**Spring 2017**

**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY:**

**RELIGIOUS CHANGE AND COMPETITION IN LATIN AMERICA**

**TR**

**WEDNESDAYS 3:30PM – 6:15PM Room STH**

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**Course Description:**

*Religious Change and Competition in Latin America* employs a sociological lens to examine the dynamic patterns of religiosity in Latin America. The religious dynamics of Latin America are increasingly under global scrutiny as the center of Christianity shifts away from its traditional bastions in the West. Yet, Christianity in Latin America must not merely be pressed into the categories that are assumed in the U.S., or other regions. Instead, it must be examined within its own context, which necessitates consideration of popular religions, indigenous movements and movements of the African diaspora, and secularization therein. Furthermore, it is not enough to simply state that Latin American religion is wielding influence globally; it is necessary to understand *how* this is happening. Finally, Latin America provides an important case for examining how theories of religious competition play out in a context beyond the U.S. This course draws from a variety of voices, primarily from within the social sciences, to highlight macro-level patterns, examine localized case studies, and address contested interpretations of Latin America’s unique religious ecologies.

**Learning Outcomes**

This course focuses on four major themes, which constitute the course’s primary learning outcomes. Students will be expected to become proficient in the following four areas:

1.) Understanding the region’s historical patterns of religious affiliation

2.) Understanding increasing pluralism and the dynamics of religious competition

3.) Understanding the influence of religion in effecting social change in Latin American society and beyond. This includes analysis of how transnational religious movements influence, and are influenced by, Latin America.

4.) Gaining a broad understanding of key concepts in the sociology of religion and thinking critically about how well these models help to explain trends of religiosity in Latin America.

**Required Texts**

**Note: All required texts are available through the STH library either on reserve or electronically. Please see syllabus schedule for details on what book sections are required reading.**

Berger, Peter L. 2017. "The desecularization of the world: A global overview." In *The New Sociology of Knowledge*, pp. 61-76. Routledge.

Brusco, Elizabeth E. 2011. *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*. University of Texas Press.

Carrasco, Davíd. 2013. *Religions of Mesoamerica: Second Edition*. Waveland Press.

Chesnut, R. Andrew. 1997. *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty*. Rutgers University Press.

Chesnut, R. Andrew. 2010. “Conservative Christian Competitors: Pentecostals and Charismatic Catholics in Latin America’s New Religious Economy.” *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 30 (1): 91–103.

Espinosa, Gaston. 2017. “Let the Spirit Fly. Marilynn Kramar and the History of the Latino/a Catholic Charismatic Movement in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands.” California Dreaming: Society and Culture in the Golden State, ed. Ronald A. Wells Wipf and Stock Publishers

Fortuny Loret de Mola, Patricia. 1995. “Origins, Development and Perspectives of La Luz Del Mundo Church.” *Religion* 25 (2): 147–62.

Freston, Paul. 2013. *Pentecostals and Politics in Latin America: Compromise or Prophetic Witness?* Oxford University Press.

Gooren, Henri. 2007. “Reassessing Conventional Approaches to Conversion: Toward a New Synthesis.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 46 (3): 337–53.

Gooren, Henri. 2013. “Comparing Mormon and Adventist Growth Patterns in Latin America: The Chilean Case.” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 46 (3): 45–77.

Jesús, Aisha Beliso-De. 2014. “Santería Copresence and the Making of African Diaspora Bodies.” *Cultural Anthropology* 29 (3): 503–26.

Keogh, Stacy, and Richard L Wood. 2013. “The Rebirth of Catholic Collective Action in Central America: A New Model of Church-Based Political Participation.” *Social Compass* 60 (2): 273–91.

Lesser, Jeffrey. 2016. “Jews and Judaism in Latin America.” In *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America*, 709–13.

Levine, Daniel H. 2012. *Politics, Religion, and Society in Latin America*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Logroño Narbona, Maria del Mar, Paulo G. Pinto, and John Tofik Karam. 2015. *Crescent over Another Horizon: Islam in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino USA*. Austin, UNITED STATES: University of Texas Press.

Lynch, John. 2012. *New worlds: A religious history of Latin America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

McKenzie, Germán. 2016. “Exploring Soto Zen in Peru.” *REVER - Revista de Estudos Da Religião* 16 (3): 174–96.

Meyer, Birgit. 1998. “‘Make a Complete Break with the Past.’ Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse.” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28 (3): 316–49.

Míguez, Néstor O. 2016. “THE POLITICAL AMBIGUITY OF LATIN AMERICAN POPULAR RELIGION.” *Politics and Religion Journal* 9 (1): 19–33.

Morello SJ, Gustavo, Catalina Romero, Hugo Rabbia, and Néstor Da Costa. 2017. “An Enchanted Modernity: Making Sense of Latin America’s Religious Landscape.” *Critical Research on Religion* 5 (3): 308–26.

Norget, Kristin. 2005. *Days of Death, Days of Life: Ritual in the Popular Culture of Oaxaca*. Columbia University Press.

Pew Research Center. 2014. “Religion in Latin America.” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project*.<http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america/>.

Premawardhana, Devaka. 2015. "Conversion and convertibility in northern Mozambique." in Michael Jackson and Albert Piette eds, *What is existential anthropology*: 30-57.

Smith, Christian. 1991. *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. University of Chicago Press.

Solorzano, Tony, “Last Call Ministries,” in *Los Evangelicos: Portraits of Latino Protestantism in the United States*, eds. Juan F. Martinez and Lindy Scott. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009), 94-104.

Somma, Nicolás M., Matías A. Bargsted, and Eduardo Valenzuela. 2017. “Mapping Religious Change in Latin America.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 59 (1): 119–42.

Stark, Rodney. n.d. “Conversion to Latin American Protestantism And,” 17.

Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?: The Politics of Evangelical Growth*. University of California Press.

Tavárez, David. 2016. “Religion in the Pre-Contact New World.” The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America. April 2016.

Torre, Renée de la, and Eloisa Martín. 2016. “Religious Studies in Latin America.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 42 (1): 473–92.

Trejo, Guillermo. 2009. “Religious Competition and Ethnic Mobilization in Latin America: Why the Catholic Church Promotes Indigenous Movements in Mexico.” *The American Political Science Review* 103 (3): 323–42.

Vega, Jose Fernandez. 2016. “THE LEGITIMACY OF THE PAPACY.” *Politics and Religion Journal* 9 (1): 85–108.

Wade, Peter. 2017. *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*. Pluto Press.

Wilde, Melissa J., Kristin Geraty, Shelley L. Nelson, and Emily A. Bowman. 2010. “Religious Economy or Organizational Field?: Predicting Bishops’ Votes at the Second Vatican Council.” *American Sociological Review* 75 (4): 586–606.

Woodberry, Robert D. 2013. *Pentecostalism and Democracy: Is There a Relationship?* Oxford University Press.

**See Appendix B for additional resources**

**GRADES**

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

1. Leading class discussion - 10%
2. Field Assignments - 20%
3. Class participation - 15%
4. Weekly Memos - 25%
5. Research Paper - 20%
6. Oral Presentation - 10%

Course grading scale:

A ≥ 93

A- = 90-92.99

B+ = 87-89.99

B = 83-86.99

B- = 80-82.99

C+ = 77-79.99

C = 73-76.99

C- = 70-72.99

D+ = 67-69.99

D = 63-66.99

D- = 60-62.99

F ≤ 59.99

**POLICIES**

* **Assignments** – Students must complete *all* assignments to receive a passing grade for the course. Exceptions are only granted under extraordinary circumstances and must be cleared by the professor.
* **Class Attendance** – Please respect the class and be present and on time, unless you are experiencing extenuating circumstances. If you miss a class for some special circumstance, it is your responsibility to obtain notes, handouts, or other information from your classmates*.* Repeated absences may lead to grade reduction and/or failure to pass the course.
* **Use of Technology:** Please silence mobile devices before entering the classroom. Do not check/respond to email or engage in online social networking during class.
* **Participation & Classroom Dynamics** – Active participation is crucial to doing well in this course and is a critical component of the course design.
* **Inclusive Language** – Inclusive language with regard to human beings is standard in contemporary academic and professional discourse. Students are expected to use inclusive or balanced language with regard to human beings in class discussions and in their writing. However, inclusive language with regard to pronominal references to God is a controversial matter, and students may use expressions that reflect their own theological perspective. If questions arise regarding this policy, please talk with the professor. Exceptions to this standard may arise when citing research subjects’ own opinions and taxonomies.
* **Readings** – The reading assigned for a particular class session should be completed by class time on the day it is listed in the course schedule below.
* **Course Updates** – Email serves as an official means of communication used to advise students of changes in assignments and scheduling. Please check your B.U. email regularly and before each class.
* **Course Materials** – Copies of required class articles are available on *Blackboard.*
* **Late Work** – One grace day for minor inconveniences and computer failures will be automatically allowed for fieldnote assignments. Please notify the professor via e-mail when using the grace day. After 9:30 a.m. on the date following the due date of an assignment a 5% penalty will be assessed for each day the assignment is late.
* **Academic Code of Conduct** – The STH Academic Code of Conduct may be found on the STH website at: [www.bu.edu/sth/academic/academic-conduct](http://www.bu.edu/sth/academic/academic-conduct). All students are required to familiarize themselves with this code, its definitions of misconduct, and its sanctions. Students should especially familiarize themselves with the section on plagiarism.
* **Students with Disabilities** – Any students who believe they have a disability should meet with BU Disability Services as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure your successful completion of course requirements. That office is at 19 Deerfield Street and can be contacted at 617-353-3658. Requests for accommodations are then sent by that office to the Academic Dean who forwards them to the Instructor.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Reading Assignments and Class Discussion**. For class sessions, a portion of the time will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings and corresponding focal themes. Students are expected to come to each seminar meeting prepared to discuss the focal questions and readings for that week. Everyone is expected to have read the assignments for the period assigned; however, each week two or more of you will take responsibility for leading the class discussion of the assigned readings. Presentation groups will be assigned during our second class session. Taking responsibility for the class discussion entails two tasks: 1.) preparing a brief synopsis of each reading and a list of questions for discussion stimulated by the readings, 2.) leading a seminar discussion based on these questions.

• Synopses and key questions will consist of a one- to three-page, typed discussion/outline of the chapters or articles assigned, with attention focused on (a) summarization of their major points or arguments, and (b) what you regard as the most interesting or problematic questions and “take away” points or observations. There is room to be critical here and to pose discussion questions not only to the class, but also to the author of the text.

• Discussion leading involves taking responsibility for the discussion of the readings

and their relevance to the focal questions and issues raised in the syllabus and by your list of key questions.

2. **Field Assignment.** Students will interview someone that was born in Latin America and has lived a substantial portion of their life there. Interview themes will center on the interviewees experiences of faith in Latin America. See **Appendix A** for instructions.

**3. Class Participation**. Since the viability of the seminar depends in large measure on student participation, you are expected to be prepared to discuss the readings assigned for each period in relation to the focal questions and issues and to each other. This means you will need to familiarize yourself with all of the readings assigned each week, even if you are not a discussion leader for that week.

**4**. **Weekly Memos**. Students will write reading reports based on the assigned readings which will accomplish three things:

Summarize the main contribution of each assigned text. Provide a critique of the text, and/or questions that are not sufficiently addressed in the text. If there are multiple texts assigned, briefly highlight points at which main ideas in the texts overlap, either because they contrast or complement each other. Memos should be 2-3 pages in length, double spaced. Memos are an opportunity for students to demonstrate their command of the reading material, and their ability to communicate key ideas in a concise manner. **Memos are due every week, starting with week 2, except for on week 11.**

**5. Research Paper.** Students are to write a research paper that focuses on religion in Latin America. There are several options for how to approach this paper. Students must select one of the following topical framings:

* One particular Latin American country of their choice
* A religious tradition
* A historical event influenced by religion
* A trend in religiosity
* A theory based debate about religion in Latin America.

The paper should demonstrate an understanding of historical developments and theoretical concepts related to the topic. The paper will be 15 pages long, double spaced.

**6. Oral Presentation**. The last class session of the semester will be devoted to presenting student research papers. Presentations will be brief, about 7 minutes long, and time will be allotted for the class to ask presenters questions about their topic of presentation. Detailed guidelines for the presentation will be posted on Blackboard.

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| Week | Date | Topic | Assignments |
| 1 | 9/4 | Latin American Religious Demography | Pew (pp.1-27; 31-39) |
| 2 | 9/11 | Theory: Sociological concepts related to religious change and competition | Torre and Martin; Somma |
| 3 | 9/18 | Indigenous Spiritualities: Pre-conquest and post-conquest traditions | Carrasco (ch.1); Norget (chs. 1 & 2); Tavarez |
| 4 | 9/25 | Spiritualities of the African Diaspora; Race and Religion | Wade (ch.5); Beliso-De Jesus |
| 5 | 10/2 | Catholicism: Maintenance and Change | Lynch (ch.5); Vega; Wilde |
| 6 | 10/9 | Catholicism: Liberation Theology, success and challenge | Smith (chs. 1 & 2); Keogh |
| 7 | 10/16 | Protestantism: Profile and Growth | Stoll (Chs. 1, 4, 5) |
| 8 | 10/23 | Transnational Renewalist Movements: Pentecostals and Charismatic Catholics | Chesnut 2010; Freston; Espinosa; Solorzano |
| 9 | 10/30 | Conversion: Gender and Class | Brusco (chs. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7); Chesnut 1997 (chs. 2,3) |
| 10 | 11/6 | Conversion: Discontinuity, Syncretism, and Lived Religion | Gooren 2007; Meyer; Premawardhana; Stark |
| 11 | 11/13 | New Religious Movements: | Fortuny Loret de Mola; Gooren 2013  **Field assignment (no memo)** |
| 12 | 11/20 | Secularization | Berger 2017; Morello 2017 |
| 13 | 12/4 | Non-Christian, Global Faiths | McKenzie; Logroño (introduction), Lesser |
| 14 | 12/11 | Politics and Religion | Levine Ch.2; Miguez; Trejo; Woodberry. |
| 15 | 12/18 | Final Presentation | Final Papers |

**Appendix A**

For our field assignment, you will be expected to interview someone that has immigrated to the U.S. from anywhere in Latin America. The person you select for the interview should meet the following criteria:

Born in a Latin American country

Came to the U.S. as an adult (over 18 years old)

From a different national background than your own.

When you invite someone to participate in this assignment, share with them a statement such as the following:

I am currently taking a class on Religion in Latin America. I’ve been asked to interview someone who grew up in Latin America about their views and experiences about faith.

The interview schedule is meant to be followed loosely. Rather than collecting specific data, view this as an opportunity to have a guided conversation. When you request to interview someone, make sure to state that their identity will remain confidential and that this is only for a class project and that the information collected will not be published anywhere.

Interview questions:

What is your country of origin?

Can you tell me about your life in your home country?

What was the role that faith had in your life, in your home country? (invite them to talk about about their own ties to a faith tradition, along with their perceptions about how faith functioned more broadly within their home country).

Currently, are you involved in any type of faith community? If so, can you describe what that is like?

(If they are not, inquire about what it is like to not be involved in a faith community)

How has your experience of faith changed in the U.S., compared to your home country?

Do you think the way faith is lived out in your home country is generally positive, or negative?

(invite them to elaborate on their response)

Interviews should last 30-60 minutes. Use the questions as launching points from which to generate conversation.

From this interview, you will submit a 2 page, double spaced response paper. In this paper you will discuss what aspects of this person's experience stand out to you.

**Appendix B**

**Additional resources**

Garrard-Burnett, Virginia, Paul Freston, and Stephen C. Dove. 2016. *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press.

“GlobalPlus: Religion and Politics in Latin America | The ARDA | Global Plus.”<http://globalplus.thearda.com/globalplus-religion-and-politics-in-latin-america/>.