COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an overview of Religions in Latin American history from the Pre-Columbian indigenous civilizations to Pentecostalism and new religious movements in the twenty-first century. It is intended to provide students with knowledge of the region, emphasizing its diversity, complexity, and vital culture.

‘Latin America’, a term created in the nineteenth century, refers to a vast region from Mexico to Chile, including not only Spanish-speaking peoples, but Portuguese-speaking countries like Brazil and French and Creole speaking countries such as Haiti. The region is a mixed population of Amerindian, African, European, and Asian descent, whose diversity has created a multifaceted society and complex religions with Indigenous, European and Afro-diasporan elements. The course examines the trajectory of Latin American religions in Latin America and the Caribbean by analyzing their religious myths, beliefs, communities, and practices from an interdisciplinary perspective. Catholic, Protestant (and Pentecostal), indigenous, Afro-diasporan and syncretistic religions will be considered in the light of a number of classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives and using methodologies from the academic disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology and phenomenology. Particular emphasis will be given to religious trends and dynamics that have been instrumental in the formation of political cultures of contemporary Latin America and the Caribbean.

In summary, the course will cover the following topics:

- Religions of the region in the context of the social, political, economic, and cultural experiences that have contributed to the development of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- Overview of the multiple ethnic backgrounds of the peoples of contemporary Latin America and the role of slavery and the conquest in the transcultural formation of new religious movements;
- The influence of religious developments that went into shaping the Latin American popular culture and politics, starting with European, African and Amerindian myths and religious beliefs;
- Connections between religious and cultural dimensions and their effects on specific regions and societies;
- The nature of religious community, leadership and governance in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The political cultures that have been shaped by long-term religious experience along with other variables such as historical events, immigration and patterns of ethnicity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
In addition to providing an engaging introduction to the topic, Religion in Latin America has three specific objectives.

They are designed to teach you about (first) the regional religions, (second) scholarly maturity, and (third) disciplinary approaches.

* First, the class asks you to **reflect critically** on the religious tradition of Latin America. This means that you regularly go beyond overarching generalizations and facile stereotypes. Instead, you will evaluate, contrast, and analyze particular cases.

* Second, the course teaches you to **write** about Latin America in a scholarly manner, and how to do so online. This means that your online writing will be graded not only on critical thinking, but also on formal professionalism and collegiality. This means you write with a scholarly tone and style, that you participate on time, and that you engage your colleagues respectfully.

* Third, the course introduces you to the disciplines and theories we use to understand the region. We will in particular look at the concept of political culture, and how it might be shaped by long-term religious traditions.

you will be asked to **compare** and **analyze** a topic from **two different disciplines**.

Please note that we will use Canvas in this course. In addition to the recommended textbook, certain PDFs may be made available on Canvas as indicated below in the class schedule. Instructions and prompts for writing assignments will be available on Canvas, and you will also submit your writing assignments through corresponding links to Turnitin.com. If you need help or training on how to use Canvas, visit this link [http://online.fiu.edu/](http://online.fiu.edu/). Please make sure that you are comfortable with using Canvas from the beginning of the class so you have full access to course content and assignments.
As a more advanced level class, this course will be reading, discussion, and writing intensive.

1) There will be 12 online forum discussions of a minimum of 300 words and one reply of 50 words or 3 complete sentences regarding one of several question prompts from the chapter readings of that week or the historical film for that month. Forum discussions will be graded (80%) on length, content (ideas), grammar and punctuation. Another 20% of the grade will be for three replies of a total minimum of 50 words to another student’s post. These 300-word forum discussions are due every Friday night by midnight, although I will leave them open Saturday and Sunday with the option for late submission for reduced points. Some of the forum discussions will be based on films that present a religious theme in a Latin American context, and others will be based on primary source documents that will be provided as PDFs in Canvas. The forum discussions will constitute 20 percent of the final grade. The two lowest grades will be dropped.

The forum discussions will be graded based on the following rubric:

- **(20%) REVIEW**: Give a BRIEF summary or review of the document or film: who? what? when? where?
- **(20%) REACTION**: Give your personal and critical reaction to the document or film.
- **(20%) RELEVANCE**: Discuss what aspects of religious study or elements of Latin American religion are illustrated by the document? How did the document illustrate the relationship between Europeans and either Amerindians or Africans? Back up your argument with examples.
- **(20%) proof READ**: Do not forget to proof read your post for grammar, punctuation and verb agreement. I will deduct points for all spelling and grammar errors. Learn to use the spell checker!
- **(20%) REPLY -IMPORTANT!!!** Please do not forget to leave a reply (or replies) of at least 50 words or 3 complete sentences to several other student’s posts for 20% of the credit for the assignment.

2) Two major essays of 1,100 to 1,200 words each will be required of undergraduates. The first essay, will have an option for an essay revision. Both essays together constitute 30 percent of your final grade. Those that write both Essay 1 AND submit the Revision, and are satisfied with their grades, will not be required to submit Essay 2. The lowest grade out of Essay 1, The Revision of Essay 1 and Essay 2 will be dropped. The essays should be 3 or 4 pages double-spaced, or about 1,100 to 1,200 words in length and submitted through Canvas (no written assignments will be accepted or graded through email).

- The essay must be written with a thesis statement and supported with evidence.
Writing should demonstrate knowledge and awareness of standard written English.

The Essay should draw evidence from primary sources, secondary sources, and class lectures.

All source material must be cited correctly using MLA or Chicago Style and long quotes should be avoided. Please be aware that papers with an originality score of over 35% similarity will be subject to additional scrutiny and may incur additional penalties, up to and including receiving an F (0 points).

**READINGS**

**Required textbook:**

**Additional Readings for Graduate Students:**

**Recommended:**

**Other Suggested Readings and Films:**


**Films and documentaries**
The Popol Vuh - Mayan Creation Stories (animated) - Secret Teachings: 
  https://youtu.be/PIAzWOqo1fY
Black Robe

- The Mission
- Yo, la peor de Todos
- Romero
ASSIGNMENTS & EXPECTATIONS:

Participation (10 percent of the overall final grade): Since this is an online course, participation will be measured through virtual sessions with Zoom. In addition to virtual office hours on Tuesdays at 4:30 PM, there will be five sessions (10 points each) which will be indicated on the Canvas calendar. Additional participation points will be awarded for viewing a library research tutorial.

Ten out of twelve online film and primary source discussions (10 points each): Most weeks, students will submit a film, or a primary source discussion of a minimum of 300 words and three replies of a minimum 50 words or 3 complete sentences. Each post should cover 4 areas: 1) a review of the film, 2) your reaction to the film, and 3) some observations about the historical relevance of the film, and there should also be replies to another student’s post. Points will be deducted if one of these 4 parts is missing, if the post is less than the minimum 300 words, for sloppy writing including errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation or if the student neglects to leave a reply to another student or the reply is less than the minimum.

Ten online chapter quizzes (10 points each): Every week, there will be a 10 question, multiple-choice and true/false quiz based on the chapter readings from the previous week. The total number of points for the quizzes will be 100 (10 out of 13 quizzes) and represents 10 percent of the final grade. Some late quizzes or makes up will be allowed with a valid excuse but the professor reserves the right to deduct 10 percent of the grade for tardiness. In some cases, students who fail a chapter quiz may be allowed a second attempt but not more than twice during the semester.

Midterm and Final Exams (each 10 percent of the final grade and 100 points each): There will be midterm and final exams. The midterm will cover the first half of the course, weeks 1 through 7. The final exam will be comprehensive, covering all of the readings for the semester. The exams will be composed of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions based upon the quiz questions. The quizzes and the midterm and final exams will all be based on the textbook and supplemental readings. Students are encouraged to purchase the book and read. The lowest of the 2 exams will be dropped.

Writing Assignments (40 percent of the final grade, 100 points each): There will be two essays of at least 1,100 to 1,200 words (3 to 4 double-spaced pages). The first essay will focus on nature and consequences of the missionary endeavor carried out by Iberian priests and members of the orders in the effort to convert the native inhabitants of the Americas. The first essay may be revised for a higher grade. The second writing assignment will focus on a contemporary situation, such as liberation theology in the Nicaraguan Revolution, the role of religious heritage in authoritarian or pluralistic political cultures. The essays will be submitted through Turnitin in Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES
Late Policy:
All writing assignments are due via Canvas on the date indicated. The professor is not obligated to accept late assignments although he may, at his discretion, if there are valid circumstances or illness. Late assignments will be penalized by 10 percent if they are less than a week, and by 50 percent if they are more than a week. No exceptions.

Academic Honesty:
Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another’s work as your own, falls into three different categories:

1. A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
2. Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
3. Paraphrasing or using ideas from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the University Code of Academic Integrity at http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm if you need further clarification. **Offenders will receive a grade of F (0 points) for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly for the course.** Please be aware: Previously submitted papers are not allowed, even if it is your own work and even if you are retaking this class. You may not “reuse” papers.

All assignments submitted for the course must be the sole creation of the student in accordance with the FIU Standards of Student Conduct
http://www2.fiu.edu/~sccr/student_conduct_p.html.

Writing Resources:
FIU has a writing center to help students improve their writing. We strongly encourage students to take advantage of this resource -- all of us have room to grow with our writing. Visit http://writingcenter.fiu.edu.

Disabilities:
If you have a disability-related need for modifications or accommodations, please contact and register with the Disability Resource Center 305-348-3532, GC 190 and http://drc.fiu.edu/.

Extra credits:
Extra credits may only account for a maximum 3 percent of the final grade. Each approved extra credit project submitted will equal one percent of the final grade: three extra credit projects will give a total of three percent of the final grade. All extra credits must be submitted in the proper drop box no later than the last day of class, or April 20th. Work submitted after April 20, for extra credit will be disregarded.

Options:
- Follow the class twitter account, @REL_FIU for one extra credit point.
- Review an approved book, film or documentary about Latin America and write a five-paragraph reaction paper describing the themes of Latin American history illustrated by the story or event. The 5-paragraph paper should cover 3 points: 1) A brief review, 2) your personal reaction to the film or documentary; and 3) historical relevance: how the film relates to themes discussed in class and from the textbook. The film or documentary selection must be approved by the
instructor. The extra credit paper is worth an extra one percent (no more than 3 percentage points) on the final grade.

- If you complete all 13 of the forum discussions, the three lowest grades will be dropped, but they can be counted toward extra credit points.
- Extra credits and approved make-ups are due no later than the last class of the semester.
### Undergrad Course Grade Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>% FINAL GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Writing assignment</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Writing assignment (revision)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online forum discussions</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm and Final Exams</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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### FIU Grading Scale

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<th>LETTER</th>
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<th>RANGE (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 or above</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 76</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 or less</td>
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### Graduate Course Grade Distribution:

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<th>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>% FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Lit Review, first draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review final draft</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online forum discussions</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm and Final Exams (keep the highest)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 (Aug. 24-28)

– Introduction to Syllabus and organize groups.

READ:
- González, Justo - “Introduction”

GRAD READING:

WATCH:
- The Popol Vuh - Mayan Creation Stories (animated) - Secret Teachings: https://youtu.be/PIAzWOqo1fY

TASKS:
- Take practice quiz (on the Syllabus) by Tuesday night at 11:59 PM EST
- 1st virtual session, 4:30 pm Tuesday
- Take Quiz 1 (on readings from week 1) by Wednesday night at 11:59 PM EST
- Discussion Board #1 of Popol Vuh, due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 2 (Aug. 31 – Sept. 4)

READ:
- González, Justo – “Foundations” (Read pages 13 to 21 regarding the Aztecs and Incas)
- “The Religious Traditions in Mesoamerica” by Gary H. Gosen

GRAD READING:

WATCH:
- Black Robe (1991, Lothaire Bluteau)
  https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1ImGfvPC7vHQnI0SGVSg1XaXc/view?usp=sharing

TASKS:
- Take Quiz 2 (on readings from week 2) by Wednesday night at 11:59 PM EST
- Discussion Board #2 of Penyak, Mayan Religiosity, due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 3 (Sept. 8 – Sept. 11; LABOR DAY Sept. 7)

Lecture: Penyak & Petry “Spain and the Conquest of the New World.”
READ:
- González, Justo – “The Arrival of Christianity” (The whole chapter)

GRAD READING:

WATCH:
- Viggo Mortensen reads Bartolomé de Las Casas https://youtu.be/_nxRvt5Rjx8

TASKS:
- Discuss González and Las Casas in class.
- Take Quiz 3 (on readings from week 3) by Wednesday night at 11:59 PM EST
- Discussion Board #3 of Black Robe (1991), due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 4 (Sept. 14 – 18)
Lecture: Penyak & Petry “Friars accounts of the Native Peoples of the Americas.”
READ: González, Justo - “The Shaping of the Faith”
- Primary sources: PART III, Conversion, p. 31-34, and 21 “Jesuits and Tupi” 22 “Rigorous Evangelization of Adult Amerindians,” 23 “Brazilian Slavers and Jesuit Missionaries.” From Penyak & Petry, Religion in Latin America: A Documentary History. PDF.

GRAD READING:

WATCH
- The Mission (1986, Robert De Niro, Jeremy Irons)

TASKS:
Discuss González and Las Casas in class
- 2nd virtual session, 4:30 pm Tuesday
- *Quiz 4 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #4 Response to “Bartolome de las Casas,” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 5 (Sept. 21 – Sept. 25)
READ: González, Justo – “Reform Movements”
- Share group presentations
- Discuss coercion and motivations for conversion

GRAD READING:

TASKS:
- Library Research Tutorial for extra credit on Tuesday, 29
- *Quiz 5 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #5 of The Mission (1986), due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 6 (Sept. 27 – Oct. 1)
READ –
- González, Justo – “The Church in Turmoil”
- Penyak Documentary History, PART V “A Unique Holy Woman from Seventeenth-Century New Spain” p.103

WATCH –
- “Yo, la Peor de Todas” on Youtube, about Sor Juana de la Cruz in Mexico.

TASKS –
- Essay 1: Spreading the Faith due on Tuesday night at 11:59 PM
- *Quiz 6 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #6 Response to Yo, la Peor de Todos, (I, the Worst of All, 1990) due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

GRAD READING:

GRAD ASSIGNMENT:
- Research Question due on Tuesday, September 28

Week 7 (Oct. 5 – Oct. 9)
LECTURE – Penyak & Petry Interpretive Essays (2009) Ch. 6, “The Inquisition and Women.” Or Ch. 8, “Anti-clericalism in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries.”
READ –
- González, Justo – “The Church’s New Place”
- Penyak Documentary History, PART IX #65 “The Liberator and Religion” p.152

GRAD READING:

WATCH –
- Latin American Revolutions: Crash Course World History #31
TASKS –
- 3rd Virtual Session on Tuesday night at 4:30 PM.
- Writing Assignment #1 (Essay: Spreading the Faith) due on Friday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- *Quiz 7 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #7 Primary Source Docs: “The Liberator and Religion” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 8 (Oct. 12 – Oct. 16)


GRAD READING:

TASKS –
- Midterm due on Wednesday night, covers weeks 1 through 7.
- No quiz
- Discussion #8 Primary Source: “PART XX, *Latino Jews*” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 9 (Oct. 18 – Oct. 22)

READ – González, Justo – “Protestant Immigration”
- Penyak *Documentary History*, PART IX #66 “Church and State in the New America” p.154.

GRAD READING:

GRAD ASSIGNMENT:
- Upload bibliography, due Tuesday, October 19

WATCH –
- *War and Nation Building in Latin America*: Crash Course World History 225
TASKS –
- *Quiz 8 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion #9 Penyak: “Church and state” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM
- Essay Revision due on Friday night at 11:59 PM.

Week 10 (Oct. 26 – Oct. 30)
READ –
González, Justo – “An Expanding Protestant Presence”

GRAD READING:

TASKS –
- *Quiz 9 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion #10 Penyak, “Protestantism: Positive or Negative for Latin America?” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 11 (Nov. 2 – Nov. 6)
READ – González, Justo - Catholicism after Vatican II

GRAD READING:
- Daniel Levine, “Assessing the Impacts of Liberation Theology in Latin America”

WATCH –
- ROMERO (1989, with Raul Julia) Shared on google drive: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1ImGfvPC7vHWmc0SmlIT1R4azA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1ImGfvPC7vHWmc0SmlIT1R4azA/view?usp=sharing)

TASKS –
- *Quiz 10 due on Thursday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #11 Response to ROMERO due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

Week 12 (Nov. 8 – Nov. 12)
LECTURE- Penyak & Petry Ch. 4, “Afro-Latinos and Christianity” and Umbanda.
READ –
- Prothero, Chapter 6, Yoruban Religion
- Penyak & Petry Interpretive Essays (2009) Ch. 12, “Umbanda.”

WATCH –
- Youtube video on Yoruba religion, https://youtu.be/EY5dB7kAekY

TASKS –
- No quiz
- Essay 2 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA
- Discussion Board #12 Response to Penyak, PART XX Afro-Latinos #141-#143, or pp. 338-345, and Prothero’s YouTube on Yoruba, due on Friday night at 11:59 PM

GRAD READING:

GRAD ASSIGNMENT:
- First draft lit review due on Tuesday, Nov. 9.

Week 13 (Nov. 16 – Nov. 20)


READ –
González, Justo – “Pentecostalism and Autochthonous Movements”

GRAD READING:

TASKS –
- *Quiz 11 due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA


- Discussion #13 Penyak, “A Radical Brazilian Pentecostal” due on Friday night at 11:59 PM
- ESSAY 2

**Week 14 (Nov. 23 – Nov. 27)**

**INSERT HERE new material on Islam?**

LECTURE –

READ –

**GRAD READING:**

**TASKS –**
- 

**Week 15 (Nov. 29 – Dec. 3)**


READ –
- González, Justo – “By Way of Conclusion”
  - González, Justo – “Some Suggestions for Further Reading”

WATCH –
- [Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador & Liberation Theology](#) Part 1

**TASKS –**
- Essay 2 due Friday night at 11:59 PM.
- *Quiz 12 ‘Conclusion’ due on Wednesday night at 11:59 PM ETA (All extra credits and make-ups are due the last day of classes).*

**GRAD READING:**
- Levine, Daniel, *The Future of Christianity in Latin America*
- Daniel Levine, “Assessing the Impacts of Liberation Theology in Latin America”

**GRAD ASSIGNMENT:**
● FINAL draft lit review due on Tuesday, Nov. 20.

**Week 16 (April 23-27) FINALS WEEK**

Wednesday night, April 22 *FINAL EXAM*
Online: 80 questions, comprehensive, with 2 hours to take it.

*ABSOLUTELY NO MAKE-UP WORK OR EXTRA CREDITS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER MIDNIGHT ON Dec. 4th UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!*

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My NOTES
FILMS
Consider showing the Youtube film about Sor Juana de la Cruz
What about the Netflix film TWO POPES
Argentine clergy complicity in the Dirty War, documentary
Film ROMERO – talk about padre Camilo Torres Colombia
Fidel y la Religion
Talk about Antonio Conseileiro, Brazilian uprising in the bad lands. Book by Mario Vargas Llosa
Take a look at Seth D. Kunin, Religion: The Modern Theories
Robert Bellah on human sacrifice