Course Description:
This course is designed to explore topics in the psychology of religion with the goal of relating the findings to the helping professions. The course is also designed to encourage thought about the psyche as it works in religious thought, feeling, and behavior. One tool we will use to facilitate this kind of reflection is reading of some of the major approaches to the psychology of religion. Another is observation of religious practice. Another is a habit of asking questions— and following them up with questions. Questions are important because psychology, like most fields of study, is a process of inquiry. A seminar format allows for sharing results of student research on selected topics. A key goal is to consider the significance of the research findings for Christian ministry.

Everyone should come to class prepared to say what he or she sees as the main point of the reading.
- Everyone should attempt to understand the structure of the author's argument. Everyone should have a question or two about the readings.
  All these contributions to the discussion should come with page numbers attached.

Course Objectives:
After having completed this course students will:

1. be able to think about how the psyche works in religious thought, feeling, and behavior.
2. Become familiar with the psychological methods and tools by which religion is studied.
3. Explore the interplay of religion and culture as it affects individuals.
4. Develop awareness of approaches to evaluating the effects of religion upon individuals' lives.

About the Readings:
This is a seminar/reading course (assume a total of @ 1600-2000 pp. of assigned and collateral readings). Some class time will be reserved to process/discuss textual reading and suggested readings, but the student will be expected to pursue reading in depth along lines of personal interest and topic chosen. Most textual reading will be directly related to class process. Specified readings are to be read before the assigned dates with a one-page response prepared before class sessions. Nine responses are expected starting on the Feb 19th 2002.
Required Texts:


William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.


Recommended Texts:


3. Part of the course will be seminar sessions led by class members on topics selected from the following list:
   1. Conversion
   2. Sanctification
   3. Healing and Health (body/mind/spirit)
   4. Spiritfilledness and Leadership (power)
   5. Tongue Speaking and Charismata (objective study)
   6. Faith
   7. Dividedness and Wholeness of the Self
   8. Listening to God--Knowing God's Will

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Regular attendance.

2. Write a thorough religious auto-biography (8-10 pages) centered on your own psycho-religious development. **Due March 28, 2002**

3. Complete textual and other assigned readings by specified dates. Responses to weekly reading assignments are to be presented in class each **Tuesday**.

4. Working with a small group, prepare and present a 75-minute seminar presentation on your selected topic. (to be presented in May).

5. Final Paper: Present a documented, 15-20-page research paper on any appropriate topic in the field of psychology of religion not later than **May 17th, 2002**. Submit topics for approval on **March 5th, 2002**.

6. Grades will be developed from class participation, reading responses, seminar presentation, and the research paper.
A "Course Calendar with Weekly Readings" for May will be modified based on the number of students in the course.

Seminar Assignments with Weekly Readings

Week 1       Feb 12 & 14

Religion and the value of individual experience: William James
William James, Varieties of Religious Experience, Lectures I and 2.

Week 2       Feb 19 & 21

Typologies of Religious Orientation: Intrinsic and Extrinsic.
1. Allport, Gordon W., "The Religious Context of Prejudice" (on reserve)

Question: How does Allport develop an empirical question? How does he relate psychology to other ways of knowing? What do you think of the distinction Allport draws between intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations?

Wulff, Psychology of Religion, pp.205-242 and pp.199-204. These pages are jam-packed. Leave plenty of time to read them.
Question: Which of the studies described seems to you to give the most insight into religion? Think about what aspect of religion it allows you to understand. How satisfying is this insight? Will it help you understand other aspects of religion? of the psyche?

Week 3       Feb 26 & 28

Religion as a Means of Dealing with Life:

Wulff, Psychology of Religion pp.243 –257
Questions What are the main aspects of religious beliefs that help people to cope as per readings?
**Week 4**  
**March 5 & 7**

**Religion and Thought Processes:**

*Question:* According to Proudfoot and Shaver, does the setting of an experience have any effect on how religious it seems? Think about this for our field experience.

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**Week 5**  
**March 12 & 14**

**Religion and Mature Adulthood**


*Question:* What difference do social structures make to development, according to Erikson? When is religion most important to people in their lives? In what forms is religion important to people and at what ages, as Erikson sees it? Is development a concept which depends strictly on psychological investigation? How widely should a psychology of religion focus as it seeks variables to investigate? How can humanistic hunches help or hinder research?

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**Week 6**  
**March 19 & 21**

**Religion and Judgments of Causes**


*Questions:* What reasons do the writers give for thinking that attribution theory will help the psychology of religion? What do Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick add to the ideas of Proudfoot and Shaver? How could you use these ideas in a field study?

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**Week 7**  
**March 26 & 28**

**Psychoanalytic Approaches to Religion:**

Freud, Sigmund, *The Future of an Illusion*, Chapters IV-VII. (on reserve)

*Question:* What is your response to Freud’s notion of religion as an illusion? How does it fit in the development of the personality, according to Freud?

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**Week 8**  
**April 1-5**  
**Reading Week**
Week 9    April 9 & 11

Psychoanalytic Theory and Its Applications- Mystical Experiences
Ralph W. Hood, “The Empirical Study of Mysticism” in Spilka & McIntosh *Psychology of Religion* pp. 222ff

*Question:* Why is mystical experience important to psychological of religion?

**Jung on Ritual as Transformation**

Week 10    April 16 & 18

Attachment Theory and Psychology of Religion

*Question:* In what ways is attachment theory like psychoanalytically oriented theories? In what ways is it different?

Week 11    April 23 & 25

Cross-Cultural Challenges from Africa

On reserve.
Bergin and Payne; (in Spilka & McIntosh) Proposed agenda for a Spiritual strategy in Personality and Psychotherapy. 54-70.

*Questions:* How do Bergin & Payne’s ideas help you make sense of the African material? Do these ideas themselves make sense when you think about the African material?

Week 12    April 30 & May 2

"Conversion"

Seminar:

Reading: William James, *Varieties*, Lectures IX and X
Week 13    May 7 & 9

"Sanctification"
Seminar:
Reading: William James, Varieties, Lectures XI-XIII

Week 14    May 14 & 16

"Healing and Health"
Seminar:
Charisma and Tongue Speaking
Seminar

Week 15    Finals Week

** The professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus.