

TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

BRS 334/ CC 6100 – SURVEY OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS (3 hrs)

T TH – 4:30-6:30 Quad A MCL 212

Fall 2007

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A historical and sociological survey of the origin and growth of new religious movements with particular attention given to Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Modern Paganism and New Age. Special attention is given to comparing and contrasting new religious movements with the historic Christian faith.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course the student should be able to:

1. Articulate the origin, historical development, major tenets, literature, ritual and worship of the new religious movements discussed in class.
2. Demonstrate a healthy respect for the religious beliefs of people different than themselves.
3. Articulate the differences of the new religious movements discussed in class with Christianity.
4. Articulate an understanding of the sociological reasons for the growth of new religious movements in the United States.
5. Demonstrate developing skills in researching new religious movements.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Lorne Dawson, ed., *Cults and New Religious Movements: A Reader* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003).

Ronald Enroth, ed., *A Guide to New Religious Movements* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2005)

TGS Students are also required to read:

William Sims Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements* (New York: Routledge, 1997)

SUGGESTED BOOKS

See bibliography below

ARTICLES

Michael T. Cooper, "Pathways to Druidry: A Case Study of Ar nDraiocht Fein," Paper presented at CESNUR 2006 International Conference, San Diego State University (Internet resource: http://www.cesnur.org/2006/sd_cooper.html)

Michael T. Cooper, "Druids, Globalization and the Construction of Religious Identity," Paper presented at CESNUR 2007 International Conference, University of Bordeaux, France (Internet resource: http://www.cesnur.org/2007/bord_cooper.htm)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Class Participation (5%)
- Reading (10%)
- Book Reviews (25%)
- Field Research (40%)
- Final Exam (20%)

NATURE OF THE COURSE

This course is taught in a seminar format and as such class participation is vital. My desire is for the learning environment to be a safe place where one might share openly about beliefs, doubts and questions. As a learner myself, I value learning in a community, particularly where theological and religious reflection is concerned. In such a community, students will have the opportunity to participate in the educational process by presenting their research. Since the course is in a seminar format we will be challenged to complete the content as outlined below. I do not see this as an issue for the integrity of the course. Nevertheless, we will at least attempt to stay on task.

This is also a quad course conducted in an accelerated manner. As such, significant additional work is expected outside the class. This work will comprise a part of your research (i.e. research template) as well as additional reading as outline in the "Book Review and Critique" component of the course.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Class Participation (5%) – You are expected to be at each lecture and verbally participate. This is an upper level course and the expectations on students are higher. It is also a survey course that can potentially be driven by the content of lectures. However, my goal is that we will cover the content in a dialogical and reflective manner in our learning community. Therefore, students are expected to come to class prepared to engage in such dialogue. TGS students will be required to lead one class discussion on a reading assignment.

Reading (10%) – You will submit a reading report at the end of the course indicating that the reading was completed on the date of the assignment. You will be left on your honor to correctly and honestly indicate whether or not you completed the

reading assignments on time. Partial credit will be given if the reading was completed, but not completed by the respective class period.

Book Reviews and Critique (25%) – Three book reviews of approximately 500 words each (not to exceed two double-spaced typed pages) are required by the end of the semester (6 December). Students should describe the overall argument of the book, identify the author’s main thesis, and assess the strengths and weaknesses. Two books can pertain to the student’s field research. One book should pertain to a NRM other than the one researched or an area of interest in the theoretical study of NRMs (such as conversion theory, violence, etc.). TGS students will review one additional book by William Sims Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements*.

Field Research (40%) – The class will be divided into five field research teams with graduate students as team leaders. There will be two components in the field research. First, using the NRM Research Template, each research team will identify at least 5 NRMs of similar faith traditions in Northeastern Illinois and complete the template. The template is due 9 October. Second, the research team will select one new religious movement and conduct phenomenological, theological and historical research to be presented to the class and invited guests beginning 20 September and written in a team research paper. The final team paper is due 6 December.

Some New Religious Movements suggested for field research:

The Wilmette Institute (Bahai)
1233 Central Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201

Swedenborgian Church of America
Transitions Bookplace, 1000 W. North Ave. Chicago, Illinois

Nation of Islam
7351 Stony Island Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60649

Unitarian Universalist Church
2100 Half Day Road, Deerfield, Illinois 60015

Cheribum and Seraphim Movement Church
7066 North Clark, Chicago, Illinois 60626

Final Exam (20%) – there will be a final exam covering the NRMs discussed in class. The exam will be designed by the class based upon each student’s presented research.

Letter grades will be based on the following scale:

95-100 A	73-76 C
90-94 A-	70-72 C-
87-89 B+	67-69 D+
83-86 B	63-66 D
80-82 B-	60-62 D-
77-79 C+	below 60 F

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

PLAGIARISM is defined as using another person's work or words as if they were one's own without identifying the source. Paraphrasing the written work of another author is a form of plagiarism and should be scrupulously avoided. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. This includes in written papers, exams, or oral presentations.

CHEATING, is defined as any form of fraud or deception that results in a better grade or even a better impression of the student's performance than he/she actually earns or deserves. Aiding or treating a fellow student with either favoritism or unfairness by a student leader in the class is also considered to be cheating. One or both parties may be held responsible. Cheating will not be tolerated in any form.

INCIDENTS OF PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING will be dealt with severely by the instructor. The penalty will include, at least, failure of the assignment(s) involved, but could include failure of the course. All incidents of plagiarism and cheating will be reported in writing to the Academic Dean, who has the authority to undertake further disciplinary measures in accordance with TIU policy on community standards violations.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE CLASSROOM

Technology has contributed significantly to the educational experience for both professors and students. While the use of technology in the classroom is encouraged, cellular telephones, wireless Internet browsing, text messaging, instant messaging is not permitted. On occasion, use of the Internet in the classroom is acceptable if such use relates to the course and discussion.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend all classes unless the absence is excused prior to the scheduled class hour. An excused absence is defined as an absence resulting from an emergency (such as death, hospitalization) or involvement in a university-related extracurricular event.

LATE PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Papers and assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date due. Papers and assignments which are turned in after that time will be penalized 5 points per day past due. Any assignment more than nine days late may be turned in for a maximum 50% of the point value. No work will be accepted after 7 December.

ACADEMIC WRITING

All writing assignments should follow the formatting guidelines in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: Chicago University, 1996). TIU has a useful Style Guide Manual accessible at http://portal.tiu.edu/files/uportal/tc/TIU_Style_Manual_10.2001.pdf. Students should use spell and grammar check abilities of their word processors. It is highly suggest that students proofread their papers before turning them in to the professor.

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING REPORT
 BRS 334/CC 6100 – SURVEY OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Name:

Date	Unit	Class	Assignments due at beginning of class	Reading Completed	
				On Time	Late
Aug 23	The Study of NRMs	Religious Research Methodology Defining NRMs	Enroth, ch. 1, 11		
Aug 28		Church, Sect, Cult Typology	Dawson, ch. 3, 4 TGS, Bainbridge, ch. 1		
Aug 30		Cults and Recruitment Religious Innovation	Dawson, ch. 7, 16, 17 Cooper, 2006 TGS, Bainbridge, ch. 2, 6		
Sep 4		Cults and Violence: Jim Jones video	Dawson, ch. 12, 13		
Sep 7	NRMs	Mormons	Enroth, ch. 5 TGS, Bainbridge, ch. 3, 4		
Sep 11		Jehovah's Witnesses and Unification	Enroth, ch. 2, 4		
Sep 13		Non-Western Religions in the West	Enroth, ch. 3, 7, 9 TGS, Bainbridge, ch. 7		
Sep 18		Contemporary Paganism and New Age Religions	Enroth, ch. 6, 8 TGS, Bainbridge, ch. 13 Cooper, 2007		
Sep 20	Field Research	Presentations			
Sep 25		Presentations			
Sep 27		Presentations			
Oct 2		Presentations			
Oct 4		Presentations			
Oct 9	Final Exam				

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

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- Barker, Eileen and Margit Warburg (eds), New Religions and New Religiosity, 2nd ed. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2001).
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- Palmer, Susan J., and Charlotte E. Hardman (eds), Children in New Religions, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999).
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- Robbins, Thomas, and Susan J. Palmer (eds), Millennium, Messiahs, and Mayhem: Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements, (New York/London: Routledge, 1997).

- Towler, Robert (ed), New Religions and the New Europe, (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1995).
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New Spiritualities – Historical Studies

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