

History of Religion in the United States (REL / HIST 3100)
Elizabeth Jemison, Assistant Professor of Religion, Clemson University

Institutional Setting

Clemson University is a public university in South Carolina with 16,000 undergraduate students, of whom two-thirds are in-state students. 15% are the first in their family to attend college. The middle 50 percent of admitted student SAT score are from 1170 to 1330 (26 to 31 for ACT). Clemson also admits a large number of transfer students. Undergraduates must indicate a choice of major upon application, and the largest majors are Business, Psychology, and Engineering. While students can change majors and degree programs throughout their time at Clemson, this process of declaring majors upon application disadvantages programs like Religious Studies with which students generally have little familiarity in high school. Clemson is upwardly mobile, and strives to be ranked among the top 20 public universities according to the *U.S. News & World Report*. It has been among the top 25 public universities for several years. Clemson earned designation as a Carnegie Research-1 institution in 2016. Clemson is built on John C. Calhoun's slave plantation and named for Calhoun's son-in-law Thomas Green Clemson. The oldest and most recognizable building on campus was renamed Benjamin Tillman Hall in the 1940s, honoring South Carolina's white supremacist politician who created Jim Crow segregation and encouraged white mob violence.

Department Setting

I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion, one of four humanities departments in the College of Arts, Architecture, and Humanities. The department's Religious Studies B.A. program became its own major in 2014, and my hire brought the tenure-line Religion faculty to four. Growing our new major remains a significant priority, and my courses in American religion need to provide a gateway into the major for new students. I work to recruit a new major or two from each course I teach. Convincing a student to major in Religious Studies is challenging with the current climate in the humanities and Clemson's significant focus on majors that lean toward vocational training rather than the liberal arts. We currently have 25 majors, and hope to grow to 30-40 in the next couple of years.

Curricular Context

This course, History of Religion in the United States, fully enrolls at 35 students each time I teach it. The course is open to undergraduate students at all levels. It is cross-listed with History, meaning that half of the 35 seats are reserved for students enrolling in the History section and half for Religious Studies. The course enrolls a mix of Religious Studies and History majors, along with students from majors in many fields. Few students have any background in American religion, although some students have a reasonable foundation in U.S. history and/or in Religious Studies. Clemson students, especially those in Religious Studies courses, overwhelmingly have ties to evangelical Christianity. I rarely find myself needing to make the case that religion is an important topic to study in the twenty-first century; however, teaching students how to question the terms of our discussion (What is religion?) takes deliberate work in the classroom, as does training student to think historically about religion.

Religion/History 3100: History of Religion in the United States

Fall 2017

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45 am

Hardin Hall 228

Instructor

Dr. Elizabeth L. Jemison, Assistant Professor of Religion

Office: 220 Hardin Hall

Email: ejemiso@clemsun.edu (Email is the best way to reach me.)

Email policy: 1) I try to reply to students' emails within one business day. If I haven't replied, please email me again. 2) I expect a similar response if I send an email to an individual student with a concern or question. Ignoring emails directly to you will hurt your participation grade.

Office phone: 864-656-2001 (It's hard for me to get messages; email me instead of calling).

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11am-12pm; 1:30-3pm

If you have a course, work, sport, or other conflict during my office hours, I am more than happy to meet at other times. Email me well in advance so we can find a mutually convenient time. Please remember (as explained below) that I expect each student to come to my office hours at least one (1) time before the midterm exam. But you're welcome to come by often!

Course Description and Student Learning Outcomes

This course offers a broad introduction to American religious history from the 1600s to today. As we travel together from the early colonial period to the present, our course will consider four important themes in the history of religion in the United States. By the semester's end, students will be able to describe and analyze important aspects of these areas, as well as have a solid understanding of the historical development of American religious cultures.

- Church and State: We will discuss the historical development of the relationship between church and state, beginning with the Puritans' efforts to construct a godly commonwealth and moving to the debates over established religion in the newly independent United States. As we trace the history of the First Amendment through nineteenth-century court battles over polygamy and twentieth-century Native American religious freedom cases, we will pay attention to the ways that the religious freedoms promised by the First Amendment have been applied unequally to different groups.
- Race and Religion: Race and religion have developed alongside each other as important categories of identity. Enslaved Africans were brought to colonial Virginia before the first Puritans settled in New England, and plans to convert Native Americans to Christianity helped to justify European colonization of their lands. Three hundred years later, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called 11 a.m. on Sunday mornings the most segregated hour in America, while at the same time, new religious traditions such as the Nation of Islam, argued for racially-distinct movements away from Christianity. We will consider the intersections of race and religion throughout U.S. history.
- Pluralism and its Challenges: Religious diversity in various forms has presented challenges and new opportunities for American communities. In the colonial period, Puritans in New England did not allow Baptists or Quakers into their colony. Immigrants to the United States have brought their religious traditions with them, and the United States has been the birthplace of many new religious traditions, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

(Mormons), Christian Science, the Nation of Islam, and more. Our class will discuss the ways that this religious diversity has often created conflict and, sometimes, creative new resolutions throughout U.S. history.

- Religion in a Changing Society: Religious groups in America have confronted major transformations throughout their history. Social changes, such as emancipation or immigrant experiences, and intellectual shifts, such as biblical criticism or Darwinian evolution, have forced different communities to reexamine their cultural or theological ideas. In this course, we will consider the ways that religious communities have adapted, resisted, or encouraged major transformations in U.S. history.

As with any course in Religious Studies, “History of Religion in the United States” engages the academic study of religion. This class requires thinking historically and analytically about a wide range of religious movements and groups from the past four hundred years. This means that we are asking a different set of questions than those asked or answered by communities of faith or campus chaplaincies. We will be discussing questions like “How did the historical context in which this religious group was founded shape its development” or “How have these ideas changed over time?” but not “Which of these ideas is the truth?” or “How do I apply this to my life?” For students new to Religious Studies, this distinction may be a challenging one. We will spend time discussing these differences in class, but please feel free to come to my office hours to talk about this or any aspect of the course.

Honor Code

“As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson’s vision of this institution as a ‘high seminary of learning.’ Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.”
(Undergraduate Catalogue)

I take any suspected case of academic dishonesty very seriously because academic integrity is at the core of what we undertake both in this class and at Clemson University. In this course, adhering to the Academic Integrity Policy means that a student neither gives nor receives aid on a quiz or exam and is the sole author of any written work submitted for credit. You must cite the source of any idea or quotation that is not your own. Obviously, actions such as copying material from the internet without citation or paying someone else to write a paper for you constitute violations of the honor code. Students may form study groups in order to prepare for tests and are permitted to discuss their papers with one another prior to submission.

Attendance and Electronics Policy

“The academic resources of Clemson University are provided for the intellectual growth and development of students. Class attendance is critical to the educational process; therefore, students should attend scheduled courses regularly if they are to attain their academic goals . . . A student with an excessive number of absences may be withdrawn at the discretion of the course instructor.”
(Undergraduate Catalogue)

For the purpose of this class, “excessive number of absences” is equal to one-third or more of the total class meetings. In the unlikely event that I am more than fifteen (15) minutes late and have not

sent a message to the class, you may leave without penalty.

Cell phones and laptops are prohibited in class. Please take notes with pen and paper. Your cell phone and / or laptop should remain in your bag and should be silent. I reserve the right to ask any student who uses electronic devices in class to leave. I have this classroom technology policy not because I am a Luddite (a term meaning someone who is afraid of or averse to technological innovation), but because I want all of us to engage fully in our work together without distraction. Studies have shown that you will actually learn more if you hand write your notes than if you type them (to say nothing of the distractions presented by email, texting, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and the rest). See the evidence: <http://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2014/05/24/taking-notes-bring-pen-skip-computer/e3kGp47M7znyaNKOamUwrO/story.html>. And again: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Benefits-of-No-Tech-Note/228089/>

Disability Access Statement

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should make an appointment with Dr. Margaret Camp (656-6848), Director of Disability Services, to discuss specific needs within the first month of classes (on or before February 12). Students should present a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Student Disability Services when they meet with instructors. Accommodations are not retroactive and new Faculty Accommodation Letters must be presented each semester.

Title IX (Sexual Harassment) Statement

Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Mr. Jerry Knighton is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator. He also is the Director of Access and Equity. His office is located at 111 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.565.0899 (TDD).

Required Text

Edwin Gaustad & Leigh Schmidt, *The Religious History of America: The Heart of the American Story from Colonial Times to Today* (Revised Edition) (HarperOne, 2002). ISBN: 978-0060630560 or 978-0060630577. This text is abbreviated *RHA* below. One copy is on 3-hour reserve in Cooper Library.

Additional course readings are on Canvas and noted (C) below. Please print, read, and bring to class.

Course Assignments, Workload, and Grading

This course requires careful reading and preparation. You should anticipate spending *at least* three hours preparing for each of our classes. In other words, budget a minimum of six hours per week for this course outside of our class meetings. During weeks when there is a paper due or an exam, you will likely need to spend more time. The more effort and focus that you put into this class, the more rewarding the experience will be.

Daily Quizzes: 15% – At the start of every class, you will have a short (3-5 question) quiz. This quiz will test your understanding of the major themes and content in the reading assigned for that day. I will use the highest scores in the class to set the grading percentage for these quizzes.

Participation: 10% – Active, engaged participation in this course requires careful preparation inside and outside of class. You will need to read thoroughly and think critically about the assigned readings before class. I expect each student to contribute regularly to class discussions, and the quality of these contributions matters more than the quantity. Asking a good question can be very helpful to the class discussion. If you find yourself feeling shy or having difficulty joining our discussion, please talk to me about this concern in my office hours. I want to help each of you find ways to participate in our class discussion. Repeated tardiness and unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. You are expected to come to my office hours at least one time before the midterm exam. I hope you will each come many times, but one office hour conversation is required by then lest your participation grade be lowered.

Midterm Exam: 20% – The midterm exam will take place in class on Thursday, October 12. The midterm exam will include short answer questions and essays.

Final Exam 25% – The final exam will consist of short answer questions and essays. It will be administered on Wednesday, December 13 from 8:00am-10:30am. It will be comprehensive of the entire semester, but the emphasis will be on material covered since the midterm.

Papers: 2 papers, 15% each – You will be responsible for two analytical, argumentative papers over the course of the semester. The topics and guidelines for each will be distributed in advance of the due dates noted below. Each writing assignment expects that you will outline, draft, revise, and proofread your work. Due dates for each paper are listed below. I do not give extensions except in extraordinary circumstances, usually involving documented serious illness or a death in the family. A late paper will be penalized five (5) points per day, or portion thereof. No paper will be accepted more than a week after the deadline.

There may be one or more opportunities for extra credit over the course of the semester. Pay attention in class to learn about possible opportunities to attend a lecture or event on campus and write a brief report on its relevance to our course for extra credit.

Course Schedule: Readings and Assignments

Unit 1: Religion in Colonial and Revolutionary America

Thursday, August 24 – Course Introduction and Overview

Tuesday, August 29 – Native Religion & Colonial Explorations

RHA, Chapter 1, “Beginnings,” pp. 3-29

“As They Had Been in Ancient Times”: Pedro Naranjo Relates the Pueblo Revolt, 1680 (C)

Thursday, August 31 – Puritan Foundations

Chapter 3, “Puritan New England,” pp. 48-73

John Winthrop, "Christian Charity, A Model Hereof" (1630) in David D. Hall, Ed. *Puritans in the New World* (C)

Tuesday, September 5 – Anglican Establishment and Colonial Diversity

RHA, Chapter 2, "English Exploration and Anglican Establishment," ONLY pp. 36-47;
Chapter 4, "Middle Colony Diversity," pp. 74-94.

Thursday, September 7 – The Birth of Evangelicalism

RHA, Chapter 5, "From Maryland Catholics to Georgia Evangelicals," 95-114.
Jonathan Edwards, "A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God," (1737) (C)

Tuesday, September 12 – Religion in the new United States

RHA, Chapter 6, "Liberty and Enlightenment," 119-138.
Patrick Henry, "A Bill Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion" (1784)
(C)
James Madison, "Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments" (1785) (C)

Unit 2: Religion in the 19th Century United States

Thursday, September 14 – Revivals and Populism

RHA, Chapter 7, "Freedom and Revival," pp. 139-161
Jarena Lee, *Religious Experiences of Mrs. Jarena Lee* (1849), (C)

Tuesday, September 19 – Mormonism and the American West

RHA, Chapter 8 "Redeeming the West," pp. 162-183
Joseph Smith, *History of the Church* (C)

Thursday, September 21 – Middle Passage to Slave Religion

Albert Raboteau, *Canaan Land*, Chapter 3, "'The Invisible Institution': Religion Among the Slaves," pp. 42-60 (C)
"'Oh ye Americans': Autobiography of Omar ibn Said, an enslaved Muslim in the US" (1831)
(C)

Friday, September 22 – First Paper Due at noon (Electronic Submission Via Canvas)

Tuesday, September 26 – African American Christianity in Antebellum America

Vincent Harding "Religion & Resistance Among Antebellum Slaves, 1800-1860" in *African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture*, Fulop and Raboteau Eds. (1997), 107-130. (C)

David Walker, "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World" (1829) (C)
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845) (C)

Thursday, September 28 – Sectional Division and Civil War

RHA, Chapter 9, "A House of Faith Divided," pp. 184-202
James Henley Thornwell, "The Christian Doctrine of Slavery" (1850) (C)

Tuesday, October 3 – Reconstruction and Reunion?

Abraham Lincoln, "Second Inaugural Address" (1865) (C)

W. E. B. Du Bois, "Of The Faith of the Fathers" (1903) (C)

Thursday, October 5 – New Immigrants and New Religious Movements
RHA, Chapter 10, "Immigration and Diversity," pp. 209-230
Pittsburgh Platform (1885) (C)

Tuesday, October 10 – World Religions in America
Swami Vivekananda, selections from "Hinduism as a Religion" and "Farewell" (1893) (C)
Mabel Potter Daggett, "The Heathen Invasion of America" (1912) (C)

Thursday, October 12 – Midterm Exam in Class

Tuesday, October 17 – NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

Thursday, October 19 – NO CLASS – Professor Jemison at a [conference in Indianapolis](#).

Unit 3: Religion in the 20th Century

Tuesday, October 24 – Social Problems and Religious Solutions
RHA, Chapter 11, "Cities and Social Gospels," pp. 231-254
Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), selection (C)

Thursday, October 26 – Defending Native "Religions" in the United States
John G. Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*, (1932) Selections. (C)
Tisa Wenger, *We Have a Religion: The 1920s Pueblo Indian Dance Controversy and American Religious Freedom* (2009), Selection (C)

Tuesday, October 31 – The Birth of Pentecostalism
RHA, Chapter 13, "Growth and Schism," ONLY pp. 277-291
Frank Bartleman, *How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles* (1925), selection (C)

Thursday, November 2 – Fundamentalism & Modernism
RHA, Chapter 13, "Growth and Schism," ONLY pp. 291-298; Chapter 14, "Faith and Reason," pp. 299-321
Henry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" (1922) (C)

Tuesday, November 7 – Cold War Religion
RHA, Chapter 15, "War, Peace, and Religious Renewal," pp. 329-348
Sen. John F. Kennedy, "Address to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association" (1960) (C)

Thursday November 9 – Religious Change in the 1960s
RHA, Chapter 16, "The Courts, the Schools, the Streets," pp. 349-373
Engel V. Vitale decision (1962) (C)

Tuesday, November 14 – Civil Rights Movement (I)
RHA, Chapter 17, "Justice, Liberation, Union," pp. 374-397
Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" (1963) (C)

Thursday, November 16 – Civil Rights Movement (II)

Malcolm X “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1964) Listen online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7oVW3HfzXkg>

And read: <http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/blackspeech/mx.html>

“A Oral History with Fannie Lou Hamer,” (1972-1973), Selections, (C).

Friday, November 17 – Second Paper Due at 12PM NOON. Submit to Canvas.

Tuesday, November 21 – Conservative Resurgence

RHA, Chapter 18, “Politics and Pluralism,” pp. 398-427

Jerry Falwell, *Listen, America!* (1980), selection (C)

Thursday, November 23 – NO CLASS – HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Tuesday, November 28 – Religion, Politics, and Abortion Debates

Emma Grace, “These Prolifers are Headed to the Women’s March on Washington” *The Atlantic*, January 16, 2017 (C)

Thomas Groome, “To Win Again, Democrats Must Stop Being the Abortion Party” *The New York Times*, March 27, 2017 (C)

Ellen Duffer, “Where Do Pro-Life Feminists Belong?” (June 2017) *Religion and Politics*

<http://religionandpolitics.org/2017/06/27/where-do-pro-life-feminists-belong/>

Thursday, November 30 – Race and Religion Today

Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President in Eulogy for the Honorable Reverent Clementa Pinckney, College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina (June 29, 2015) (C)

And watch video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9IGyidtfGI>

Rachel Wheeler, “Charlottesville, Exodus, and the Politics of Nostalgia” (August 2017) *Religion and Politics* <http://religionandpolitics.org/2017/08/22/charlottesville-exodus-and-the-politics-of-nostalgia/>

Tuesday, December 5 – Immigrants, Refugees, and American Religion

Gene Zubovich, “The Conservative Tradition of Welcoming Refugees” (March 2017) *Religion and Politics* <http://religionandpolitics.org/2017/03/14/the-conservative-tradition-of-welcoming-refugees/>

*I reserve the right to add timely news articles for this day’s reading based on how contemporary events change over the course of the semester.

Thursday December 7 – Concluding Conversations

Final Exam – Wednesday, December 13, 8:00-10:30am