

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON, SC
Religious Studies Department

David M. Bossman, Ph.D
Professor

BossmanD@cofc.edu

Summer Day Session 2 / July 8 to August 5, 2008
9:45 to 11:30 a.m. MTWRF
Education Center 219

RELS 115

Religion and Society

Course Description

A study of the social and political dimensions of religion, including the role of religion in the framework of culture and history. The theme of this term will be: The Abrahamic Faith Tradition: Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Required Readings

Kogan, Michael

OPENING THE COVENANT: A JEWISH THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIANITY. Oxford University Press (2007). ISBN 978-0195112597.

Safi, Omid

PROGRESSIVE MUSLIMS: ON JUSTICE, GENDER, AND PLURALISM. Oneworld Publications (2003). ISBN 1-85168-316-X

Smith, Jane

MUSLIMS, CHRISTIANS, AND THE CHALLENGE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE. Oxford University Press (2007). ISBN: 978-0195307313

Class Procedure

The course will be conducted in colloquium format to promote critical conversations on selected readings and related current media. Each student will prepare a typed one-page critical response to daily assigned readings and submit it at the beginning of each class.

Two students, following examination of the readings, will facilitate discussion on the readings, using the procedure outlined by the professor and introducing additional media resources in consultation with the professor, as appropriate for the assigned topic.

All students will develop a portfolio of media (online, published) resources dealing with topics discussed within the course, and submit this portfolio for grading, together with a final essay on the general topic of religious pluralism in the United States: the present reality and future goals.

Grading

Each day's typed critical response to the reading will indicate attendance in the class as well as preparedness for participating in the class discussion. Credit for such submissions will be given only when the typed response is presented at the time of the assigned class. These daily submissions will be valued as 40% of the final grade.

The portfolio and a related final essay each will earn 20% of the final grade. The essay should range from five to seven pages (approximately 1500 to 2100 words), should focus on a particular topic related to the course, and should follow the critical methodology demonstrated in course readings and class discussions.

The portfolio should be an organized collection of media materials garnered from online or print media such as newspapers, journals, magazines, or web sites. A minimum standard will be at least fifteen items within the portfolio. Daily newspaper articles, national magazine articles, journal reports, online special reports are likely sources for these items, which must have relevance to the course topic and assigned readings. The final essay should build upon these resources.

Class participation will be graded at 20% of the final grade at the discretion of the professor.

Subject to revision.

June 12, 2008