

## SACRED TEXTS: PLAGUES AND PANDEMICS (SPRING 2022)

Time: Mondays 10:00AM - 12:45PM EST

Location: PC449

Professor: Dr. Tudor Parfitt (tparfitt@fiu.edu)

Course Convenor: Victoria Davide (vdavide@fiu.edu)

Office Hours: Appointments by Request

### **Description**

This graduate seminar will explore how different religions have responded to or are responding to plagues and pandemics. Epidemic diseases have always been part of human experience. How do religions explicate these devastating events? How do different religions enable people to confront the dangers of plagues? And how have epidemics over time influenced faith and the practice of religions? This course is team-taught. Experts in various religious traditions will examine historical and contemporary contexts illustrating the response of the world's religions to the horrors of plague.

### **Readings**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rIK4kSiNvyweEG3s4OeN\\_58jpNTj6e-n?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rIK4kSiNvyweEG3s4OeN_58jpNTj6e-n?usp=sharing)

### **Schedule**

DATE	SUBJECT/TITLE	LECTURER
January 10	Course Introduction and Comparative Religions Framework	Daniel Alvarez
January 17	NO CLASS: MLK DAY	
January 24	Thinking of Narration: Uncertainty and Loss when "Things Fall Apart"	Rachaell Diaz
January 31	Plagues, Fires and Floods, Oh My! Facing the Planetary Apocalypse	Whitney Bauman
February 7	Plagues in DSS and Rabbinical Literature	Erik Larson
February 14	Ottoman Empire: Plagues and Pandemics	Carlos Grenier

February 21	Pope Francis, the Vatican action, and COVID-19	Ana Maria Bidegain
February 28	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK	
March 7	East Asian Buddhist Responses to Plagues and COVID	Steven Heine
March 14	Contemporary Jewish responses to Covid in Israel and the Jewish Diaspora	Tudor Parfitt
March 21	Islam: Plagues and Pandemics	Iqbal Akhtar
March 28	Thirukkural and Thiruvartup: Plagues and Pandemics	Kalai Mathee
April 4	COVID and Witchcraft	Erin Weston
April 11	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS	
April 18	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS	
April 25	ESSAYS DUE	

### **Assignments**

There are two assignments, a term paper and a presentation based on the topic of your choice related to religions and pandemics. Your topic will be due *14 February 2022*. Your presentation will be during the second to final class on *11 April 2022*. The paper will be due midnight *25 April 2022*. Your final grade will be based on attendance (20%), presentation (20%), and term paper (60%).

### **JMOF**

The Jewish Museum of Florida- FIU is a unique place where the *only* collection of documents and a preservation/interpretation of Florida's Jewish history is located. The professor of the course, Dr. Tudor Parfitt, is the academic director of the museum. The JMOF lecture series Monday nights usually at 7pm is also dealing with

plagues and pandemics throughout mainly Jewish history and today. Some of the world's leading experts will be lecturing in this series and it is expected that you attend at least one of these lectures while in the course. Most of the lectures will be available on Zoom. Students who attend the JMOF lecture series, virtually or in person, and submit a photo proof along with a 300 word critical essay on how said lecture is related to the topic of the course, will receive extra credit. Please follow the link [here](#) for more information.

### **Grading rubric**

[http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~layachia/1-All\\_Courses\\_Docs/Grading%20Rubrics%20For%20Papers.pdf](http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~layachia/1-All_Courses_Docs/Grading%20Rubrics%20For%20Papers.pdf)

### **Policies**

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

[Policies](#)

[Netiquette](#)

[Technical Requirements and Skills](#)

[Accessibility and Accommodation](#)

[Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

[Academic Misconduct Statement](#)

[Inclusivity Statement`](#)