Course Description

From the first interactions between Native Americans and Christian colonists to the rise of the Religious Right, this course will provide a thematic and chronological framework for understanding the diversity of Christianities in American history and culture. Christianity has been a dominant force in American history, and it has been a very diverse force. In America, it seems there is no one way to be Christian. During the course, we will investigate the powerful social, cultural, political, and intellectual role religion has played throughout our nation’s past.

Historically speaking, how one is Christian in the United States is closely related to one’s social status. Thus race, politics, and gender are key themes in this course.

This course will equip students with information to analyze arguments about religion in America’s past, present, and future.
Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify the sources of Christian traditions: scripture, doctrines, historical developments, leading thinkers, or practices.
   In American Christianities, we'll map various themes, trends, texts, and people in American religious history across different time periods.

2. Students will be able to interpret and analyze sources of Christian tradition critically and creatively by employing contemporary scholarly methods that relate sources to historical contexts, to other sources, and to the experiences of faith.
   In American Christianities, we'll analyze and contextualize primary sources about American religious history and culture. Additionally, we'll compare and critique how various Christian groups have related to one another and found their place in American culture.

3. Students will be able to articulate how the sources of Christian tradition and methods of interpretation and analysis promote cultural transformation and social justice.
   In American Christianities, we'll assess how religion, power, and identity have intersected in American history and culture.

Student Responsibilities

As a student enrolled in this course, you agree to do the following:
1) Complete assigned readings, in their entirety, on schedule. Read the “Lecture” posts every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in blackboard.
2) Regularly check your Gonzaga email. This will be my primary form of communication with you.
3) Complete your discussion posts on blackboard. And read the posts of others in your group.
4) Complete the essay exams, in a timely manner. I will allow extensions for in distressing cases of family emergencies and extreme illness. Otherwise late essay

Course Policies

I do not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. We are an intellectual and academic community, and all of us are responsible to act with integrity. All violations of the Gonzaga Academic Honesty Policy will be reported to your advisor, and you will receive a zero on the assignment. Plagiarism is the act of passing another's work off as your own. For more on plagiarism consult the guide on blackboard. Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic violations.

The Gonzaga University Academic Honesty Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work. Each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community.
exams will be deducted a full letter grade for every day it is late, starting Saturdays at 5:01 pm. Consult the Turnitin Technology Policy for additional information.

3) Ask for help when you need it. I am happy to assist students in their attempts to master course materials and successfully complete course assignments. I am always available via email and typically respond within a few hours.

**Requirements and Grading**

1) Three Essay Exams: There will be **three essay exams**. Each exam will consist of short essay questions. These will be based off the readings and the “lecture” content. You will receive the questions on a Monday and the essay exams are due by 5:00 pm Saturday, Spokane time. Each exam is worth 100 points.

2) Participation: Sure, this class is online, but that doesn’t mean you won't participate. We will use the discussion boards in our blackboard course site. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I will post a “Lecture” document which will include text, images, and links to various media. It will conclude with questions for you, and you will respond to those questions in the **blackboard discussion forum**. You are required to do **2 posts per week** on 2 different days. (If you want to do a third, have at it. You won’t get extra points though.) You should be reading the posts of other discussants in your group and be in conversation with their posts. That does not mean copy them or merely echo/agree with them. Each post must be at least a paragraph in length (6-8 sentences). In total, your participation is worth 100 points. For more, check the Discussion Board Guide on blackboard under the Assignments tab.

If you miss a week, you **cannot** go back and make up missed posts. I consider a week from 12:01 am Sunday to 11:59 pm Saturday, Spokane time.

**Grading Breakdown:**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>249-239</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>239 points and below</td>
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**Course Policies**

Americans with Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities who need academic accommodations should:
1. Register with and provide documentation to the Disability Access.
2. Email me your Disability Access letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done **during the first week** of class.

A Note on Course Content:

This is a course in religious studies and not confessional in nature; that is, we are not here to promote a particular religious viewpoint or to debate religious “truth.” Rather, we will be engaging religious materials as anthropologists, historians, and sociologists to understand their meanings for the people who have produced and used them. You may have your own religious commitment; if so, throughout this course you will likely encounter opinions and religious beliefs and activities with which you do not agree. This does not make them unworthy of your study, consideration, and respect. I ask you to imagine yourself in the shoes of someone else whose practices and beliefs may differ from your own and yet carry immense meaning and value for that person.

Furthermore, students will be expected to communicate in a civil manner at all times. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified way. Treat your peers and the subject material with respect.

Course Schedule

Even though we don’t physically meet together in a classroom, I’ve given us a course schedule. Material (videos, additional readings, etc.) will be posted to Blackboard in the “Lectures” section every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. This will be the “in-class” content that goes with the reading. Do the day’s assigned reading before consulting the “in-class” material.

**Week 1: Colonial Christianities**

- **Monday, May 22**: Introduction and Overview
  Reading: Introduction in *Bounds of Their Habitation*
- **Wednesday, May 24**: Pluralism in the Colonial World
  Reading: Chapter 1 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; and “Facing East from Indian Country” on blackboard
- **Friday, May 26**: Colonial New England
  Reading: “Puritan primary sources” and “The Devil, the Body, and the Feminine Soul in Puritan New England” on blackboard

**Week 2: Creating American Christianities**

- **Monday, May 29**: Early American Republic
  Reading: Chapter 2 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; and “Religious Freedom” on blackboard
- **Wednesday, May 31**: Second Great Awakening
  Reading: “Finney’s Memoirs” on blackboard
- **Friday, June 2**: Slavery and Slave Religion
  Reading: Chapter 3 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; and “Frederick Douglass” on blackboard

**Essay Exam 1 due to blackboard by 5pm Saturday**
**Week 3: Diverse Christianities**

**Monday, June 5:** Antebellum Spiritual Hothouse, Take 1  
Reading: Prologue and Chapters 1-2 in *Kingdom of Matthias*

**Wednesday, June 7:** Antebellum Spiritual Hothouse, Take 2  
Reading: Chapters 3-4 in *Kingdom of Matthias*

**Friday, June 9:** Catholic Immigration and Anti-Catholicism  
Reading: Epilogue of *Kingdom of Matthias*; and “Maria Monk” and “Solving the Italian Problem” on blackboard

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**Week 4: Modern Christianities**

**Monday, June 12:** Christianity and Health  
Reading: “Kellogg and Palmer” on blackboard

**Wednesday, June 14:** American Christians and Modern “Others”  
Reading: Chapter 4 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; “American Christians and ‘Others’” on blackboard

**Friday, June 16:** Christianity and Modernity  
Reading: Chapter 5 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; and “Protestant Intellectual Controversies” on blackboard

**Essay Exam 2 due to blackboard by 5 pm Saturday**

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**Week 5: Political Christianities**

**Monday, June 19:** Christianity and the Ghost Dance  
Reading: “The Ghost Dance” on blackboard

**Wednesday, June 21:** Civil Rights Movement  
Reading: Chapter 6 in *Bounds of Their Habitation*; and “Letter from Birmingham Jail” on blackboard

**Friday, June 23:** Rise of the Religious Right  
Reading: Chapter 7 and Epilogue in *Bounds of Their Habitation*

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**Week 6: Catholicism Exploration: Bodies, Gender, and Protest**

**Monday, June 26:** Gender and Catholicism  
Reading: “Gender and Siekmann Advice for Boys and Girls” on blackboard

**Wednesday, June 28:** Bodies and Catholicism  
Reading: “Mildred, Is it Fun to be a Cripple?” on blackboard

**Friday, June 30:** Protest and Catholicism  
Reading: “Sisters in Selma” on blackboard

**Essay Exam 3 due to blackboard by 5 pm Saturday**