

## THE ROADMAP

Key: Moodle (M), Reserve (R), Library E-View (E), Online (O), Video/Multimedia (V)

### ORIENTATION & PRELUDE

#### WEEK 1 (Jan 17): Introduction

Readings:

**Wed** Introduction to the Study

In-class: (V) “What is Religion” [here](#); “Is Religion Good or Bad?” [here](#)

**First Day: Bring a 100-word intellectual biography. What drives your study of religion?**

#### WEEK 2 (Jan 22-Jan 24): Thinking About Religion – Some Provocations

Readings:

**Mon** Sommerville, *The Decline of the Secular University: Why the Academy Needs Religion* Ch. 1, 4 & 5.  
(E)

**Wed** J. Kripal, *The Superhumanities: Historical Precedents, Moral Objections*, “Prologue”, & “Introduction” (E)

### WESTERN THOUGHT ABOUT ‘RELIGION’

**NOTE:** Google DOC will be in effect beginning NOW.

#### WEEK 3 (Jan 29-Jan 31):

Readings:

**Mon** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), “Preface”, “Introduction” & “Part 1”;  
Strenski, *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, 1-48 (Chapters. 1 & 2 – Skim for key points)

**Wed** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), Ch. 4. *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch.3.

#### WEEK 4 (Feb 5-7):

Readings:

**Mon** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), Ch. 5. *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch. 4.

**Wed** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), Ch. 8, *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch. 7.

**WEEK 5 (Feb 12-14): Weber & Freud**Readings:

**Mon** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion (E)*, Ch. 9, *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch. 8

**Wed** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion (E)*, Ch. 10. *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch. 9

**WEEK 6 (Feb 19-21): Marx & Postmodernism**Readings:

**Mon** Pals, “Religion as Alienation: Karl Marx” in *Ten Theories of Religion (M)*; Daniel Pals, “Religion as Agent of Economic Oppression” in *Introducing Religion: Readings from the Classic Theorists (M)*

**Wed** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion (E)*, Chapters 14; Huston Smith (1990), “Postmodernism’s Impact on the Study of Religion” (M); *Study of Religion: A Reader*, 367-373 (R)

**WEEK 7 (Feb 26-28): Feminism**Readings:

**Mon** Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion (E)*, Chapter 16. *Study of Religion: A Reader*, 70-83 and 419-440 (R); **Recommended:** Rita Gross, “Defining Feminism, Religion and the Study of Religion” (full version, M).

**Wed** NO CLASS MEETING TODAY – focus on the Midterm.

**MIDTERM REVIEW: Thinking about Religion is Due before Spring Break**

***SPRING BREAK: March 4 - Mar 8***

**WEEK 8 (Mar 11-13): Concluding our Conversation on Western Thinking about “Religion”**Readings:

**Mon** Heschel, “No Religion is an Island” (M); Pope Benedict “The Creation of the Human Being” (M); Robert Jensen, “How the World Lost its Story” <https://rb.gy/0qng9d>

**Wed Watch** Movie *The Island* (2006) (M); Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, Book II: “Life and Miracles of St. Benedict” (M); A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, excerpt: pp. 84-90 (M)

An Interactive Lecture by **Prof. Kabala** on “Miracles, the Paranormal and Science”.

## Non-Western Perspectives and the Western Study of 'RELIGION'

### WEEK 9 (Mar 18-20): Colonialism, Orientalism, Postcolonialism & Decolonizing I

#### Readings:

**Mon** Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*, "Introduction" (M), *The Invention of Religion in Japan*, "Introduction" (M); *Study of Religion: A Reader*, pp.205-210. 374-386 and 472-480 (R).

**Recommended:** Masao Abe, "What do We Learn about Religion from the Study of Buddhism?" from *Our Religions* (ed. A. Sharma)

**Wed** Edward Said on Orientalism [here](#) (V); Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), Chapter 17; Richard King, "Orientalism and the Study of Religions" (M); "The Sacred" in *Postcolonial Studies Reader* (M)

**Bring a 100-word handwritten reflection on our study thus far (MAR 20)**

### WEEK 10 (Mar 25-27): Colonialism, Orientalism, Postcolonialism & Decolonizing II

#### Readings:

**Mon** Oludamini, "Decolonizing the Africana Religion" (M); Nye, Mallory, "Decolonizing the Study of Religion" (2019) *Open Library of Humanities* 5(1):43: 1-45; **Recommended:** Indigenous and Ethnic Studies Approach to Decolonizing Religious Studies <https://rb.gy/az42yc>

**Wed** Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (M); Interview with Hamid Dabashi <https://newhumanist.org.uk/articles/4912/can-non-europeans-think-an-interview-with-hamid-dabashi>

**By MARCH 27: Meet, discuss, and receive approval of your Venture from the instructor.**

### WEEK 11 (Apr 1-3): You Venture and Hinduism & Islam

#### Readings:

**Mon** Ashish Nandy, "History's Forgotten Doubles" (M); Watch the movie *Dharam* [2007] (V) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lG5XjZgmHto>; *Study of Religion: A Reader*, pp.170-204;

**LETTER:** *A Common Word Between Us* –(O);

**Wed** Introduce your Venture of Choice on Thinking about Religion (10-minutes each)

**APRIL 3: You will turn in your Annotated Bibliography to the Instructor.**

## **THINKING ABOUT RELIGION: RECENT TRENDS, DEBATES, CRITICISMS & FUTURE**

### **WEEK 12 (Apr 8-10): Religion and Education in America**

#### Readings:

**Mon** Muller-Fahrenheit, *America's Battle for God* (M); Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America" (M); Vine Deloria, "Education" (selections) from *Spirit and Reason*

**Wed** Sommerville, *The Decline of the Secular University*, Chs. 10 & 11, 12. (E)

A Conversation with **Prof. Doug Ottati** on "Religion, Theology and the Academy".

### **WEEK 13 (Apr 15-17): Islam & The Spiritual-But-Not-Religious (SBNR)**

#### Readings:

**Mon** Gai Eaton, *Remembering God: Reflections on Islam*, everyone will read the Preface & Chapter 1.

In groups of two, you will map one chapter of the book.

**Wed** How Society Manufactures Happiness (V) <https://rb.gy/ihr80>; Richard King, *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion* "Introduction" (E); Pew Forum "Religious 'Nones' in America" <https://shorturl.at/ptwyM>; Pew Forum: "More Americans now say..." <https://shorturl.at/cijwI>; "What it Means to be Spiritual but not Religious" *The Atlantic* (M)

**Mr. William Reilly** will discuss "New Age Spirituality & the Spiritual-But-Not-Religious (SBNR)"

### **WEEK 14 (Apr 22-24): SBNR, Critical Theory and Race**

#### Readings:

**Mon** M. Wood (2001), "Religious Studies as Critical Organic Intellectual Practice" (M); Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion* (E), Chapters 15; Malcom X <https://rb.gy/63s15e>;

**Wed** James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, Introduction by Cornel West, 1989 Preface by Cone, Chapters 1 & 6 (E)

**Prof. Trent Foley** will lead our discussion today.

### **WEEK 15 (Apr 29): The Future of Religious Studies**

#### Readings:

**Mon** John Kuykendall, "Presidential Installment Speech at Davidson College (1984)

**Recommended:** Ursula King (2002) "Is there a Future for Religious Studies?" (M);

Strenski, *Understanding Theories of Religion*, Ch. 13 (E); *Thinking about Religion: A Reader*, Ch. 12

You will give an overview of your "Venture" (7 minutes each)

**APRIL 29: YOUR [VENTURE OF CHOICE] THINKING ABOUT RELIGION IS DUE.**

**CUMMULATIVE FINAL REVIEW DURING THE EXAM WEEK**