

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION (PSY 3960)
University of Utah
Summer Semester 2010

Course Time: Monday & Wednesday 9:00 – 10:30am

Room: BEH-S 104

Instructor: Kevin Jordan, M.S.

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview

This course seeks to understand the relationship between psychology and religion. Throughout the course, we will see how psychology informs religion and how religion informs psychology. This class will be divided into 4 sections: **1)** theoretical overview of the psychology of religion including important people such as Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Gordon Allport, **2)** empirical research, **3)** developmental considerations, **4)** clinical applications, and **5)** real world applications and implications.

This course will be comprised of days consisting mostly of lecture and other days consisting mostly of discussion. The discussion times are meant to be fun yet challenging as we consider the ideas that permeate this field. It will be important to keep up with the readings in order to participate thoughtfully in the discussions. Discussions will be a time where we can respectfully consider others' ideas and reactions. In this way we can collectively come to a greater understanding of the rich viewpoints within this field. Note: If you have difficulties discussing things in class, please come and talk to me. These discussion times are not meant to be evaluative and I do not want you to feel pressured to contribute to earn a grade. However, I do think that we can brainstorm some ways for you to enrich the discussions as we each have something important to offer.

By the end of this class, you will have a solid understanding of important theories underlying the psychology of religion. You will have an increased appreciation of different religious traditions and how they impact psychological processes and outcomes. I hope to leave you with a sense that this subject matter is not only possibly important for you personally but also important for the world at large. Some clients may want to talk about religion in a therapeutic setting so by the end of this class you will have some ideas about how religion can be incorporated into psychotherapy. Finally, religion plays an enormous role in cultures across the world. By considering the relationship between psychology and religion, we will develop a sense of how religion contributes to both pro-social and anti-social causes across the world.

Required Textbook

Invitation to the Psychology of Religion (2nd Edition) by Raymond F. Paloutzian

Other readings will be placed on Course Reserves at the Marriot Library

Course Format

It will be important for you to attend class every day. The lectures will provide you with a necessary knowledge base of the field. Discussions will facilitate and enrich this process as we consider some of the topics raised during lecture. Furthermore, several discussion days will be spent on films that we have watched. Films that are being considered for this course are:

Soul Searching: A Movie about Teenagers and God
What Do You Believe
Jesus Camp
Inside of the Mind of a Suicide Bomber
Taliban II: The Revival

These films should provide much fodder for great discussions in our class!

Evaluation

Your grade will be based on the following:

15% Attendance on discussion days (on these days I will take attendance)
60% Two papers
25% Two exams