

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

UC 11488 11F

Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: VPA-Critical Effective Fall 2012  
Core code 50

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall 2011

APPROVED DEC 7 2011

1. Department: RELS College: CLASS
2. Faculty Contact Person: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213 Email: lemitchell@uh.edu
3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
RELS / 2380 / Religion and Film
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
RELS / 2380 / RELIGION AND FILM
  - SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 38.0201.00 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 14 2011

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
 If Yes, please complete:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
RELS / 3396 / Jesus in Film
  - Course ID: 41388 Effective Date (currently active row): 8222011

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
  - Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
 \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
 • Course ID: \_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304 or ENGL 1310. Description (30 words max.): Introduction to the study of religions and their portrayal in film; exploration of two-way pervasion of religion and culture and identity

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/13/11  
 Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

**U N I V E R S I T Y of H O U S T O N**  
**CORE CURRICULUM REQUEST FOR COURSES NEW TO THE CORE**

Originating Department/College: CLASS/ Religious Studies Program

Person making request: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213

E-mail: lemitchell@uh.edu

Dean's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/13/11

**I. General Information:**

**Course number and title:** RELS 2380 Religion and Film

**Catalog description** must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

**Category of Core** for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- American History
- Government
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Natural Sciences
- Social/Behavioral Sciences
- Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

**II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):**

**Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at [www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum](http://www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum)**

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

**SVP. Effective 8/23/10. Replaces all previous forms, which may no longer be used.**

A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.

- Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
- Students will learn to think and discuss critically about storytelling through film and its impact on religious traditions, culture and identity from a religious studies perspective;
- Students will expand understanding of religious traditions and their significant role in film plot, narrative, and imagery;
- Students will develop insight into other perspectives through a careful examination of their own thinking.
- Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.

B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.

- Use of evidence, experience, critical reason, and coherent argumentation will be the standards upon which all of the written work will be graded, and will be modeled and encouraged within the course itself.
- Instructor evaluations

C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course

- Evaluation of Film Analysis will serve to refine the selection of readings and amount of time spent in certain formative areas of the course and selection of included films.
- Instructor evaluations will serve to refine presentation style to increase the correlation between the course goals and the methods for achieving the goals.

## Religion and Film

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Professor Lynn E. Mitchell, Ph.D</b>
Office	A. D. Bruce Religion Center, 113B
Telephone	713-743-3213
Email	<a href="mailto:lemitchell@uh.edu">lemitchell@uh.edu</a>

### Course Description:

Introduction to the study of religions and their portrayal in film; exploration of two-way pervasion of religion and culture and identity

### Learning Outcomes

1. Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
2. Students will learn to think and discuss critically about storytelling through film and its impact on religious traditions, culture and identity from a religious studies perspective;
3. Students will expand understanding of religious traditions and their significant role in film plot, narrative, and imagery;
4. Students will develop insight into other perspectives through a careful examination of their own thinking.
5. Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.

Class meetings will be solely for watching the films. You have the option of obtaining the film at your own expense and watching it on your own.

\*/WARNING: Some of the films viewed in this course contain scenes of explicit violence, sexuality, sexual brutality, and offensive language. All films are chosen based on relevant issues introduced./\*

### Course Grading Requirements:

**30%: Film Analysis** (3 pts each) reviewing each of the assigned films according to the religious studies methods reviewed in class and using course readings; 1 page each, double spaced with 1-inch margins and 12 pt times new roman font; edited, typed, and reflecting your serious consideration of the topic. Due Dates: weekly

- *Rubric for Film Analysis*

Identified and related significant ideas (20 points)	_____
Good discussion of ideas (20 points)	_____
Insightful and reflective (20 points)	_____
Well-written with few to no errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar (20 points)	_____
Followed syllabus instructions (20 points)	_____
Total Points:	_____

**30%: Three Quizzes** 10% each. Multiple choice, covering the reading and films.

**20%: Online discussion participation.**

**20%: Final Exam;** Three hour exam composed of short answers and multiple choice questions, covering the term's in-class material and assigned readings. Date set by the registrar's office.

### **Required Texts:**

Lyden, John C.. *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, and Rituals*. New York: NYU Press, 2003. (abbr: FAR)

ISBN-13: 9780814751817

Fisher, Mary Pat. *Living Religions: A Brief Introduction*. New York: Prentice Hall, 2009.

(abbr: LR)

ISBN-13: 9780205635641

### **Writing Assignment**

Religious studies is a deeply interdisciplinary field. Writing projects will require use of theories and methods drawn from many other departments, programs, and curricula of study. Various modes of investigation are possible—literary, historical, cultural, sociological, anthropological, etc. One significant aspect of these approaches is their tendency to contextualize religious phenomena (beliefs, rituals, etc). Every religion arises within a particular environment, which inevitably affects the development of the religion. When you explore a religion's context, seemingly mystifying aspects of the tradition often become more comprehensible (source: [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious\\_studies.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious_studies.html)).

#### **Tips for Writing the Religion Paper**

- Consider your sources.  
When reading for Religion - especially when reading sources found on the Web - note whether you are using materials from experts in the practice of religion (gurus, theologians, priests, nuns), or respected scholars, employed by reputable universities. While both sources might be useful to your research, it's important to understand the source, its purpose, and its intended audience.
- Consider the current conversation.  
Consulting recent editions of new work by living scholars is a good way to determine which arguments are current and salient.
- Read footnotes and endnotes.  
Often footnotes and endnotes will lead you to other sources. Moreover, good scholarly editions of religious texts have substantive footnotes that will help you to better understand the passages you are working with.
- Consider your audience.  
If you are writing for readers who are not experts in the field, be sure to acquaint them with all relevant background material. Always write clearly and concisely, so that your paper is a pleasure to read.
- Don't let quotations speak for themselves.  
In religion, passages taken out of context can be misread. Also, because so much dispute exists over meaning, you need to make sure that you explain to your reader what a passage means in terms of your argument, and why it is relevant. As in all papers, you need to provide background for passages *before* quoting them, and you need to analyze the passage *after*.
- Remember: religious texts require special citation methods.

When citing the *Bible*, for instance, you need to cite Book, Chapter, and Verse. Familiarize yourself with the appropriate citation methods.

Source: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/religion.shtml>

**Class Schedule:****Week 1: Religious Studies and Film**

An introduction to religion/religious studies; Film studies as a discipline

Film

Readings:

FAR 1-2

LR 1

John Lyden, "To Command or to Critique? The Question of Religion and Film Studies"  
<http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/tocommend.htm> (Online)

**Week 2: Texts, Biography and Film**

Christianity in film; Post-Modernity, Controversy and Religion in film

Film Jesus of Montreal, 1989; 119 min

Readings:

FAR 3

LR 8

Adele Reinhartz, "Scripture on the Silver Screen" <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/scripture.htm> (online)

**Week 3: Marriage, Sex and Reproduction**

A brief intro to Judaism; Women in film and religion

Film Kadosh, 1999; 110 min

Readings:

FAR 4, 8-9

LR 7

Ephraim Tabory, "Avoidance and Conflict: Perceptions regarding Contact between Religious and Nonreligious Jewish Youth in Israel" (Online)

**Week 4: Adolescence and Coming of Age**

A brief intro to Islam & Sufism; Muslims in film

Film Monsieur Ibrahim, 2003; 95 min

Readings:

LR 9

Review of *Monsieur Ibrahim* (Online); Rubina Ramji, "From *Navy Seals* to *The Siege*: Getting to Know the Muslim Terrorist, Hollywood Style" (Online)

**Week 5: QUIZ 1****Week 6: Spiritual Quest and Philosophical Seeking**

"New Age" and popular spirituality; religious consumerism; therapy

Film I ♥ Huckabees, 2004; 107 min

Readings:

FAR 11

LR 11

Brian J. Zinnbauer, Kenneth I. Pargament, et al, "Religion and Spirituality: Unfuzzifying the Fuzzy" (Online); Review

Walther Heissig, "Banishing of Illnesses into Effigies in Mongolia" (sic) (Online)

**Week 13: Death**

A brief intro to Hinduism; Death in religion and film

Film Water, 2005; 114 min

Readings:

LR 4

Wilbert M. Gesler and Margaret Pierce, "Hindu Varanasi" (Online)

**Week 14: The Afterlife**

The afterlife and immortality in religion and film; Course Review

Film The Fountain, 2006; 96 min

Readings:

Brian Schmidt, "Afterlife Beliefs: Memory as Immortality" (Online)

**Week 15: QUIZ 3**

**Week 16: Final Exam**