

## **Sacred Geographies: Place, Space, and Pilgrimage**

**Fall 2015**

REL4491/5338

T 8-9 (3-4:55)/R 9 (4:05-4:55)

Office Hours: T 11:30-12:30, 2-3; R 3-4

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### **Course Description**

Sacred springs, sacred groves, and sacred mountains loom large in the religious imaginary in many religious traditions. Using textual and ethnographic sources, we will explore various conceptions of sacred space and place, and of movement, to, from, and between them. We will read accounts of actual pilgrimages as well as theoretical works which attempt to understand this practice. This course will draw primarily on religious traditions of Asia and the Americas to consider what constitutes sacred space and how people use this space in both religious and practical terms.

### **Selected Readings:**

Selections from William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*

Basho, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*

David Haberman, *Journey through the Twelve Forests*

Ian Reader, *Making Pilgrimages: Meaning and Practice in Shikoku*

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To analyze how different peoples and traditions understand concepts of and relationships between humans, place, and space;
2. To familiarize students with theoretical approaches to the study of religion and sacred geography;
3. To read theoretical texts and materials critically;
4. To improve students' ability to write analytically and comparatively about the broad themes and theories, as well as specific texts and cases, studied; and
5. To explore alternate forms of communication in the digital humanities.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **1. Mapping your World (20%)**

In this narrative essay (7 pages), you will consider your connection to place and geography. Write about your own sacred geography, reflecting upon your own assumptions about land and geography. Discuss how your landscape is invested with meaning. How is this landscape sacred, and think about the religious/cultural assumptions about why this landscape. What makes it beautiful, sacred, or and/or worth saving? For example, how has your experience of the landscape shaped your beliefs about reality, life, and the cosmos or the divine. The role of humans and animals in the world? Incorporate at least three of the authors we have read to date. **Due Tuesday, October 13.**

## **2. Mapping Exercises, Reading Reflections and Blog Posts (25%)**

Each week, you will write a short response (300-500 words) to issues raised in the reading. These responses will provide some grist for classroom discussion of the material and provide an opportunity to communicate in alternate formats.

Blogs are increasingly being used by academics and are one way of conveying ideas to the public. These blogs will be available to members of the class. You can choose your communications format, e.g., WordPress, Tumblr and you can include pictures, if relevant. You should post links to the sites in the classroom discussion page by **10 pm, Monday evening**.

If you choose to blog using the discussion tool in Canvas, these are the directions. Creating Your Blog

1. Click on Discussions in the left navigation in your course.
2. Click on the blue +Discussion button. This thread will serve as your individual blog.
3. Title the blog using your name – e.g. “John Doe’s Class 101 Blog”
4. Check Allow threaded replies.
5. Do not check or select any other settings.
6. Feel free to add a description in the Rich Content Editor box.
7. Click the blue Save button.

Three times over the semester, your blog posts will incorporate the spatial humanities and mapping exercises. Map a pilgrimage, literary text, or set of sacred sites on Google Earth or an app of your choice. How does this spatial information change our understanding of the material, if it does? What choices did you make? What might have been left out?

**Canvas Resources.** I have created resources pages in Canvas on mapping and the digital humanities. This page is wiki-style, so students can edit as well.

## **2. Critical Mapping Exercise (10% of grade)**

Over this week, in groups of two or 3, you will locate and map local sacred geographies, based on existing literary sources. You may choose sites based on Bartram or Rawlings – or propose a similar project. **Due October 6, 2015.**

## **3. Final research paper with digital component (25% of grade)**

You will be expected to produce one medium length research project (10-15 pages undergrad; 15-20 graduate) on either a particular religious tradition or on sacred geographies that fit criteria of ‘religious’. You are to offer a comprehensive description of the sacred geography of that tradition. Research for this paper will require at least three books, three articles, and two electronic resources. Graduate students will compile an annotated bibliography relevant to their area of specialization. This research should incorporate a digital component, reflecting the mapping and digital work we have done over the semester. **Due December 3, 2015.**

## **4. Final Presentation PechaKucha (<http://www.pechakucha.org/>) (10%)**

You will prepare a short presentation about your project. Since you chose the project, it will already be something that is interesting to you, and that should make for some interesting presentations. But just to be sure things stay interesting, here are some rules.

You will have exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

Your presentation will use PowerPoint, but you'll be restricted to 20 slides. No more, no less. See Canvas for more details.

#### **4. Discussion/Class participation (10%)**

This class will be conducted in a seminar format, and in-class discussions of the material are critical. You are responsible for attending class and participating in the in-class assignments.

**Software/GPS:** The Map Library has GPS for loan if anyone would like to use those. UF also has software licenses for some software such as GIS, if anyone is interested.

#### **Grading Scale**

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	Below 60

Grades are consistent with UF policy as stated here:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

#### **POLICIES AND RULES**

##### **Late or Make-Up Assignments**

You may take an exam early or receive an extension on an exam or essay assignment only in extraordinary circumstances and with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

##### **Attendance and Participation**

Class attendance is required. Poor attendance will harm your course grade. Students should arrive on time and prepared to discuss the day's readings.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

##### **Honor Code**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest

standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Common Courtesy**

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer, although the instructor reserves the right to ask you to turn off the computer if circumstances warrant. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class.

### **Conferences**

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours or by appointment.

### **Accommodation for Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Counseling Resources**

Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

1. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
2. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
3. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
4. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

### **Software Use**

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

## Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

## Readings and Assignments

August 25	Introduction
August 27	Sacred Space (Encyclopedia of Religion) (Canvas)
September 1	Mircea Eliade, "Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred" J. Z. Smith, "Map is Not Territory" (Canvas)

In-class exercise: (Prior to class, find and explore space that you consider to be sacred. What makes it sacred, why, and to whom? Bring pictures.) We will discuss these spaces in class. Consider how you might map or represent these spaces. What differences does *being in* this space make, as opposed to reading about this space.

## Sacred Space, Pilgrimage, and India

September 3	Haberman, <i>Journey Through the Twelve Forests</i>
September 8	<i>Journey Through the Twelve Forests</i>
September 10	Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Enshrining the Map of India: Cartography, Nationalism, and the Politics of Deity in Varanasi" in <i>Visualizing Space in Benares</i> (Canvas) Sanford, "Negotiating for Shrinathji" (Canvas)

## Mapping Sacred Florida

September 15	Visit to Map and Imagery Library: Critical Map Reading Walker, "The Lie of the Land" <b>First Mapping/Blog Exercise due</b>
September 17	Selections from <i>Bartram's Travels</i> and Coleridge, "Xanadu" (Canvas) Porter, "An Eighteenth Century Flower Child" (Canvas)
September 22	Rawlings, "Hyacinth Drift" Turcotte, "'For This Is an Enchanted Land': Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and the Florida Environment" Visit with Flo Turcotte, UF Archives

September 24	Digital Humanities/Wrisley, “Spatial Humanities” (Canvas)
September 29	Mapping exercise: Sacred sites of Florida “Quotes about Florida Springs, A Bit of Poetry, an Al Burt Essay, and Springs in the Bible” ( <a href="http://apalacheehills.com/springs/Springbook/Quotes.htm">http://apalacheehills.com/springs/Springbook/Quotes.htm</a> )
October 1	Critical Mapping exercise: Sacred sites of Florida
October 6	Tuan, “Space and Place: A Humanistic Perspective” (Canvas) Mapping presentations <b>Second Mapping/Blog Exercise due</b>
October 8	Greiner, “Sacred Space and Globalization” (Canvas)
October 13	Project and blog discussion <b>Mapping Your World due</b>
<b>Mapping Native Sacred Spaces</b>	
October 15	Film: Native Sacred Lands Lane, “Seeking a Sacred Center”
October 20	“Seeing through Maps” (Canvas) Basso, “Stalking with Stories”
October 22	Vasquez, “Expanding the Conversation on Emplaced Religion” (Canvas)
October 27	Mapping Workshop with Carol McAuliffe Hangen, “Digital Humanities Primer” ( <a href="http://www.tonahangen.com/resources/dh-get-started/">http://www.tonahangen.com/resources/dh-get-started/</a> )
<b>Pilgrimage, Migrations, and Changing Places</b>	
October 29	Tweed, “Space” (Canvas)
November 3	Basho, <i>Road to the Narrow North</i>
November 5	Basho, <i>Road to the Narrow North</i>
November 10	Reader, <i>Making Pilgrimages</i> <b>Third Mapping/Blog Exercise due</b>

November 12	Reader, <i>Making Pilgrimages</i>
November 17	Tweed, "Diasporic Landscapes and Urban Landscapes" Digital Humanities discussion
November 19	McClymond, "You Are Where You Eat" (Canvas)
November 24	AAR
November 26	Thanksgiving
December 1	PechaKucha
December 3	PechaKucha <b>Research Paper Due</b>
December 8	Bartram Fieldtrip

## Writing Assignments Rubric

	EXPERT	PROFICIENT	APPRENTICE	NOVICE
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<b>INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE</b>	The paper demonstrates that the author fully understands and has applied concepts learned in the course. Concepts are integrated into the writer's own insights. The writer provides concluding remarks that show analysis and synthesis of ideas.	The paper demonstrates that the author, for the most part, understands and has applied concepts learned in the course. Some of the conclusions, however, are not supported in the body of the paper.	The paper demonstrates that the author, to a certain extent, understands and has applied concepts learned in the course.	The paper does not demonstrate that the author has fully understood and applied concepts learned in the course.
<b>TOPIC FOCUS</b>	The topic is focused narrowly enough for the scope of this assignment. A thesis statement provides direction for the paper, either by statement of a position or hypothesis.	The topic is focused but lacks direction. The paper is about a specific topic but the writer has not established a position.	The topic is too broad for the scope of this assignment.	The topic is not clearly defined.
<b>DEPTH OF DISCUSSION</b>	In-depth discussion & elaboration in all sections of the paper.	In-depth discussion & elaboration in most sections of the paper.	The writer has omitted pertinent content or content runs-on excessively. Quotations from others outweigh the writer's own ideas excessively.	Cursory discussion in all the sections of the paper or brief discussion in only a few sections.
<b>COHESIVENESS</b>	Ties together information from all sources. Paper flows from one issue to the next without the need for headings. Author's writing demonstrates an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	For the most part, ties together information from all sources. Paper flows with only some disjointedness. Author's writing demonstrates an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	Sometimes ties together information from all sources. Paper does not flow - disjointedness is apparent. Author's writing does not demonstrate an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	Does not tie together information. Paper does not flow and appears to be created from disparate issues. Headings are necessary to link concepts. Writing does not demonstrate understanding any relationships
<b>SPELLING &amp; GRAMMAR</b>	No spelling &/or grammar mistakes.	Minimal spelling &/or grammar mistakes.	Noticeable spelling & grammar mistakes.	Unacceptable number of spelling and/or grammar mistakes.

<b>SOURCES</b>	More than 5 current sources, of which at least 3 are peer-review journal articles or scholarly books. Sources include both general background sources and specialized sources. Special-interest sources and popular literature are acknowledged as such if they are cited. All web sites utilized are authoritative.	5 current sources, of which at least 2 are peer-review journal articles or scholarly books. All web sites utilized are authoritative.	Fewer than 5 current sources, or fewer than 2 of 5 are peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly books. All web sites utilized are credible.	Fewer than 5 current sources, or fewer than 2 of 5 are peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly books. Not all web sites utilized are credible, and/or sources are not current.
<b>CITATIONS</b>	Cites all data obtained from other sources. CMS/MLA citation style is used in both text and bibliography.	Cites most data obtained from other sources. CMS/MLA citation style is used in both text and bibliography.	Cites some data obtained from other sources. Citation style is either inconsistent or incorrect.	Does not cite sources.

Adapted from: Whalen, S. "Rubric from Contemporary Health Issues Research Paper"  
[http://academics.adelphi.edu/edu/hpe/healthstudies/whalen/HED601\\_r2.shtml](http://academics.adelphi.edu/edu/hpe/healthstudies/whalen/HED601_r2.shtml)