

Psychology of Religion

Psychology 202

Course Syllabus Spring 2019

Instructor: Kevin Seybold, Ph.D.
Office HAL 217H; 724.458.2002
Office Hours:
MW 3:00-4:00; T 4:30-6:30
TR 9:30-11:30; R 2:00-3:00
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Class Meeting: MWF 9:00 in HAL 212

Course Description: A psychological approach to the understanding of religious life, with special emphasis on the Judeo-Christian tradition. In addition to traditional areas in the psychology of religion (e.g., religious development, measurement of religion and spirituality, forgiveness, religious conversion, religious orientation and attitudes, etc.) the course will consider issues surrounding the integration of psychology and theology, the innateness of spirituality, the nature of the soul or self, the neuroscience of religious experience, and the role of religion and spirituality in health.

Required Texts

Paloutzian, R.F. (2017). *Invitation to the psychology of religion* (3rd ed.). New York: The Guilford Press. (**RFP**)

Seybold, K.S. (2017). *Questions in the psychology of religion*. Eugene, OR: Cascade. (**KSS**)

Armstrong, K. (2002). *Islam: A short history*. New York: The Modern Library. (**KA**)

Utz, A. (2011). *Psychology from the Islamic perspective*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: IIPH. (**AU**)
ISBN: 978-603-501-099-3

Electronic copy available at this website: <https://iiph.com/islamic-ebooks/psychology-from-islamic-perspective-ebook.html>

Hardcopy available at this website:

http://iiphonline.com/index.php?route=product/product&filter_name=psychology&product_id=294

Websites

Exploring my religion www.exploringmyreligion.org/
Global Religion Research Initiative grri.nd.edu/
Islamic Center of Pittsburgh www.icp-pgh.org/

Relevant Journals

Journal of Psychology and Christianity
Journal of Psychology and Theology
International Journal for the Psychology of Religion
Psychology of Religion and Spirituality
Religion, Brain & Behavior
Zygon
Perspectives on Science and the Christian Faith

Recommended Books in the Library

al-Razi (no date). *Razi's traditional psychology*. Damascus, Syria: Islamic Book Service.

Andresen, J. (2001). *Religion in mind: Cognitive perspectives on religious belief, ritual, and experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Atran, S. (2002). *In gods we trust: The evolutionary landscape of religion*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Barrett, J.L. (2012). *Born believers: The science of children's religious belief*. New York: Free Press.

Barrett, J.L. (2004). *Why would anyone believe in God?* New York: AltaMira Press.

Brown, W.S., Murphy, N., & Malony, H.N. (1998). *Whatever happened to the soul? Scientific and theological portraits of human nature*. Minneapolis: Fortress.

Cardena, E., Lynn, S.J., & Krippner, S. (2014). *Varieties of anomalous experience: Examining the scientific evidence*(2nd ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

Clarke, S., Powell, R., & Savulescu, J. (2013). *Religion, intolerance, and conflict: A scientific and conceptual investigation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Cobb, M., Puchalski, C.M., & Rumbold, B. (2012). *Oxford textbook of spirituality in healthcare*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fuller, R.C. (2013). *The body of faith: A biological history of religion in America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

- Hill, P.C., & Hood, R.W. (1999). *Measures of religiosity*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press.
- Hood, R.W., Hill, P.C., & Spilka, B. (2009). *The psychology of religion: An empirical approach* (4th ed.). New York: Guilford Press.
- Hood, R.W., Hill, P.C., & Williamson, W.P. (2005). *The psychology of religious fundamentalism*. New York: Guilford Press.
- James, W. (1999). *The varieties of religious experience*. New York: The Modern Library. (Original work published 1902)
- Johnson, D. (2016). *God is watching you: How the fear of God makes us human*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Koenig, H.G., McCullough, M.E., & Larson, D.B. (2001). *Handbook of religion and health*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Luhrmann, T.M. (2012). *When God talks back: Understanding the American evangelical relationship with God*. New York: Vintage Books.
- McNamara, P. (2009). *Neuroscience of religious experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norenzayan, A. (2013). *Big gods: How religion transformed cooperation and conflict*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Paloutzian, R.F., & Park, C.L. (2013). *Handbook of the psychology of religion and spirituality* (2nd ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Pargament, K.I. (2013). *APA handbook of psychology, religion, and spirituality. Vol. 1: Context, theory, and research*. Washington, DC: APA.
- Roehlkepartain, E.C., Ebstyne King, P., Wagener, L., & Benson, P.L. (2006), *The handbook of spiritual development in childhood and adolescence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sanderson, Stephen K. (2018). *Evolution and the axial age: From shamans to priests to prophets*. New York: Bloomsbury.
- Schloss, J., & Murray, M. (2009). *The believing primate: Scientific, philosophical, and theological reflections on the origin of religion*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Seybold, K.S. (2007). *Explorations in neuroscience, psychology and religion*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

Tremlin, T. (2006). *Minds and gods: The cognitive foundations of religion*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Watts, F., & Turner, L. (2014). *Evolution, religion, & cognitive science: Critical & constructive essays*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, D.S. (2002). *Darwin's cathedral: Evolution, religion, and the nature of society*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

The Global Religion Research Initiative (GRRI) is dedicated to supporting the study of religion in global perspective in order:

1. To broaden the current study of religion beyond the North American and European contexts to the global study of religion, allowing for a more thorough understanding of the role of religion in the lives of individuals and societies worldwide.
2. To invigorate an interest in religion as a viable topic of academic inquiry.

To achieve these goals, the GRRI encourages the construction and enhancement of innovative college and university courses in the social sciences that involve significant material engaging students in scholarship about non-Western religions. The Psychology of Religion course here at GCC attempts to understand the psychological mechanisms underlying religion and religious experiences, primarily from a Judeo-Christian perspective. Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the United States and the world, so PSYC 202 has been revised to include this religious tradition. Adding Islam to the curriculum will allow students to compare and contrast research from the traditions of Christianity and Islam on representative topics in the psychology of religion.

Departmental Outcomes Relevant To This Course

- **Knowledge Base in Psychology:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify, recognize, and articulate key components of the major concepts, theories, trends, and empirical findings in a wide variety of areas in psychology. (For B.S. Students will also demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of biology and genetics.)
- **Values and Character:** Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate a worldview that integrates knowledge in psychology with other disciplines and the Christian faith. Will recognize the tensions in this integration process rather than accept simplistic answers. Will demonstrate awareness of ethical and socially responsible behaviors for psychologists in research and practice.

Course Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate by way of examinations and class discussions their understanding of how integration is conceptualized within Islamic psychology and how it is different from integration from a Christian perspective. (Values and Character)
- Students will demonstrate by way of examinations and class discussions their knowledge of fundamental content in the psychology of religion. (Knowledge Base in Psychology)
- Students will demonstrate by way of examinations and class discussions their understanding of how the soul or self is conceptualized in Islamic psychology, how this conceptualization is different from or similar to the conceptualization in traditional Christian theology, and the implications of physicalism to religious life. (Knowledge Base in Psychology)
- Students will demonstrate by way of examinations and class discussions their knowledge of the cognitive science approach to religion. (Knowledge Base in Psychology)
- Students will demonstrate by way of observation and a paper on those observations their awareness and knowledge of a religious tradition other than their own, specifically Islam (Values and Character)

Grades

There will be three (3) exams administered, including the final. (The final must be taken at the assigned time.) The exams will cover material from the texts, from class discussions, and from assigned readings. All makeup exams must be taken within seven (7) calendar days of the original exam date. A 10 percent penalty will be imposed on the makeup if the original exam was missed due to an unexcused absence. In addition, a paper on your study and observation of a religious tradition different from your own is required (see below). Assignment grades will be posted on mygcc.edu as soon as they are available. (Students may look at their exams in the instructor's office for seven days following the administration of the exam. After the seven day period, the exam will not be available for review.)

Exam 1	50 pts
Exam 2	50 pts
Exam 3 (final)	75 pts
Observation	50 pts.

	225 pts

209-225	A
202-208	A-
195-201	B+
186-194	B
180-185	B-
173-179	C+
164-172	C
157-163	C-
150-156	D+
142-149	D
135-141	D-
Below 135	F

Consequences of Violations of Academic Integrity including Plagiarism in this Class

If the professor believes a violation of the Honesty in Learning Policy has taken place, he or she will fill out an online report of the alleged violation which will be automatically sent to the chair of the Student-Faculty Review Committee (SFRC). The professor may then meet with the student who is alleged to have violated the Honesty in Learning Policy. If the professor, following this meeting, still believes the student violated the Policy, then the professor will pursue the matter as specified in the *College Bulletin* (pp. 56-59).

<http://www.gcc.edu/Home/Academics/Majors-Departments/College-Catalog>

Accessibility & Accommodations: It is Grove City College's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please let me know immediately so that we may discuss options. You are also welcome to contact the disability services office to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations. The Disability Services Coordinator may be reached at 724-264-4673 or

[DisabilityServices@gcc.edu<mailto:DisabilityServices@gcc.edu>](mailto:DisabilityServices@gcc.edu).

Visit to the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh – ICP (Optional)

Although not required, I do encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity to tour the ICP and participate in an afternoon prayer service. This visit will be on a Friday afternoon from approximately 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. (Exact date to be determined.) The address of the ICP is 4100 Bigelow Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Transportation will be provided for students who are able to visit the Center.

Description of Observation Assignment

Select a religious tradition that is different from your own. Examples might include Catholic, Protestant (of various denominations), Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Orthodox (Eastern, Russian) to name just a few. Once the tradition is selected, plan a visit to that tradition's worship service. Write an 7-9 page paper on the tradition and your observations. The report should include a history of the tradition, some basic beliefs and practices of the tradition, and a psychology of religion analysis of your observations. This report is due by the end of the day on **April 17** and should follow APA format for references. Submit paper as an electronic attachment. The attached file should have your LAST NAME as the title. Send the paper via email to me with the following subject line: Psyc202Paper

Classroom Policies

I do not take attendance on a regular basis. (I do, of course, notice when a person is missing class excessively – see GCC's policy regarding withdrawing a student from a course for excessive absences.) So, if you decide to come to class the following policies will be followed:

First, come to class on time.

Second, do not leave class before the class ends.

Third, during exams, remove everything from your desk. No bottles, backpacks, electronic devices, etc. Also, unless it is an emergency, please do not leave the classroom during an exam.

Fourth, do not use your computer in class. Listen to what is being said (lectures, videos, class discussion, etc.) and take notes using paper and pen. Early empirical research suggests that note taking using a computer results in poorer performance than taking notes longhand. When you use a computer to take notes, you tend to merely transcribe what you are hearing which is a shallow form of processing information. Better learning and memory results from deeper processing which occurs when you listen to what is being said and then reframe it by putting it into your own words. I will do my part by trying to lecture more slowly and putting any PowerPoint presentations on the network.

Articles on Islam and Psychology (see course schedule)

1. Abou-Hatab, F.A-L.H. (1997). Psychology from Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic perspectives: Unfulfilled hopes and hopeful fulfillment. *European Psychologist*, 2,(4), 356-365.
2. Abu-Raiya, H., & Pargament, K.I. (2011). Empirically based psychology of Islam: Summary and critique of the literature. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 14(2), 93-115.
3. Abu-Raiya, H., & Pargament, K.I. (2015). Religious coping among diverse religions: Commonalities and divergences. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 7(1), 24-33.

4. Beller, J., & Kröger, C. (2018). Religiosity, religious fundamentalism, and perceived threat as predictors of Muslim support for extremist violence. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 10(4), 345-355.
5. El Azayem, G.A., & Hedayat-Diba, Z. (1994). The psychological aspects of Islam: Basic principles of Islam and their psychological corollary. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 4(1), 41-50.
6. Haque, A. (2004). Psychology from Islamic perspective: Contributions of early Muslim scholars and challenges to contemporary Muslim psychologists. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 43(4), 357-377.
7. Kalkan, K.O., Layman, G.C., & Uslaner, E.M. (2009). “Band of others”? Attitudes toward Muslims in contemporary American society. *The Journal of Politics*, 71(3), 847-862.
8. Kaplick, P.M., & Skinner, R. (2017). The evolving Islam and psychology movement. *European Psychologist*, 22(3), 198-204.
9. Rothman, A., & Coyle, A. (2018). Toward a framework for Islamic psychology and psychotherapy: An Islamic model of the soul. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 57, 1731-1744.
10. Tiliouine, H., Cummins, R.A., & Davern, M. (2009). Islamic religiosity, subjective well-being, and health. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 12(1), 55-74.

Course Schedule

Jan	21	Introduction (RFP 1) (KSS 1)
	23	What is Religion and Spirituality?
	25	Experiences Deemed Religious?
	28	Measurement of Religiosity/Spirituality (RFP 3, 4)
	30	Islam and History (KA 1-5)
Feb	1	Mr. Mohammad Sajjad, Program Director, Islamic Center of Pittsburgh
	4	Typologies of Psychology and Religion (RFP 2) (articles 1, 2, 5)
	6	Religion and Meaning
	8	Religious Experience (RFP 6, 8) (AU preface, 1)
	11	Religion and Brain (KSS 4)
	13	
	15	Mystical Experiences (AU 13)
	18	Forgiveness
	20	Exam 1
	22	Religious Development (RFP 5)
	25	Islamic Perspective (AU 11)
	27	Individuals and Religious Groups (RFP 11)
March	1	Islamic Perspective (AU 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

BREAK

	11	Religion, Morality, Prejudice (KSS 6)
	13	
	15	Religious Fundamentalism (article 4)
	18	
	20	Religion and Terrorism (article 7)
	22	Cultural and Cross-Cultural Psychology of Religion (AU 12)
	25	Conversion (RFP 7)
	27	Exam 2
	29	Religious Coping (RFP 9, 10) (AU 9)
April	1	Islamic Perspective (article 3)
	3	Religion and Health (AU 14, 15, 16, 17)
	5	Islamic Perspective (article 10)

	8	Evolution of Religion (KSS 2)
	10	
	12	Persons, Souls, and Selves: Rethinking Human Nature (KSS 5)
	15	Christian Perspectives
	17	Islamic Perspectives (AU 2) (article 9) Observation paper due
	19	No Class
	22	No Class
	24	Why Religion is Natural and Science is Not
	26	Cognitive Science of Religion (KSS 3)
	29	Why Would Anyone Believe in God?
May	1	
	3	The Physical Nature of Religious Life
	6	
	8	Psychology from an Islamic Perspective (articles 6, 8)

Final Friday, May 10 9:00 a.m.

The final exam for this class may not be changed or eliminated to suit the convenience of either the instructor or the students. It is the responsibility of the students to review the final exam schedule at the beginning of the semester and adjust their travel and work plans accordingly. Students with a Provost's excused absence will receive permission to reschedule their final exam. [Criteria for a Provost's excuse are given under "Attendance Expectations for Students" in the Faculty Handbook and in *The Crimson*.] Students who have three exams scheduled on a particular day during the final exam period may request permission from the Dean of the school of the student's first major to reschedule one exam. The Dean will consult with the instructors involved. The Dean, however, is not required to grant such a request.

This schedule may be changed at the discretion of the instructor to better meet the needs of this course