

**RELIGION 185**  
**RELIGIOUS MIGRATIONS**  
tr 9:30-10:45am, Moyer 214

**INSTRUCTOR** Sharon L. Albert  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS**

In this course we will use travel narratives to explore how religion has motivated human movement—migrations, colonization, and even tourism—and how this travel has affected the religious practices, traditions, and identities of both the travelers and the peoples they encounter. We will look at both early moments of religiously motivated movement such as the Muslim incursions into Spain during the so-called *convivencia*, often viewed as a model of religious tolerance, and the expulsions that followed during the Inquisition; and also modern-day travel and migration. Key concepts for consideration will include globalization, transnational, multiculturalism, and identity, as well as religion.

Course Goals: 1) Articulate working definitions of globalization, transnationalism, and multiculturalism, demonstrating an understanding of the challenges and complexities these conceptual frameworks present. 2) Demonstrate a working understanding of what religion is and what it means to study religion from an academic perspective, and, more specifically, 3) recognize the importance of religion as a means of identity formation; and 4) provide evidence for religious diversity and change across space and time. 5) Amass intellectual tools and active models for participating in and enacting positive change in our diverse and interconnected world.

**Cluster:** This course is part of a cluster with FLM-229, "Travel and Cultural Encounters in Film," taught by Amy Corbin. Key questions in both courses include: who travels voluntarily and who is forced to travel? Who is able to return home and who is permanently displaced? How is a location changed by the arrival of travelers? Both courses also have an interest in the way that storytelling shapes travel experiences, so we ask: in what ways do written and visual narratives represent travel experiences and how might these narratives shape people's perceptions of their own journeys and of other groups who travel?

Cluster Goals: 1) Increase your understanding of travel as a cultural and political phenomenon that has implications beyond the individual traveler. 2) Recognize the ways that written and visual narratives represent and construct human experiences, and shape social identities. 3) Become familiar with various methods and theoretical approaches towards understanding travel, including religious studies, film studies, post-colonial theory, and cultural geography. 4) Consider how the historical events and fictional stories depicted in the course readings and films are applicable to current events including US political discourse about immigration, Islamophobia, and European responses to migration.

**Spring 2018**

### **TEXTS & OTHER RESOURCES**

Our Canvas course site is integral to the course. Class readings, assignments, collaborative work spaces, announcements, and a variety of resources including texts and links to websites are available there, and students should check the site regularly.

A schedule of class readings and assignments is also available on the course site. Please note that while we will usually follow it quite closely, it is subject to change based upon student interests and class progress. *\*\*Please bring a printed copy of the assigned reading to each class session, as we will often refer closely to the text as we work.*

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

While it is better to come to class late than not to come at all, please respect your fellow students and be in the classroom ready to start class promptly.

Please attend to personal needs before class so that you do not regularly need to leave the classroom during the class session.

Please do not text, surf the web, google, or access other technology not related to the class during class sessions. While computers are permitted in class, you are strongly encouraged to consider your own capacity for distraction, and students may be asked to close their computers if they become distracting for the class. Please bring writing implements (pen and paper) to class for use in these circumstances.

This class is one in which we will deal with a number of sensitive issues including religion, race, and gender. While you are strongly encouraged to take *ideas* out of our classroom and into your conversations and interactions with others, it is very important that we respect the integrity of the classroom as a site where individuals' contributions will be treated with appropriate confidentiality.

### **EVALUATION**

Your final grade for the course will be determined by the following components:

- Preparation & in-class participation: 150 pts
- In-class reading reflections 100 pts
- Short writing assignments 250 pts
- Tracking current migrations: 150 pts (shared with FLM-229)
- Integrative discussions & reflection paper: 150 pts (shared with FLM-229)
- Final Test 200 pts

A grading rubric is available from the course website.

*PLEASE NOTE: Failure to complete any aspect of evaluation will result in a failing grade. (That is, you can't not hand in the final.)*

#### *Preparation & Participation, 150 points*

While showing up is a good thing, participation beyond classroom presence is expected. Discussion is an important element of this course, and all students should come to class prepared to talk about the readings. As you read, investigate words or ideas that are new to you or being used in unfamiliar ways. Note key concepts and terms, and major themes emerging from the reading. You are strongly encouraged to annotate the text as you read. *\*\*Please bring a printed copy of the assigned reading to each class session, as we will often refer closely to the text as we work.*

*In-class reading reflections, 100 points*

At least 5 times during the semester, class will begin with brief in-class writings in response to a prompt about the reading. These writings will be collected and graded on a ✓/+ basis. (See grading rubric on the Canvas course site for more information about ✓/+ grading.)

*Short writing assignments, 250 points*

At least 5 times during the semester you will be given short assignments to prepare, usually for the following class. These assignments will take a variety of forms. Types of work may range from annotation of a class reading to undertaking some minor research on a specific topic.

*Tracking current migrations, 150 pts (shared with FLM-229)*

Working in groups, students will track a specific migration issue throughout the semester. Full details about this assignment will be presented early in the semester.

*Integrative discussions & reflection paper, 150 pts (shared with FLM-229)*

Approximately 6 times during the semester, we will have joint class sessions attended by both Dr. Corbin and Professor Albert in which we discuss a specific film from the perspectives of both classes. Students will be provided with prompts to prepare for these discussions. Dates are listed on the Canvas course site. This integrative work will culminate in a brief reflection paper at the end of the semester.

*Final Test, 200 points*

The course will culminate in a take home final due on the Thursday of exam week. This final test will be an opportunity to synthesize ideas we have developed throughout the semester.

**GENERAL COLLEGE AND COURSE POLICIES**

***Technology: cell phones, computers, and other devices***

Cell phones, computers, and other devices can often be useful tools to enhance your learning, and we will regularly be using some of these devices in class.

That said, a study by Duncan, Hoekstra, and Wilcox (2012) demonstrated that students who reported regular cell phone use in class showed an average negative grade difference of  $0.36 \pm 0.08$  on a four-point scale. Students also underestimated the number of times they accessed their phones while in class. While students reported an average access rate of three times per class period, observation data showed the rate was closer to seven times per period. An interesting finding is that other students are distracted when students text in class (Tindell and Bohlander, 2012). So while students may claim they are only hurting themselves when texting, studies show that others are affected also. *Bottom line: Use caution!*

***Academic Integrity***

As an academic community devoted to the discovery and dissemination of ideas, Muhlenberg College expects that all students will conduct themselves honestly in all academic activities. The College's Academic Integrity Code (AIC) safeguards students' ownership of their intellectual exploration, discovery, and creativity. Violations of the code break this trust, and will be fully prosecuted.

The AIC is detailed at <http://muhlenberg.edu/main/aboutus/dean-academic/integrity> .

***Accommodations***

Students requiring accommodations for this course should submit to the professor appropriate documentation from Academic Support Services, the Counseling Center, or Student Health Services.

Please do so as early as possible in the semester so that we may discuss how best to meet your needs and implement the recommended accommodations.

***Course Unit Instruction***

This class is scheduled to meet for 3 hours per week. Additional instructional activities for the course may include viewing films outside class time, participation in electronic discussion boards, journals or wikis, and attendance at specified College lectures and events distributed across the semester. These activities will add an additional 14 hours of instruction. Please note that it is expected that you will devote an additional 2-3 hours per course hour to preparatory work outside of class.

**READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

This is a preliminary schedule. Readings for each class session are available on the Canvas course site. Please note that readings may change based on class progress and interest, so it is important that you check the Canvas site regularly

**WEEK 1**

**Tues 16 Jan:** Introducing the course

**Thurs 18 Jan:** Thinking about terms

- Reading: Ernst on Religion

**WEEK 2:** What is Religion?

**Tues 23 Jan:** Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious"

**Thurs 25 Jan:** Carefully reread Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious"

**WEEK 3**

**Tues 30 Jan:** Wandering in the Desert: Readings from the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish sources

- Readings: Pre-Islamic poetry: "The Mu'allaha of Imru' al-Qays;" Scriptural excerpts on wandering and wilderness.

**Thurs 1 Feb:** Intermezzo: Sa'ed Atshan, "Palestinian Christians: Past, Present, Future"

- Reading: Wood, "Mapmaking, Counter-Mapping, and Map Art in the Mapping of Palestine"
- Short writing assignment 1

**WEEK 4**

**Sun 4 Feb:** *Tracking migration issues: presentations due*

**Tues 6 Feb:** Joint Discussion: Lecture: Atshan on Palestinian Christians

**Thurs 8 Feb:** Tracking migrations

- Please watch the presentations of each of the other groups and for each group post one question that emerges for you based on their presentation.

**WEEK 5**

**Tues 13 Feb:** The Islamic Expansion: Religion spreads!

- Reading: Menocal, "A Brief History of a First-Rate Place"

**Thurs 15 Feb:** **NO CLASS SESSION: assignment will be posted**

- Readings: Ernst, "Islam in the Eyes of the West"
- Short writing assignment 2 due by 8:30am Friday, February 16.

**WEEK 6**

**Tues 20 Feb**

- Reading: Brann, "The Moors?"

**Thurs 22 Feb**

- Readings: Dodd on space and architecture in Muslim Spain; and a modern brochure about the Cordoba Cathedral

**WEEK 7**

**Tues 27 Feb**

- Readings: Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Geneology, & Acculturation in al-Andalus"

**Thurs 1 Mar:**

- Readings: Documents on the expulsion;; Rogozen-Soltar, "Managing Muslim Visibility: Conversion, Immigratio, and Spanish Imaginaries of Islam"

**SPRING BREAK:** March 5 - March 9

**WEEK 8**

**Tues 13 Mar:** Leaving Spain: Muslims and Jews to the New World

- Readings: Muchnick, "Judeoconvertos and Moriscos; Alexy, excerpts from *The Mezuzah in the Madonna's Foot*

**Thurs 15 Mar:** Coming back to Spain: Ethnic tourism

- Readings: Excerpts from Benjamin of Tudela; Flesler & Melgosa, "Marketing *Convivencia*: Contemporary Tourist Appropriations of Spain's Jewish Past

**WEEK 9**

**Tues 20 Mar:** Joint Film Discussion: "Everything is Illuminated"

**Thurs 22 Mar:** Pilgrimage

**WEEK 10**

**Mon 26 Mar:** Film Screening: "*The Chinese Exclusion Act*"

**Tues 27 Mar:** Join Film Discussion: "Le Grand Voyage" & "The Chinese Exclusion Act"

- Readings on the Hajj: Ibn Battuta, Wolfe, Malcolm X

**Thurs 29 Mar:** Missionaries & Colonizers

- Readings: Excerpts from Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*;

**WEEK 11:** India, Pakistan, & Bangladesh

**WEEK 12:** The Middle East: Israel/Palestine; Jerusalem; Syria

**WEEK 13:** America: Land of Religious Freedom? From Puritans to Mormons

**WEEK 14:** Coming to America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**WEEK 15:** Conclusions