

RELIGION AND PSYCHOANALYSIS
REL4157-SummerBW61

“Religion would thus be a universal obsession neurosis; like the obsession neurosis of children, it arose out of the Oedipus complex, out of relation to the father. If this view is right, it is to be supposed that a turning away from religion is bound to occur with the fatal inevitability of a process of growth, and that we find ourselves at this very juncture in the middle of that phase of development.”

Sigmund Freud

“Psychoanalysis itself is just a stripe on the coat of the tiger. Ultimately it may meet the Tiger—the Thing itself—O.”

Wilfred Bion

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Course Description:

From Freud’s dismissal of religion as rooted in the infantile wish to be protected by an all-powerful father to Wilfred Bion’s reflections on the mystical dimensions of psychoanalysis, religion has been a central topic of interest for both classic and contemporary psychoanalysts. Taking an historical and critical approach, this class explores the numerous interactions between psychoanalysis and religion. It discusses the different perspectives of psychoanalytic theorists, such as Freud, Jung, Winnicott, and Kohut on a variety of religious traditions including Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and phenomena such as ritual, mysticism, myth, and meditation.

Course Objectives:

- To familiarize students with a range of psychoanalytic perspectives and how these different thinkers and schools have approached religion.
- To develop analytic skills in which student can independently apply different psychoanalytic theories to religious phenomena.
- To understand the ways in which psychoanalysis and religion have conflicted, competed and collaborated in making sense of the human condition and religious phenomena.
- To introduce students to an intellectual community whose basic rules of engagement and discourse are fundamentally different from, and sometimes hostile to, those of the religions being analyzed. This encounter will foster a spirit

of intellectual freedom and critical inquiry and, in turn, will require the ability and willingness to think openly and critically about controversial topics. (I encourage students who feel nervous or uneasy about this requirement to come and chat with me before committing to the class).

Course Requirements:

There will be two types of graded assignments:

1. [Writing Assignments](#) There will be a short writing assignment at the end of each module (700-1000 words). For each of these assignments, you will be required to watch a movie and apply a specific psychoanalytic theory to interpret it. These are formal writing assignments and must be written in an academic style. There are four of them and each one is worth 100 points, and 10% of your total class grade. Specific instructions and the rubric is available in webcourse.

In total, the writing assignments make up 40% of your total class grade.

2. [Exam Guidelines](#) At the end of each module, there will be a module exam that will test your understanding of the material in that unit. Each exam consists of 40-45 multiple choice and true/false questions and you will have 60 minutes to take them. They are open-book exams and the questions are drawn from the review terms given at the end of each class. There are four exams and each one is worth 15% of your final grade.

In total, the exams make up 60% of your total class grade.

There is no extra credit in this class and there will be no extensions on any of the assignments apart from in the case of a documented illness or emergency.

Ungraded Assignments: Review Terms boards

At the end of each class, I will give a list of review terms and concepts that you need to know for the exams. I will set these as discussion boards so you can share answers and questions with your peers and myself. These essentially function as virtual equivalents of classroom discussions. They are optional and ungraded but will help you prepare for the exams so are strongly recommended. Please see specific instructions here: [Review Post details](#)

All assignment dates are set in webcourse. It is your responsibility to check and keep on top of the assignment section with its list of due dates.

Grading Scale:

A (94-100) A- (90-93) B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82) C+ (77-79) C (70-76) D+ (67-69) D (63-66) D- (60-65) F (0-59)

WRITING HELP: The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF students. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by the first floor of Colbourn Hall, or call (407) 823-2197.

Deadlines: I follow a strict policy for late assignments for summer intensive courses. Unless we have agreed on an alternative date in advance or you have a documented emergency, I will not accept any late assignments.

UCF Academic Integrity Code

All written assignments require strict adherence to the honor code and must include the following “I (print name) hereby certify that I have adhered to the UCF academic integrity code (signature).” I have a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism, which I consider an essentially cowardly and uncreative activity that undermines education, character and community:

UCF is committed to promoting a culture of academic integrity where faculty and students work together to meet our personal, professional, and social responsibilities. A degree from UCF is only valuable to the extent it reflects valid assessments of student learning. Misrepresenting your learning on texts, projects, reports, or papers invalidates your grades and tarnishes the credibility of UCF. While collaboration is encouraged in the learning and studying process, you should assume all tests, quizzes, ect. require your individual effort unless explicitly directed otherwise. Unauthorized collaboration, whether voluntary or not, is cheating. Unauthorized use of materials during a test, quiz or other assessment is cheating. Regarding papers and projects, one of the core fluencies that students need to demonstrate is the ability to discern information that is common to the public from the intellectual property of individuals. Use of protected ideas, processes or language without attribution or proper citation is plagiarism.

Student Accessibility: Any student requiring accommodations in this course must contact Student Accessibility Services at the start of class. <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu>

Required Course Texts:

This is a level 400 class and reading heavy. Please order these books as soon as possible:

Steven A. Mitchell, and Margaret J. Black, *Freud and Beyond: A History of Modern Psychoanalytic Thought* (Basic Books)

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of An Illusion* (Standard Edition) W. W. Norton & Company;
1 edition (September 17, 1989)

Carl Gustav Jung, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* (Vintage; Reissue edition (1989)

Mark Epstein, *Going to Pieces without Falling Apart* (Harmony; Reprint edition (June 1, 1999)

Course Schedule:

Week One: June 25th-

What is Psychoanalysis? And Introducing Freud

Week Two: July 2nd-

Freud on Religion

Week Three: July 9th

Introducing Jung

Week Four: July 16th

Jung on Religion

Class Withdrawal Deadline is July 19th 2018

Week Five: July 22nd-

Introducing Kohut and Kohut on Religion

Week Six: July 29th -

Introducing Winnicott and Winnicott on Religion

Class Ends on Sunday August 5th

Final Assignments due on Sunday August 5th

Grades due in Wednesday 8th August.

**The reading for each class is given on the Content Page of each class PowerPoint*