Course Description:
This course will focus upon the various issues, debates, and problems concerning the academic study of religion. It examines the intellectual contributions of Tylor, Frazer, Durkheim, Eliade, Evans-Pritchard, Geertz, and present-day theorists to the discipline of religious studies. In addition to introducing students to the complexities of religious studies, the course is designed to enhance critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills. This class is a collaborative effort involving undergraduate students, guest speakers, and the professor.

Course Requirements:
Assignments are to be carefully analyzed and discussed in class. Two formal papers will be required.

Class participation
First paper is a short essay 4-6 pages, due January 22, 2010
Second paper is a 8-10 page essay due February 24, 2010

Oral Presentation (Dates Listed Below)

Grading:
Paper Proposal..................................20%
Class Participation............................10%
First Paper (4-6 Pages)......................20%
Second Paper (8-10 pages)..............25%
Final............................................25%

The final is an oral presentation of your last paper.

Required Texts:

Course Reader
Course Lectures and Readings:

Jan 4: Course Introduction
   Reading: Introduction Pals pp 3-15

Jan 6: Animism
   Reading: Chapter One, Pals pp 16-53

Jan 8: Durkheim’s Approach to religion
   Reading: Chapter Three, Pals pp 88-123

Jan. 11: Religion and Alienation
   Reading: Chapter Four, Pal pp 124-157

Jan 13: Eliade
   Reading: Chapter Five Pal pp 158-197

Jan 15: Evans-Pritchard
   Reading: Chapter Six, Pals pp 198-232

Jan 18: Holiday

Jan 20: Films

Jan 22: Paper Number 1 is Due, Geertz
   Reading: Chapter Seven, Pals pp 233-267

Jan 25: Theories Past and Present
   Reading: Chapter Eight, Pals pp 268-284

Jan 27: Religion and Ethics Today
   Reading: Reader, Article #1

Jan 29: Make Prayers to the Raven
   Reading: Reader, Article #2

Feb. 1: Film

Feb. 3: Review for Midterm: Critical Thinking and your Thesis

Feb. 5: Midterm

Feb. 8: The Study of Religion
   Reading: Reader, Article #3
Feb. 10: Religion in Global Societies
   Reading: Reader, Article #4

Feb. 12: Defining Religion Today
   Reading: Handout TBD

Feb. 15: Holiday

Feb. 17: Anthropology and Indigenous Religious Traditions

Feb. 19: North American Native Religions
   Reading: JSTOR Article, Keith H. Basso, “‘To Give up on Words’: Silence in Western Apache Culture,” Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Autumn, 1970)

Feb. 22: Religious Life in Mexico

Feb. 24: Paper Number 2 is Due, Religious Life in the Middle East
   Reading: Handout TBD

Feb. 26: Religious Life in Haiti
   Reading: Catch Up!

March 1: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 3: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 5: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 8: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 10: Course Review

March 12: Classes End