RS 15 RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY
Fall Quarter, 2012

Instructor: Dr. Wade Clark Roof
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Office Hours: Dr. Roof: Tuesday, Thursday: 1-3 PM or by appointment;
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Description: This is a course on religion and the “inner life” – described variously as “soul,” “mind,” or “psyche.” The focus is on humanistic psychology -- on questions of identity, meaning, and depth of life. Attention is given primarily to Western psychology and applications of its insights to contemporary life.

Internet Resources: There are thousands of web sites on religion, quite a number on the psychology of religion. Google “Religion and Psychology.”

Texts:
Frankl, V. Man’s Search for Meaning
Csikszentmihalyi, M. Finding Flow
Beaudoin, T. Virtual Faith
Kimball, C. When Religion Becomes Evil
Frietas, D. Sex and the Soul

Course Requirements:
1. Attend lectures and discussion sections
2. Read assignments in timely order
3. Two examinations, Mid-term and Final
4. Short paper (6-8 typewritten, double-spaced pages) – A separate memo will describe the assignment

Examinations: Mid-term and Final. Both cover lectures, readings, videos, and discussion. The final is cumulative. Examinations will include both objective and short answer and/or essay questions.

Make-Up Examinations: Available only for those who present written medical verification of illness from a physician or an obituary of the death of a family member. No exceptions.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Serious offenses. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing even once risks dismissal from the course. Continued registration in the course is regarded as acknowledgement of this risk and its consequences.
Rules of the Classroom (from the time instruction begins until class dismissed):

1) Cell Phones -- Off in class.
2) Texting during class – Prohibited.
3) Late Attenders to Class -- Sit at back of the room.

Continued registration in class implies consent to these rules.

Grading: Final grades to be determined on the basis of the following distribution of points:

- Mid-term: 30 points
- Final: 40 points
- Paper: 20 points
- Discussion Section: 10 points

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Sept. 27: INTRODUCTION

Oct. 2, 4: RELIGION, MODERNITY, AND YOU

Read Book: Virtual Faith

Key Issues:
- 1) Religion in culture, culture in religion
- 2) Modernity: Impact on religion
- 3) Media and Lived Religion

Exercise: Go to: http://pewresearch.org/millennials/quiz/

Check out “How Millennial Are You?”

Oct. 9, 11 TWO CRUCIAL PSYCHOLICAL DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION: EXPERIENCE AND MEANING

Read Entry on William James, particularly part on religion. Go to: http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html
Scroll down to James.

Also watch www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6vwNUOjxSA
Read Book: *Man’s Search for Meaning*

A. The Religious Experience:

Theories of William James
Conversion, Mysticism, Spirituality
Triggers of Religious Experience: Hearing, Seeing, Touching, Ingesting, Fasting, Pain

Key Issues:
1) What makes an experience religious?
2) What is central for James in defining religion?
3) The “reality of the unseen”

Check out: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_o6bDixWKA&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_o6bDixWKA&feature=related)

Or Go to You Tube, Huston Smith, “Psychology of Religious Experience”

**THE SEARCH FOR MEANING**

Threat of Chaos
Logotherapy
Suffering
Meaning as “Tragic Optimism”

Key Questions:
1) What factors figure into the “Making of Meaning?”
2) What can we learn from Frankl’s horrific experience as it applies to our ordinary lives?
3) What is his philosophy about life and struggle?

Check out [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_J1KYnd5X0I&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_J1KYnd5X0I&feature=related)

Or go to You Tube, Vicktor Frankl on Religion and Ultimate Meaning 1990

Oct. 16-18: **THE HIDDEN SELF**

Read: Selection on Freud, GauchoSpace

Theories of Sigmund Freud
Need for Protection
Religion as Illusion
Father Figure

Film: “The Hidden Nature of Man”

Key Question: Do you really know yourself?

Oct. 23-25:

THE UNDISCOVERED SELF

Read: Selection on Jung, GauchoSpace

Theories of Carl G. Jung
Collective Unconscious
Archetypes
Individuation
Personality Types

Key Question: Are there identities within you yet to be discovered?

Oct. 30: Review

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Nov. 1 MID-TERM

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Nov. 6-8 THE SEXUAL SELF

Read Book: Sex and the Soul
Women and Men
No Safe-Sex?

THE DEVELOPING SELF
Theories of Erik Erikson
Life-Cycle and Religious Change
Attachment Theory

Key Question: In what directions am I evolving?
Go to:
http://www.learningplaceonline.com/stages/organize/Erikson.htm
http://psychology.about.com/od/loveandattraction/ss/attachmentstyle.htm

Nov. 13-15  WHEN RELIGION IS BAD

Read Book: When Religion Becomes Evil

- Reified Reality
- Authoritarianism
- Coercion and Violence
- Self-Destruction
- Dangerous Signs

Key Questions:
- What is evil?
- What is “bad” religion?
- What are the signs of “bad” religion?

Nov. 20:  A THANKSGIVING HOMILY

Nov. 27-29  WHEN RELIGION IS GOOD

Read Book: Finding Flow

- Maslow and Self-Actualization
- Fromm: Authoritarian vs. Humanistic Religion
- Csikszentmihali’s Theory about Flow

PAPERS DUE ON Nov. 29

Dec. 4-6:  PULLING THINGS TOGETHER

FINAL EXAMINATION - Tuesday, Dec. 11, 8-11 AM