as: aesthetically, philosophically, linguistically, historically, or culturally remote forms of knowledge and world-making, or formal logic, scientific practice, and similar formalized approaches to countering bias and creating knowledge.

Questions for Students

1. What norms and expectations do I take for granted?
2. What categories and concepts frame my assumptions, experiences, and beliefs?
3. What practices of investigation or inquiry best challenge those assumptions and expectations?
4. How can I consider whether my beliefs might be wrong?

Learning Outcomes

1. Recognize and use one or more approach(es) to developing and validating knowledge of the unfamiliar world.
2. Evaluate ways that temporal, spatial, scientific, and philosophical categories structure knowledge.
3. Interrogate assumptions that underlie our own perceptions of the world.
4. Employ strategies to mitigate or adjust for preconceptions and biases.
5. Apply critical insights to understand patterns of experience and belief.

Research and Discovery

Students immerse themselves in a research project and experience the reflection and revision involved in producing and disseminating original scholarship or creative works.

Questions for Students

1. How do I establish my point of view, take intellectual risks, and begin producing original scholarship or creative works?
2. How do I narrow my topic, critique current scholarship, and gather evidence in systematic and responsible ways?
3. How do I evaluate my findings and communicate my conclusions?

Learning Outcomes

1. Frame a topic, develop an original research question or creative goal, and establish a point of view, creative approach, or hypothesis.
2. Obtain a procedural understanding of how conclusions can be reached in a field and gather appropriate evidence.
3. Evaluate the quality of the arguments and/or evidence in support of the emerging product.
4. Communicate findings in a clear and compelling ways.
5. Critique and identify the limits of the conclusions of the project and generate ideas for future work.

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APPENDIX 2: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND RESOURCES

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Information for Undergraduate Classes
Summer & Fall 2023

Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Attendance Policy

University Policy: As stated in the University's [Class Attendance Policy](#), no right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities: [University Approved Absence Office \(UAAO\) website](#) provides information and [FAQs for students](#) and [FAQs for faculty](#) related to University Approved Absences
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Instructors may work with students to meet attendance needs that do not fall within University approved absences. For situations when an absence is not University approved (e.g., a job

interview, illness/ flu or club activity), instructors are encouraged to work directly with students to determine the best approach to missed classes and make-up assessment and assignments.

Honor Code

All students are expected to follow the guidelines of the UNC Honor Code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. If you are unsure about which actions violate the Honor Code, please see me or consult studentconduct.unc.edu.

Acceptable Use Policy

By attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the acceptable use of IT systems and services. The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) sets the expectation that you will use the University’s technology resources responsibly, consistent with the University’s mission. In the context of a class, it’s quite likely you will participate in online activities that could include personal information about you or your peers, and the AUP addresses your obligations to protect the privacy of class participants. In addition, the AUP addresses matters of others’ intellectual property, including copyright. These are only a couple of typical examples, so you should consult the full [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#), which covers topics related to using digital resources, such as privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property.

Additionally, consult the [Safe Computing at UNC](#) website for information about data security policies, updates, and tips on keeping your identity, information, and devices safe.

Accessibility Resources and Service

[Accessibility Resources and Service](#) (ARS – ars@unc.edu) receives requests for accommodations, and through the Student and Applicant Accommodations Policy determines eligibility and identifies reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions to mitigate or remove the barriers experienced in accessing University courses, programs and activities.

ARS also offers its Testing Center resources to students and instructors to facilitate the implementation of testing accommodations.

Faculty and instructors with any concerns or questions about accommodations and/or their implementation, are invited to [reach out to ARS](#) to discuss.

Counseling and Psychological Services

UNC-Chapel Hill is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body. The [Heels Care Network](#) website is a place to access the many mental health resources at Carolina. CAPS is the primary mental health provider for students, offering timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services. Go to their website <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health building for an initial evaluation to learn more. Students can also call CAPS 24/7 at 919-966-3658 for immediate assistance.

Title IX and Related Resources

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/> or by contacting the University’s Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, titleixcoordinator@unc.edu) or the Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu). Confidential resources include Counseling and Psychological Services and the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu). Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Policy on Non-Discrimination

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered, and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (email reportandresponse@unc.edu or see additional contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

Undergraduate Testing Center

The College of Arts and Sciences provides a secure, proctored environment in which exams can be taken. The center works with instructors to proctor exams for their undergraduate students who are not registered with ARS and who do not need testing accommodations as provided by ARS. In other words, the Center provides a proctored testing environment for students who are unable to take an exam at the normally scheduled time (with pre-arrangement by your instructor). For more information, visit <http://testingcenter.web.unc.edu/>.

Learning Center

Want to get the most out of this course or others this semester? Visit UNC's Learning Center at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu> to make an appointment or register for an event. Their free, popular programs will help you optimize your academic performance. Try academic coaching, peer tutoring, STEM support, ADHD/LD services, workshops and study camps, or review tips and tools available on the website.

Writing Center

For free feedback on any course writing projects, check out UNC's Writing Center. Writing Center coaches can assist with any writing project, including multimedia projects and application essays, at any stage of the writing process. You don't even need a draft to come visit. To schedule a 45-minute appointment, review quick tips, or request written feedback online, visit <http://writingcenter.unc.edu>.