

LATINA/O RELIGIONS
REL217
Spring 2016

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Office Hours: Mon 9:15-10:15; Tue 10:30-11:30; appointments

OBJECTIVES

Latinas/os, or people who trace their ancestry to the countries of Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, are the largest minority group in the United States. Religion forms an important part of the lives of many Latinas/os. From various expressions of Catholicism, to Protestant and Pentecostal movements, to religions that draw on African heritage and folk devotions, many Hispanics have a rich religious life. Adding to this richness, Latinas/os are a diverse group made up of communities that claim distinct countries of national origin, including Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and people from Central and South America. This course explores the history and practice of several major Latina/o religions, the role religion plays in ethnic identity formation and maintenance, the ways in which religion aids Latinas/os in a context often touched by racism and prejudice, and the cultural products associated with Hispanic religions.

OUTCOMES

All Lafayette courses list learning outcomes. You should understand these outcomes as what you can expect to change in you as a result of this class. At the end of the semester, you will be able to affirm:

- I know about several Latina/o religious traditions and can share that knowledge with others.
- I can explain Latina/o ethnicity with an emphasis on the diversity inherent in different groups of national origin.
- I can recognize the role religion plays in ethnic formation and maintenance both for Latinos/as and other ethnicities.
- I can give examples of how international immigration and American western expansion have impacted the practice of Hispanic religion;
- I can assess the role of religion in combating racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice against Latinas and Latinos.
- I appreciate Hispanic religious cultural production including art, music, and dance.

This course fulfills H, GMI, and V Student Learning Outcomes for the Common Course of Study. For more information, see <http://ccs.lafayette.edu/learning-outcomes/>.

READING

The following books are required and are available at the bookstore and are on reserve at Skillman Library:

- *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* by Timothy Matovina
- *Latino Pentecostals in America* by Gastón Espinosa

- *Performing Piety: Making Sacred Space with the Virgin of Guadalupe* by Elaine Peña
Additional required readings are on Moodle.¹

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **In-class writing.** We will do frequent, short, in-class writing assignments both to help you formulate what you think about course readings and to demonstrate to me that you have done the reading. 5 points each.
2. **Participation.** Strong participation includes asking good questions, coming to class prepared, thoughtful and prepared interactions with the VAs, and listening carefully to me and to other class members. Your punctuality is also required. Anything missed due to unexcused absence or tardiness cannot be made up. Your own self-assessment of your participation will influence this grade. 40 points.
3. **Short papers.** There will be two short papers. 20 points each. The purpose of these papers is to help you work with information and ideas from the course and do some limited research.
4. **Encyclopedia entry.** This 5-6 page paper asks you to synthesize course material by writing an encyclopedia entry. 60 points.
5. **Book review.** The paper is 4-5 pages and lets you engage critically with a monograph we are reading for the course. 40 points.
6. **Other stuff.** While there **WILL BE NO LAST MINUTE EXTRA CREDIT**, there will be occasional opportunities to earn a few points by attending relevant lectures and events.

WRITING

This class includes a fair amount of writing. To help you with this, we will be working with two Writing Associates (WAs). Each of you will meet with a WA four separate times to discuss your writing.

GRADING

The final point total for the course is yet to be determined, depending on the number of in-class writing assignments we have. Your grade will be the points you earn over the total possible points for the course.

Letter grades will be assigned thus:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77

¹ Moodle contains student information that is protected by the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). Disclosure to unauthorized parties violates federal privacy laws. Courses using Moodle will make student information visible to other students in this class. Please remember that this information is protected by these federal privacy laws and must not be shared with anyone outside the class. Questions may be referred to the Registrar's Office.)

- C- 70-73
- D 60-69
- F 0-59

Also please note: I do NOT round up grades. This means that an 89.99999% is graded as an 89%.

POLICIES & ADDITIONAL INFO

1. I check my email frequently throughout the day and try to return messages quickly (at least within 24 hours). However, I am unavailable by email on weekends and after 5pm weekdays.
2. Please do not read or send texts in class. If you know you cannot resist, then put your phone in your bag.
3. I want to help you learn. Please see me if you need anything or want to talk about the class.
4. Majoring or minoring in Religious Studies is awesome! Let me know if you want to know more.
5. Se habla español. En serio.
6. Late work: Unless you make arrangements in advance, work submitted late will be marked down a full grade level (A to B, B to C, etc.) for every 24 hours or portion thereof that it is late.
7. Do not miss your appointments with the WAs. Every time you miss a meeting, your grade will go down one level. Tardiness to WA meetings, at my discretion, may be counted as an absence.
8. Lafayette College's Academic Honesty Policy: Students are required to abide by the standards of academic honesty described in the *Student Handbook* (http://www.lafayette.edu/student_life/download_handbook.html): "To maintain the scholarly standards of the College and, equally important, the personal ethical standards of our students, it is essential that written assignments be a student's own work, just as is expected in examinations and class participation. A student who commits academic dishonesty is subject to a range of penalties, including suspension or expulsion. Finally, the underlying principle is one of intellectual honesty. If a person is to have the self-respect and the respect of others, all work must be his/her own." It is **your** responsibility to be familiar with this policy, including guidelines for use of information from the internet (see <http://library.lafayette.edu/help/citing/webpages>). Faculty members are required to report any cases of suspected academic dishonesty to the Dean of the College. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.
9. I am very committed to promoting diversity in this classroom! Throughout the semester, we will be exploring how different people in different situations make ethical decisions. Our understanding of others (and ourselves) will benefit from this approach. Here is the College's Statement on Diversity: "Lafayette College is committed to creating a diverse community: one that is inclusive and responsive, and is supportive of each and all of its faculty, students, and staff. The College seeks to promote diversity in its many manifestations. These include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and place of origin. The College recognizes that we live in an increasingly interconnected, globalized world, and that students benefit from learning in educational and social

contexts in which there are participants from all manner of backgrounds. The goal is to encourage students to consider diverse experiences and perspectives throughout their lives. All members of the College community share a responsibility for creating, maintaining, and developing a learning environment in which difference is valued, equity is sought, and inclusiveness is practiced. It is a mission of the College to advance diversity as defined above. The College will continue to assess its progress in a timely manner in order to ensure that its diversity initiatives are effective.”

10. The student work in this course is in full compliance with the federal definition of a four credit hour course. Please see the Lafayette College Compliance webpage (<http://registrar.lafayette.edu/additional-resources/cep-course-proposal/>) for the full policy and practice statement.
11. In compliance with Lafayette College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you require as a student with a disability. Except in unusual circumstances, requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester so that arrangements can be made. Students must register with the Office of the Dean of the College for verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

SCHEDULE

Week One (Jan. 25 & 27) – Mapping the Territory

Read:

- Matovina vii-41
- Espinosa, Elizondo, and Miranda “Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings” (moodle)

Week Two (Feb. 1 & 3) – Ethnicity and Integration

Read:

- Oboler, excerpts from *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives* (moodle)
- Matovina 42-66
- Huntington, “The Hispanic Challenge” (moodle)

Do: Meet in small groups with a WA. Complete worksheet beforehand.

Week Three (Feb. 8 & 10) – Theoretical Problems and Possibilities

Read:

- Vásquez and Marquardt, excerpts from *Globalizing the Sacred* (moodle)
- León, “The Terror of Postcolonial History” (moodle)

Week Four (Feb. 15 & 17) – Catholic Ministry and Movements

Read:

- Matovina 67-131

Do: First short paper

Week Five (Feb. 22 & 24) – Catholic Leadership and Worship

Read:

- Matovina 132-189

Do: Meet with WA to talk about your first short paper.

Week Six (Feb. 29 & Mar. 2) – Catholicism in Public Life and in the Future

Read:

- Matovina 190-250

Do: On Monday, turn in revision of first short paper. Begin second short paper.

Week Seven (Mar. 7 & 9) – Santería

Read:

- De La Torre, excerpts from *Santería* (moodle)
- Brown, “Altared Spaces” (moodle)

Do: Finish second short paper. Meet with WA to talk about it.

Week Eight (Mar. 14 & 16) – Curanderismo

Read:

- Hendrickson, excerpts from *Border Medicine* (moodle)
- Avila, excerpts from *Woman Who Glows in the Dark* (moodle)

Do: On Wednesday, turn in revision of second short paper.

Week Nine (Mar. 28 & 30) – Latino/a Religious Minorities

Read:

- Excerpts from *Islamic Horizons* (moodle)
- Chitwood, “Hispanic Muslims?” (moodle)
- Zubizarreta “Voices of Latina and Latino Buddhists” (moodle)
- Gurnon “Minority Mormons: Latinos and Latter-day Saints” (moodle)
- Shellnutt “On a Mission: Mormons Reach out to Hispanics” (moodle)
- Navarro-Rivera “Latinos and the Future of American Secularism (moodle)

Week Ten (Apr. 4 & 6) – Pentecostalism and Puerto Rico

Read:

- Espinosa 22-59, 192-232

Week Eleven (Apr. 11) – Pentecostal Growth and Nuyoricans

Read:

- Espinosa 233-281

Do: Encyclopedia entry assignment.

Week Twelve (Apr. 18 & 20) – Women’s Leadership

Read:

- Espinosa 282-321
- Castañeda-Liles “Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Politics of Cultural Interpretation” (moodle)

Do: Meet with WA to talk about your encyclopedia entry.

Week Thirteen (Apr. 25 & 27) – Monograph: *Performing Piety*

Read:

- Peña 1-86

Do: On Tuesday, turn on revision of third short paper.

Week Fourteen (May 2 & 4) – Monograph: *Performing Piety*

Read:

- Peña 87-152

Finals Period

Do: Book review is due by noon on Wednesday, May 11.