



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

**Course information:**

Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

Academic Unit	<u>Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies</u>	Department	<u>Religious Studies</u>
Subject	<u>REL</u>	Number	<u>287</u>
Title	<u>Topics in Film, Media and Religion6710</u>		Units: <u>3</u>
Is this a cross-listed course?	<u>No</u>		
Is this a shared course?	<u>No</u>		
Course description:	<u>If so, list all academic units offering this course</u>		

**Requested designation:** Humanities, Fine Arts and Design-HU  
*Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested*

**Eligibility:**

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process.  
For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact [Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu](mailto:Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu) or [Lauren.Leo@asu.edu](mailto:Lauren.Leo@asu.edu).

**Submission deadlines dates are as follow:**

For Fall 2015 Effective Date: October 9, 2014

For Spring 2016 Effective Date: March 19, 2015

**Area(s) proposed course will serve:**

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

**Checklists for general studies designations:**

Complete and attach the appropriate checklist

- [Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses \(L\)](#)
- [Mathematics core courses \(MA\)](#)
- [Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses \(CS\)](#)
- [Humanities, Arts and Design core courses \(HU\)](#)
- [Social-Behavioral Sciences core courses \(SB\)](#)
- [Natural Sciences core courses \(SO/SG\)](#)
- [Cultural Diversity in the United States courses \(C\)](#)
- [Global Awareness courses \(G\)](#)
- [Historical Awareness courses \(H\)](#)

**A complete proposal should include:**

- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Catalog description
- Course Syllabus
- Copy of Table of Contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

**Respectfully request that proposals are submitted electronically with all files compiled into one PDF. If necessary, a hard copy of the proposal will be accepted.**

**Contact information:**

Name	<u>Cindy Baade</u>	Phone	<u>5-7183</u>
Mail code	<u>4302</u>	E-mail:	<u>cynthia.baade@asu.edu</u>

**Department Chair/Director approval: (Required)**

Chair/Director name (Typed):	<u>Matthew J. Garcia</u>	Date:	<u>4/1/15</u>
Chair/Director (Signature):			

## Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

### **HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN [HU]**

#### **Rationale and Objectives**

The humanities disciplines are concerned with questions of human existence and meaning, the nature of thinking and knowing, with moral and aesthetic experience. The humanities develop values of all kinds by making the human mind more supple, critical, and expansive. They are concerned with the study of the textual and artistic traditions of diverse cultures, including traditions in literature, philosophy, religion, ethics, history, and aesthetics. In sum, these disciplines explore the range of human thought and its application to the past and present human environment. They deepen awareness of the diversity of the human heritage and its traditions and histories and they may also promote the application of this knowledge to contemporary societies.

The study of the arts and design, like the humanities, deepens the student's awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures. The arts have as their primary purpose the creation and study of objects, installations, performances and other means of expressing or conveying aesthetic concepts and ideas. Design study concerns itself with material objects, images and spaces, their historical development, and their significance in society and culture. Disciplines in the arts and design employ modes of thought and communication that are often nonverbal, which means that courses in these areas tend to focus on objects, images, and structures and/or on the practical techniques and historical development of artistic and design traditions. The past and present accomplishments of artists and designers help form the student's ability to perceive aesthetic qualities of art work and design.

The Humanities, Arts and Design are an important part of the General Studies Program, for they provide an opportunity for students to study intellectual and imaginative traditions and to observe and/or learn the production of art work and design. The knowledge acquired in courses fulfilling the Humanities, Arts and Design requirement may encourage students to investigate their own personal philosophies or beliefs and to understand better their own social experience. In sum, the Humanities, Arts and Design core area enables students to broaden and deepen their consideration of the variety of human experience.

Revised April 2014

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

<b>ASU - [HU] CRITERIA</b>			
HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN [HU] courses must meet <i>either</i> 1, 2 or 3 <i>and</i> at least one of the criteria under 4 in such a way as to make the satisfaction of these criteria <b>A CENTRAL AND SUBSTANTIAL PORTION</b> of the course content.			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Emphasizes the study of values; the development of philosophies, religions, ethics or belief systems; and/or aesthetic experience.	See syllabus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Concerns the interpretation, analysis, or creation of written, aural, or visual texts; and/or the historical development of textual traditions.	See syllabus
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Concerns the interpretation, analysis, or engagement with aesthetic practices; and/or the historical development of artistic or design traditions.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. In addition, to qualify for the Humanities, Arts and Design designation a course must meet one or more of the following requirements:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Concerns the development of human thought, with emphasis on the analysis of philosophical and/or religious systems of thought.	See syllabus
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Concerns aesthetic systems and values, especially in literature, arts, and design.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Emphasizes aesthetic experience and creative process in literature, arts, and design.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Concerns the analysis of literature and the development of literary traditions.	
		<b>THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COURSES ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE [HU] DESIGNATION EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO THE HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN:</b>	
		• Courses devoted primarily to developing skill in the use of a language.	
		• Courses devoted primarily to the acquisition of quantitative or experimental methods.	
		• Courses devoted primarily to teaching skills.	

Course Prefix	Number	Title	General Studies Designation
REL	287	Topics in Film, Media, and Religion	HU

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
1: Emphasizes the study of values; the development of philosophies, religions, ethics, or belief systems.	This course uses film and media to help contextualize the study of various religious traditions and belief systems in a global context.	Section 1: "The Color Purple" and "End of the Wicked" - Christianity, Pentecostalism. Section 2: "Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring" - Buddhism; "The Passion of the Christ" - Christianity Section 3: "Timbuktu" - Islam (various expressions); class session on terrorism and Islam Section 4: "Kumare" - Hinduism and New Religious Movements TV documentaries: Mormonism, evangelical Christianity, Islam in North America Section 5: "Waltz with Bashir" - Judaism; "Earth" - Hinduism and Islam (India); Charlie Hebdo (Islam in Europe) Section 6: "Avatar" - indigenous religions, Christianity Section 7: Religious fundamentalism in Islam and Christianity
2: Interpretation and analysis of written and visual texts	The course is based around the interpretation and analysis of films and various forms of media (television, social media, news media).	Assignments: Students are required to write two substantive analyses of films that are viewed in class and one larger analysis of a film that was not required viewing in class. Students are required to do a group project that analyzes the use of social media by a religious figure or religious group. Students are also required to write a critical analysis of a news/media story concerning religion. Required viewing/reading: Films and media examples are paired with relevant scholarly readings that address critical theoretical or methodological issues with respect to the interpretation or analysis of the film or media.

<p>4a: concerns religious systems of thought</p>	<p>This course uses film to introduce religious traditions and systems of thought while also providing multiple perspectives on some religious traditions.</p>	<p>Christianity: Section 1 - "End of the Wicked" (Pentecostalism); "The Color Purple" (Womanist theology; Christianity); Section 2 - "The Passion of the Christ" (Catholicism); Section 3 - Christianity and terrorism; Section 4 - Mormonism, evangelical Christianity; Section 6 - Mormonism (Battlestar Galactica); "Avatar"                  Islam: Section III: "Timbuktu"; Section 5: "Waltz with Bashir"; "Earth"; Charlie Hebdo comics; Section 7: Modernity, Social Media, and Fundamentalism                  Buddhism: Section 2: "Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring"                  Hinduism: Section 4: "Kumare"; Section 5: "Earth"; Section 6: "Avatar"                  Judaism: Section 5: "Waltz with Bashir"</p>

REL 287 Topics in Film, Media and Religion

This course explores specialized topics in the study of film, media, and religion. It analyzes how religious values, identities, and practices related to various cultural traditions are constructed, communicated and presented through films and media.

**“Film, Media, and Religion”**  
REL 287

Instructor: Jason Bruner  
Office: COOR 3326  
Phone: 480-965-0454  
Email: Jason.Bruner.1@asu.edu

**Course Description**

This course explores specialized topics in the study of film, media, and religion. It analyzes how religious values, identities, and practices related to various cultural traditions are constructed, communicated and presented through films and media. It pays particular attention to the dissemination, discussion, and social significance of religious ideologies, ethical debates, and religious fundamentalism in film and media and analyzes the emergence of new forms of ritual and worship on the internet and social media.

Please note that all films will be made available via electronic reserve at ASU.

**Course Objectives**

This course will:

1. Introduce students to specialized topics in the study of film, media, and religion
- 2) Familiarize students with transdisciplinary tools exploring the mediated construction and representation of religious values, identities, and practices.
3. Analyze the technological and social intersection of religion, film and media.
4. Facilitate critical awareness of the dissemination and discussion of religious ideologies, ethical debates, and religious fundamentalism in film and media.
5. Explore the emergence of new forms of ritual and worship on the internet and social media.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Having completed this course, the student should:

- 1) Be able to use and interrelate methodological tools from Religious Studies and Film and Media Studies.
2. Have learned to critically analyze films and media productions dealing with the representation and performance of religious values, identities, and practices.
3. Have strengthened their skills in visual analysis, critical writing and verbal communication.
4. Be able to critique depictions of religions, religious traditions and subjects in film, media, and popular culture.

Commented [JB1]: Criteria 2

Commented [JB2]: Criteria 2

Commented [JB3]: Criteria 2

## Assignments

**Quizzes** (10 points each; 150 points total): *Weekly* quizzes will be given on individual films and required readings.

**Response Papers** (100 points each; 200 points total): The student will write two papers of 250-300 words each in response to one of the films assigned for the class. *The paper is due on the class day for which the film is assigned.* One paper should be on a film assigned in sections 1-3 of the course syllabus; the second paper should be on a film assigned in sections 4-7 of the syllabus. The paper should demonstrate a close, careful viewing and analysis of the film, with particular attention to the thematic elements highlighted by the supplemental readings.

Commented [JB4]: Criteria 2

**News Analysis** (200 points): This assignment is due in week 8. Each student will take a news story and analyze its description, use, and/or presentation of "religion" or religious people and communities. A list of acceptable news essays will be provided in class, though others will be accepted with instructor permission. The analysis should be between 700 and 750 words. It should address basic questions about the assumptions the author makes about the role of religion, faith, and/or belief in the story or in the subjects in the story.

Commented [JB5]: Criteria 2

**Group Project Presentation** (150 points): Students will work in groups of 3-4 to analyze the social media presence of a notable religious figure or community. This could include a Twitter feed, Facebook page, or community in Second Life, for example. Students will give short presentations of no more than 10 minutes in week 14 that highlight the most significant features and content of this aspect of digital religion and its relationship to the course. Each group will also submit a 2-page write-up of their findings and conclusions.

Commented [JB6]: Criteria 2

**Final Paper** (300 points): For the final paper, students should review the list of films in the syllabus, choose one, view it carefully, and write an analysis of 1400-1500 words. Films viewed or assigned in class are not eligible for this paper. The paper should demonstrate the application of critical theories, methods, and ideas from the study of film and religion. It should apply one or more of these themes or theories to understand elements of religion or its depiction in the film, keeping in mind that these elements will be more obvious in some films than others.

Commented [JB7]: Criteria 2

### List of films for final paper (others accepted at instructor's discretion)

12 Years a Slave	Count of Monte Cristo
Amistad	The Cup
The Apostle	Devi
The Burmese Harp	Divine Secrets of the Ya Ya sisterhood
Children of Heaven	The Exorcist
Children of Men	Holy Father, Holy Son
The Chosen	Inherit the Wind
Constantine	The Jazz Singer



Lagaan	Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall, and Spring
Life is Beautiful	Stigmata
O Brother, Where Art Thou?	Taste of Cherry
On the Waterfront	Their Eyes Were Watching God
Malcolm X	Tree of Life
The Matrix	Truman Show
P.K.	

### Grading Scale

A+ (970-1000)	A (930-969)	A- (900-929)
B+ (870-899)	B (830-869)	B- (800-829)
C (700-799)	D (600-699)	F (0-559)

### Required Readings

All readings will be made available through Blackboard.

Al-Rawi, Ahmed. "The Representation of September 11<sup>th</sup> and American Islamophobia in Non-Western Cinema." *Media, War, and Conflict* 7:2 (2014), 152-164.

Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena. "We Are on the Internet": Contemporary Pentecostalism in Africa and the New culture of Online Religion." In Rosalind I. J. Hackett and Benjamin F. Soares, eds., *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.

Baker, Raymond William. "Screening Islam: Terrorism, American Jihad and the New Islamists." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 25:1/2 (2003), 33-56.

Blizsek, William L., ed. *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film*. London: Continuum Books, 2009.

Carta, Silvio. "Orientalism in the Documentary Representation of Culture." *Visual Anthropology* 24:5 (2011), 403-420.

Carter, J. Kameron. "Avatar: An Amazing and Troubling Film," <http://jkameroncarter.com/?p=56>.

Charkravarty, Sumita S. *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema, 1947-1987*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Chidester, David. *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

- de Castelli, Laurent. "Mali: From Sanctuary to Islamic State." *The RUSI Journal* 159:3 (2014), 62-68.
- de Vries Hent and Samuel Weber. *Religion and Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Echchaibi, Nabil. "Alt-Muslim: Muslims and modernity's discontents." In Heidi A. Campbell, ed. *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Fernando, Mayanthi. "The Republic's 'Second Religion': Reconquering Islam in France." *Middle East Report* 235 (2005), 12-17.
- Geraci, Robert M. "Video Games and the Transhuman Inclination." *Zygon* 47:4 (2012), 735-756.
- Grimes, Ronald L. *Deeply into the Bone: Re-inventing Rites of Passage*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Grimes, Ronald L., et al., eds., *Ritual, Media, and Conflict*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Groys, Boris. "Invisibility of the Digital: Religion, Ritual, Immortality." *Anthropology and Aesthetics* 55/56 (2009), 336-340.
- Helleland, Christopher. "Ritual." In Heidi A. Campbell, ed. *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Hill, Annette. *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Holderness, Graham. "'Animated icons': Narrative and Liturgy in The Passion of the Christ." *Literature and Theology* 19:4 (2005), 384-401.
- Hughes-Freeland, Felicia. *Ritual, Performance, Media*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Hyland, Robert. "Going Na'vi: Mastery in Avatar." *Cineaction* 82:82-83 (2010), 10-16.
- "Lights, Camera, Africa." *The Economist*. Dec. 16, 2010.  
<http://www.economist.com/node/17723124>
- Lyden, John. *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, Rituals*. New York: NYU Press, 2003.
- McGrath, James. F., ed. *Religion and Science Fiction*. Lutterworth Press, 2012.

- Mendesohn, Farah. "Religion and Science Fiction," in Edward James, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 264-275.
- Mesaros-Winckles, Christy. "TLC and the Fundamentalist Family: A Televised Quiverfull of Babies." *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 22:3 (2010).
- Mitchell, Jolyon. "Decolonising Religion in African Film." *Journal of World Christianity* 15:2 (2009), 149-161.
- Neumann, Iver B. "Unexpected Enchantment in Unexpected Places: Mormonism in Battlestar Galactica." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16:2 (2013), 226-243.
- Plate, S. Brent. *Blasphemy: Art that Offends*. London: Black Dog, 2006.
- Poolé, Elizabeth. *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*. I.B. Taurus, 2009.
- Prince, Stephen. "Beholding Blood Sacrifice in 'The Passion of the Christ: How Real is Movie Violence?" *Film Quarterly* 59:4 (2006), 11-22.
- Ramji, Rubina. "From *Navy Seals* to *The Siege*: Getting to Know the Muslim Terrorist, Hollywood Style." *Journal of Religion and Film* 9:2 (2005).
- Soares, Benjamin F. "Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era." *African Affairs* 105:418 (2006), 77-95.
- Stewart, Garrett. "Screen Memory in *Waltz with Bashir*." *Film Quarterly* 63:3 (2010), 58-62.
- Stier Oren Baruch and J. Shawn Landres, eds. *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.
- Wagner, Rachel. *Godwired: Religion, Ritual and Virtual Reality*. Routledge, 2011.
- Waterson, Roxanna. "Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony." *History and Anthropology* 18:1 (2007), 51-73.
- Wilbanks, Jessica. "On the Far Side of the Fire: Life, Death and Witchcraft in the Niger Delta." *Ninth Letter*. Fall/Winter 2013.
- Yosef, Raz. "War Fantasies: Memory, Trauma and Ethics in Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir*." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 9:3 (2010), 311-326.

## Class Schedule

### Section I: Religion and Gender

January 13: Introduction: How to “see religion” in film

**Film:** “The Color Purple”

**Required Reading:** William L. Blizек, “Using Religion to Interpret Movies” (pp. 29-38) and “Using Movies to Critique Religion” (pp. 39-48) in *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film*, ed. William L. Blizек (London: Continuum Books, 2009).

**Supplemental Reading:** John Lyden, *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, Rituals* (New York: NYU Press, 2003), introduction.

Judith Weisenfeld, “For Rent, ‘Cabin in the Sky’: Race, Religion, and Representational Quagmires in American Film,” *Semioia* 74 (1996): 147-165.

Commented [JB8]: Criteria 1, 4a

January 20: **Film:** “End of the Wicked”

**Required Reading:** “Lights, Camera, Africa,” *The Economist* (Dec. 16, 2010) <http://www.economist.com/node/17723124>

Jessica Wilbanks, “On the Far Side of the Fire: Life, Death and Witchcraft in the Niger Delta,” *Ninth Letter* (Fall/Winter 2013).

**Supplemental Reading:** Jolyon Mitchell, “Decolonising Religion in African Film,” *Journal of World Christianity* 15:2 (2009), 149-161.

Commented [JB9]: Criteria 1, 4a

### Section II: Ritual and Symbolism

January 27: **Film:** “Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring”

**Required Reading:** Francisca Cho, “The Art of Presence: Buddhism and Korean Films,” in S. Brent Plate, ed., *Representing Religion in World Cinema* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

**Supplemental Reading:** Felicia Hughes-Freeland, *Ritual, Performance, Media* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

Ronald L. Grimes, “Living with the Dead,” in *Deeply into the Bone: Re-inventing Rites of Passage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 230-257.

Commented [JB10]: Criteria 1, 4a

February 3: **Film:** “The Passion of the Christ”

**Required Reading:** Graham Holderness, “‘Animated icons’: Narrative and Liturgy in The Passion of the Christ,” *Literature and Theology* 19:4 (2005), 384-401.

**Supplemental Reading:** Stephen Prince, “Beholding Blood Sacrifice in The Passion of the Christ: How Real is Movie Violence?” *Film Quarterly* 59:4 (2006), 11-22.

Commented [JB11]: Criteria 1, 4a

### Section III: Violence

February 10: **Film:** “Timbuktu”

**Required Reading:** Benjamin F. Soares, “Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era,” *African Affairs* 105:418 (2006), 77-95.

Commented [JB12]: Criteria 1, 4a

Laurent de Castelli, "Mali: From Sanctuary to Islamic State," *The RUSI Journal* 159:3 (2014), 62-68.

**Supplemental Reading:** Ahmed Al-Rawi, "The Representation of September 11<sup>th</sup> and American Islamophobia in Non-Western Cinema," *Media, War, and Conflict* 7:2 (2014), 152-164.

Charles Hirschkind, "Hearing Modernity: Egypt, Islam, and the Pious Ear," in V. Erdmann, ed., *Hearing Cultures: Sound, Listening, and Modernity* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2004).

February 17: Terrorism and News Media

**Media:** Media networks' coverage of "terrorism", including Norway mass shooting, Oklahoma City bombing; Clips from TV show "24"

**Required Reading:** Rubina Ramji, "From *Navy Seals* to *The Siege*: Getting to Know the Muslim Terrorist, Hollywood Style," *Journal of Religion and Film* 9:2 (2005). <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/Vol9No2/RamjiIslam.htm>

Raymond William Baker, "Screening Islam: Terrorism, American Jihad and the New Islamists," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 25:1/2 (2003), 33-56.

**Supplemental Reading:** Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber, *Religion and Media* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

Commented [JB13]: Criteria 2

#### Section IV: Representing Religion: Documentary

February 24: Film: "Kumare"

**Required Reading:** David Chidester, *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), ch. 10.

**Supplemental Reading:** Silvio Carta, "Orientalism in the Documentary Representation of Culture," *Visual Anthropology* 24:5 (2011), 403-420.

Commented [JB14]: Criteria 1, 4a

**Assignment Due: News Analysis (submit via Blackboard)**

March 3: Religion and Television

**Media:** Excerpts from "19 Kids and Counting" / "Sister Wives" "All American Muslim" / "The Little Mosque on the Prairie"

**Required Reading:** Christy Mesaros-Winkles, "TLC and the Fundamentalist Family: A Televised Quiverfull of Babies," *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 22:3 (2010).

**Supplemental Reading:** Annette Hill, *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Commented [JB15]: Criteria 2

March 10: Spring Break (no class)

#### Section V: Religion and the "Other"

March 17 Film: "Waltz with Bashir"

**Required Reading:** Raz Yosef, "War Fantasies: Memory, Trauma and Ethics in Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir*," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 9:3 (2010), 311-326.

Garrett Stewart, "Screen Memory in *Waltz with Bashir*," *Film Quarterly* 63:3 (2010), 58-62.

Commented [JB16]: Criteria 1, 4a

Commented [JB17]: Criteria 2

**Supplemental Reading:** Roxanna Waterson, "Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony," *History and Anthropology* 18:1 (2007), 51-73.

March 24:

**Film:** "Earth"

**Required Reading:** Jeanette Herman, "Memory and Melodrama: The Transnational Politics of Deepa Mehta's Earth," *Camera Obscura* 20:58 (2005), 106-147.

**Supplemental Reading:** Sumita S. Charkravarty, *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema, 1947-1987*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.  
Oren Baruch Stier and J. Shawn Landres, eds., *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

Commented [JB18]: Criteria 1, 4a

Commented [JB19]: Criteria 2

March 31:

Charlie Hebdo and Danish cartoons of Mohammed |

**Required Reading:** S. Brent Plate, *Blasphemy: Art that Offends*. London: Black Dog, 2006, selections.

**Supplemental Reading:** Elizabeth Poolc, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims* (I.B. Taurus, 2009).  
Mayanthi Fernando, "The Republic's 'Second Religion': Recognizing Islam in France," *Middle East Report* 235 (2005), 12-17.

Commented [JB20]: Criteria 1, 4a

Commented [JB21]: Criteria 2

## Section VI: Religion and Other Worlds

April 7:

**Film:** Battlestar Galactica, selections

**Required Reading:** Farah Mendlesohn, "Religion and Science Fiction," in Edward James, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 264-275.

Iver B. Neumann, "Unexpected Enchantment in Unexpected Places: Mormonism in Battlestar Galactica," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16:2 (2013), 226-243.

**Supplemental Reading:** James F. McGrath, ed., *Religion and Science Fiction* (Lutterworth Press, 2012).

Commented [JB22]: Criteria 2, 4a

April 14:

**Film:** "Avatar"

**Required Reading:** J. Kameron Carter, "Avatar: An Amazing and Troubling Film," <http://jkameroncarter.com/?p=56>

**Supplemental Reading:** Robert Hyland, "Going Na'vi: Mastery in Avatar," *Cineaction* 82:82-83 (2010), 10-16.

Commented [JB23]: Criteria 1, 4a

## Section VII: Social Media and Digital Religion

April 21:

Modernity, Religious Fundamentalism, and Social Media

**Required Reading:** Boris Groys, "Invisibility of the Digital: Religion, Ritual, Immortality," *Anthropology and Aesthetics* 55/56 (2009), 336-340.

**Read one of the following articles:**

Nabil Echchaibi, "Alt-Muslim: Muslims and modernity's discontents," in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, ed. Heidi A. Campbell (Routledge, 2013).

Commented [JB24]: Criteria 2, 4a

J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "We Are on the Internet: Contemporary Pentecostalism in Africa and the New Culture of Online Religion," in Rosalind I. J. Hackett and Benjamin F. Soares, eds., *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.  
**Supplemental Reading:** Ronald L. Grimes, et al., eds., *Ritual, Media, and Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

**Assignment Due:** Group Project Presentations (including the submission of a 2-page summary)

April 28: Conclusion: Thinking about religion in a digital age  
**Film:** "Her"  
**Required Reading:** selection from Rachel Wagner, *Godwired: Religion, Ritual and Virtual Reality* (Routledge, 2011).  
Christopher Helleland, "Ritual," in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, ed. Heidi A. Campbell (Routledge, 2013), 25-40.  
**Supplemental Reading:** Robert M. Geraci, "Video Games and the Transhuman Inclination," *Zygon* 47:4 (2012), 735-756.

Final Exam Date: **Final paper due**

## Class Policies

### Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

### Computers

Computers are amazing tools that allow us to send and view pictures of our cats instantly to virtually anywhere in the world. If I find that you are using a computer for this or any other non-class-related purpose (including, but not limited to, using social media, shopping, watching videos, or email) – or if I find that they are being a hindrance to the class and a distraction to those around you – I reserve the right to limit or prohibit their use in class. This includes laptops, cell phones, iPods, and tablets, among other devices. This class will be most interesting and rewarding for all of us if you and those around you are engaged in discussions and class activities.

### Blackboard Information

Blackboard is an integral component of this course. Many required and supplemental readings and materials will be posted to Blackboard throughout the semester and it is the

student's responsibility to check both Blackboard and their university e-mail regularly for information and content pertaining to the course. If you are properly enrolled in the course, a link to this course's Blackboard page should appear in the "MyASU Courses" section of your MyASU page. If a link does not appear or if you do not have an ASURITE ID, please contact the ASU helpdesk at (480) 965-6500.

#### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and attendance will be taken. Absences for non-medical reasons need to contact the professor beforehand, and such absences will be excused at the discretion of the professor. Please give prior notice for absences due to religious holidays and university-sponsored events, which are considered excused absences. Students are permitted 2 unexcused absences. Unexcused absences beyond these two will negatively impact your final grade, and excessive unexcused absences can result in your failing the course. Conversely, consistent engagement in classroom activities and discussions can potentially increase your final grade.

#### **Make-ups**

All assignments are due on or before the date and time stipulated above in the syllabus, even if the student is absent for a class meeting on which an assignment is due. Late assignments will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. In the event that the timely submission of an assignment is not possible, prior notification is required, and it will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Unexcused late assignments will be subject to a penalty of a 10% reduction per 24-hour period after the due date and time stated for that assignment.

#### **Withdrawals and Incompletes**

<http://www.asu.edu/aad/catalogs/general/ug-enrollment.html#grading-system>

#### **Classroom Decorum**

Students are expected to come to class on time. Class sessions are designed to have consistent student participation. Therefore, student interaction with the material and one another is vital to the success of this course. Diversity is a fundamental and essential part of successful learning. Discussions and student interactions should be conducted in a respectful, civil manner, being mindful of differences of gender, sexuality, abilities, religion, political ideologies, and ethnicity, among others, as well as varying levels of familiarity and expertise in the subject matter among students.

#### **Disability Accommodations**

Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

#### **Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations**



Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: [www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc). Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

**Final Disclaimer**

The instructor reserves the right to amend or alter this syllabus.

## Required Readings

All readings will be made available through Blackboard.

Al-Rawi, Ahmed. "The Representation of September 11<sup>th</sup> and American Islamophobia in Non-Western Cinema." *Media, War, and Conflict* 7:2 (2014), 152-164.

Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena. "'We Are on the Internet': Contemporary Pentecostalism in Africa and the New culture of Online Religion." In Rosalind I. J. Hackett and Benjamin F. Soares, eds., *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.

Baker, Raymond William. "Screening Islam: Terrorism, American Jihad and the New Islamists." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 25:1/2 (2003), 33-56.

Blizek, William L., ed. *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film*. London: Continuum Books, 2009.

Carta, Silvio. "Orientalism in the Documentary Representation of Culture." *Visual Anthropology* 24:5 (2011), 403-420.

Carter, J. Kameron. "Avatar: An Amazing and Troubling Film,"  
<http://jkamercarter.com/?p=56>.

Chakravarty, Sumita S. *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema, 1947-1987*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Chidester, David. *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

de Castelli, Laurent. "Mali: From Sanctuary to Islamic State." *The RUSI Journal* 159:3 (2014), 62-68.

de Vries Hent and Samuel Weber. *Religion and Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Echchaibi, Nabil. "Alt-Muslim: Muslims and modernity's discontents." In Heidi A. Campbell, ed. *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Fernando, Mayanthi. "The Republic's 'Second Religion': Recongizing Islam in France." *Middle East Report* 235 (2005), 12-17.

Geraci, Robert M. "Video Games and the Transhuman Inclination." *Zygon* 47:4 (2012), 735-756.

Grimes, Ronald L. *Deeply into the Bone: Re-inventing Rites of Passage*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Grimes, Ronald L., et al., eds., *Ritual, Media, and Conflict*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Groys, Boris. "Invisibility of the Digital: Religion, Ritual, Immortality." *Anthropology and Aesthetics* 55/56 (2009), 336-340.

Helleland, Christopher. "Ritual." In Heidi A. Campbell, ed. *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Hill, Annette. *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Holderness, Graham. "'Animated icons': Narrative and Liturgy in The Passion of the Christ." *Literature and Theology* 19:4 (2005), 384-401.

Hughes-Freeland, Felicia. *Ritual, Performance, Media*. New York: Routledge, 1998.

Hyland, Robert. "Going Na'vi: Mastery in Avatar." *Cineaction* 82:82-83 (2010), 10-16.

"Lights, Camera, Africa." *The Economist*. Dec. 16, 2010.  
<http://www.economist.com/node/17723124>

Lyden, John. *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, Rituals*. New York: NYU Press, 2003.

McGrath, James. F., ed. *Religion and Science Fiction*. Lutterworth Press, 2012.

Mendlesohn, Farah. "Religion and Science Fiction," in Edward James, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 264-275.

Mesaros-Winckles, Christy. "TLC and the Fundamentalist Family: A Televised Quiverfull of Babies." *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 22:3 (2010).

Mitchell, Jolyon. "Decolonising Religion in African Film." *Journal of World Christianity* 15:2 (2009), 149-161.

Neumann, Iver B. "Unexpected Enchantment in Unexpected Places: Mormonism in Battlestar Galactica." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16:2 (2013), 226-243.

Plate, S. Brent. *Blasphemy: Art that Offends*. London: Black Dog, 2006.

Poole, Elizabeth. *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*. I.B. Taurus, 2009.

Prince, Stephen. "Beholding Blood Sacrifice in The Passion of the Christ: How Real is Movie Violence?" *Film Quarterly* 59:4 (2006), 11-22.

Ramji, Rubina. "From *Navy Seals* to *The Siege*: Getting to Know the Muslim Terrorist, Hollywood Style." *Journal of Religion and Film* 9:2 (2005).

Soares, Benjamin F. "Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era." *African Affairs* 105:418 (2006), 77-95.

Stewart, Garrett. "Screen Memory in *Waltz with Bashir*." *Film Quarterly* 63:3 (2010), 58-62.

Stier Oren Baruch and J. Shawn Landres, eds. *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Wagner, Rachel. *Godwired: Religion, Ritual and Virtual Reality*. Routledge, 2011.

Waterson, Roxanna. "Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony." *History and Anthropology* 18:1 (2007), 51-73.

Wilbanks, Jessica. "On the Far Side of the Fire: Life, Death and Witchcraft in the Niger Delta." *Ninth Letter*. Fall/Winter 2013.

Yosef, Raz. "War Fantasies: Memory, Trauma and Ethics in Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir*." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 9:3 (2010), 311-326.