SEMINAR ON RACE/ETHNICITY AND RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES
(sample – advanced undergraduate or graduate course)

Term: Fall 2015
Time: Thursdays 1pm – 4pm
Location: TBA
Instructor: Samuel L. Perry
Office hours: XXX
Office: XXX
Contact: samperry@uchicago.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the scientific study of how race and ethnic issues influence and are influenced by religion. The course will focus upon this race and religion relationship within the context of the United States. We will begin with a historical and theoretical examination of religion and race/ethnic relations. This will lead us to examining how various racial interests have used religious concepts to legitimate their racial beliefs. We will examine empirical evidence of the ways religion can influence racial issues such as racism, discrimination and stratification. We will then look at the different religious traditions of various racial and ethnic groups in America. Lastly, we will consider the phenomenon of multiracial faith communities and their potential impact in our society. This is a seminar course will be discussion-based. It assumes previous course work in both the social sciences and religion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance, Participation, & Preparedness (30%)
Full participation is essential to your getting the most out of the readings, class sessions, and assignments. Class participation will be weighted heavily and will be based on my subjective evaluation of whether you consistently come to class, contribute to the class discussions, and demonstrate that you have read and thought about the materials. The impetus will be on you to convince me of these things.

Weekly Reflection Papers (30%)
You will submit 1 page (double-spaced) papers at the beginning of class each week in which you reflect on the readings for that day. These papers should be more than a mere summary, but should also include critique and/or extension of the authors’ arguments.

Leading Course Discussion (10%)
Students will be required to lead course discussion at least once during the semester. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for you to choose the date/topic on which you wish to lead. This will be first come, first served.

Final Term Paper (30%)
Students will be required to write a final term paper on a topic of their choice related to race/ethnicity and religion in the United States. This can be an empirical analysis using primary or secondary data, or it can be a systematic (and thorough) review of the literature on a particular topic pertaining to race/ethnicity and religion.
**GRADING**

Attendance, Participation, & Preparedness = 30%
Weekly Reflection Papers = 30%
Leading Course Discussion = 10%
Final Term Paper = 30%
Total = 100%

**COURSE MATERIALS**

The course is reading intensive and there is obviously a good deal of required books here. Nevertheless, most of these books can be found on Amazon for a few dollars. They will also be on reserve in the library.


Various articles and selected chapters from sources outside of these books can be found online or through the course website where I will post them.
READINGS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introduction and Foundational Considerations

Read: Cone, chapter 3
Read: Emerson and Smith, Introduction
Read: Priest and Nieves, Introduction through chapter 3

Week 2 Historical Considerations

Read: Noll, chapters 1-3
Read: Emerson and Smith, pp. 5-50.

Week 3 Historical Considerations Cont’d.

Read: Chen, chapter 1
Read: Noll, chapters 4-Theological Conclusion

Week 4 Religion and Race Relations: Theoretical Considerations

Read: Allport. 1954. The Nature of Prejudice (selections).

Week 5 Religion and Contemporary Race Relations

Read: Emerson and Smith, pp. 69-172

Week 6 Religion and Contemporary Race Relations

Read: Bail (whole book)
Week 7 The African American Religious Experience

Read: Raboteau. 2004. Slave Religion (selections)
Read: Frazier. 1964. The Negro Church in America (selections).

Week 8 The African American Religious Experience

Read: Douglas (whole book)
Read: Cone, chapters 1, 2, 5, and 8

Week 9 The African American Religious Experience


Week 10 Religion and Immigrant Faith

Read: Chen (whole book after chapter 1)

Week 11 Religion and Immigrant Faith, cont’d.

Read: Chen and Jeung, chapters 1-5
Read: Priest and Nieves, chapters 15 and 16

Week 12 Religion and Immigrant Faith, cont’d.

Read: Chen and Jeung, chapters 7, 9, 10-12

Week 13 Multiracial/ethnic Faith Communities: Goals and Aspirations

**Week 14 Multiracial/ethnic Faith Communities: Challenges**

**Read:** Lichterman et al. 2009. “Race Bridging For Christ: Conservative Christians and Black-White Relations in Community Life.”

**Read:** Priest and Nieves, chapters 9 and 17


**Week 15 Multiracial/ethnic Faith Communities: Critiques and Avenues for Future Research**

**Read:** Edwards (whole book)


**Week 16**

**Final Term Paper Due**