Syllabus Description:

NRM Project: Part 1 Due Week 4, Part 2 Week 7, Part 3 Week 14

Congratulations! You are now part of a brand-new religion! What, you might ask, is your religion about? You tell me! Over the first 4 weeks of the semester you will discuss, as a class, what your religion is all about. You can solicit ideas from everyone and combine them, you can vote on options, you can draw an idea out of a hat, the method of deciding is up to you, but in Week 4 you will each submit a 300-500 word report of what you see as the major tenets of the religion (there is a rubric laying out some basic requirements). DO NOT WORRY IF YOUR IDEAS DON’T GET PICKED! You should continue to discuss things in the coming weeks, but tensions will rise and your unity will be strained, so by Week 11 you will experience a great schism! Your religion will now fracture into many sects. You can form an individual sect, or team up with up to 2 other classmates. Up to 3 people can also remain true to the original idea as the orthodox or fundamentalist sect. Between Week 11 and Week 14 you and your sect-mates will develop the ideas around what defines your sect. Your 300-500 word write up of your sect will be due in Week 14. If we have few enough groups we will have class presentations so you can share your sects.

NRM Rubric

The focus of your religion is, truly, up to you and the sky is the limit. I place no restrictions on it other than reminding you that it needs to comply with the University code of conduct, so hate speech will not be tolerated.

Your first write-up is worth 5 points and your second is worth the other 5 points. Consider the following when writing your report:

A 5 point report will be well-written in terms of grammar, style, mechanics, spelling, and punctuation. It will be the right length and will clearly articulate the core identity of the religion. It will explicitly state what your contribution to the project has been. Even if your ideas were not chosen or included, the report will explain why you made those suggestions.

A 4 point report will do the same things, although there may be more errors and the core identity of the religion will not be as clearly articulated.

A report that does not include an explicit explanation of your contribution to the project will score no better than 3 points. A 3 point essay may also have all of the required elements, but in a short or incomplete manner.

A 2 point report fails to address most of the required elements, is not the right length, does not include an explicit explanation of your contribution, or in other ways falls short of completion.

A 1 point report fails to complete the required elements in any coherent way.

0 points will only be awarded in cases of plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or violations of the University code of conduct.

In considering the core identity of your religion you should include as many of the following topics as possible:

* What are the main beliefs of your religion? What do you value?
* Does your religion have a vision of the afterlife? Is it the same for everyone after death? If not what determines your afterlife?
* Are there sins? If so how does one atone for sins?
* Are there divine entities? Does your religion worship a person, place, object, or idea? If so how does one worship?
* Can anyone become a member? How is someone initiated into the religion?
* Do you have any scriptures or holy texts? Who wrote them? What makes these texts holy? How are they used in your religion?
* Do you have any holidays? What are they about or like? When are they and how are they observed?