

LPS/PHILOS 140 Religion and Science

Adam J. Chin | Time | Location

1 Course Logistics

Contact: achin6@uci.edu **Office Hours:** TBA; via Zoom or in SST 740/742

Course Website: Canvas

Required Text: N/A; all texts will be made available online; see [section 9](#) below.

Course Description: Religion and science are often understood to lie at opposite ends of human experience. One, it is said, deals with matters of fact, with the actual nature of things. The other, it is said, deals with matters of morality, with the significance of things. Often, the two are cast in opposition to one another—religion is out to get science, and scientists are out to get religion. This view is known as the “Conflict/Warfare Thesis.” But is this the only way to view the relationship between religion and science? This course will explore four major characterizations of the relationship: conflict, harmony, dialogue, and separation. Before we get there, we’ll try to get a handle on just what religion and science are, and we’ll conclude with some reflections on why all this matters—if it does.

This course has no prerequisites and presumes no background knowledge in (any) science or in religious studies. Please note that we will approach the study of religion from a secular, academic perspective.

2 Course Goals and Objectives

After this course, I hope that you will:

- be familiar with the major ways in which people have understood the relationship between religion and science,
- think critically about the nature of religion and science, and
- identify and articulate an argument clearly and concisely.

In order to achieve the above goals, you will:

- isolate, summarize, and analyze arguments in academic and non-academic texts;
- construct concise written arguments and analyses; and
- engage in dialogue with those texts and with your peers concerning the nature of religion and science.

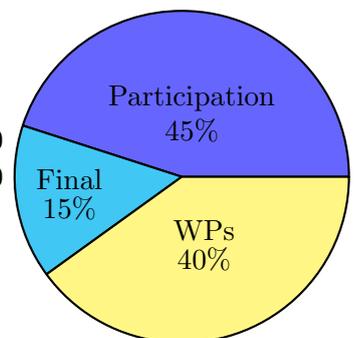
3 Assignments

Your grade will be composed of three parts: Discussion/Participation (45%), Writing Projects (WPs) (40%), and a Final reflection (15%).

There will be no curve for the course.

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A+	100-97.0%	B+	89.9-87.0	C+	79.9-77.0	D+	69.9-65.0
A	96.9-92.0	B	86.9-82.0	C	76.9-72.0	D	64.9-60.0
A-	91.9-90.0	B-	81.9-80.0	C-	71.9-70.0	F	<60.0



3.1 Discussion/Participation (45%)

A large component of this class will feature class and small group discussions, as well as various forms of groupwork. As such, it's important that you attend class every session and participate in these discussions. Your discussion/participation grade will be broken down as follows:

- Groupwork (18%)—each class you will be required to complete a worksheet/quiz that acts as a comprehension-check for one of the readings (marked below with a †). Each of these is worth 2% of your grade.
- Class surveys (6%)—you will be asked to complete three different surveys: one before week 1, one after week 2, and one at the end of the course.
- Attendance (10%)—attendance will be taken each class. It's important that you show up on time so that you can participate in your group discussions and with the class. The discussions we have will also act as templates for how to compose your WPs (see below)!
- Participation (11%)—active engagement with the material and with your peers is mandatory. However, I recognize that people have different ways of participating and engaging with course content—some feel comfortable speaking in front of everyone, others feel more comfortable talking one-on-one in office hours or via email. A rubric (link) regarding how your participation will be assessed can be found on Canvas.

3.2 Writing Projects (WPs) (40%)

At the end of each week (save the last one), you will submit a short piece of writing related to the readings and topic of the week. In the first two weeks, you will be asked to evaluate whether a given field/system/thing counts as a religion or science. In the third and fourth weeks, you will be asked to evaluate one of the readings. Word lengths and exact details for these assignments will be released at the end of lecture on Mondays/Tuesdays and can be found on Canvas.

Each piece will be due on the Saturday of the week at 5pm (PST)—**including Week 1**—and will be submitted online via Canvas. All WPs are worth 10% of your final grade.

3.3 Final Reflection (15%)

In lieu of a final paper, you will submit a final reflection on the course and what you have learned. This will be roughly five pages long and will address your prior views on religion and science before you entered the course, and how your experience over this summer session changed (or didn't!) those views.

More details on this assignment will be released during Week 5.

If you would prefer, however, you can instead write a 10 page argumentative research paper on a topic of your choice, related to this course and approved beforehand by me.

If you believe this is an option you would like to pursue, please contact me by 5pm (PDT) on Friday of Week 3.

4 Canvas

The course Canvas page can be accessed here: [LINK]. If you have logistical questions, please post them to the Logistics Questions discussion board. You're also welcome to ask content-related questions in a separate thread of your own.

5 Course Policies

5.1 Academic Dishonesty

All work that you produce and submit in this course must be your own. Cheating and plagiarism, [as defined here by UCI](#), will not be tolerated. Violations of academic integrity will be reported to the university and may result in failure of the course.

5.2 Absences and Tardiness

Attendance in lecture is mandatory. However, you will be allowed one (1) unexcused absence (that is, you can choose not to show up and not tell me about it beforehand, and you won't be penalized). In the case of an emergency, family death, etc., further absences may be granted. If you are able, please email me beforehand, or else email me as soon as possible after the absence.

I also expect you to show up to lecture on time. Almost every meeting will begin with groupwork, and your participation in those groups will be essential to your success in this course. I understand, however, that sometimes things come up! As such, you will have two (2) days in which you can arrive up to 20 minutes late (i.e. by XX:XX). However, if you show up on other days and miss the sign-in sheet, you *will* lose points. If you know in advance that you will have to be late, please let me know as soon as possible.

5.3 Late Submission Policy

All WPs are due at 5pm (PDT) the Saturday after they are assigned (see Canvas for dates). Late submissions will be accepted, but 10% of the assignment grade will be deducted for each calendar day after Sunday that it is late (e.g. if you submit it on Monday at 8am (PDT), 10% will be deducted).

Except in extremely exceptional circumstances, I will not accept your Final Reflection past the posted deadline ([DATE]). If you think you'll be unable to turn it in on time, please contact me as soon as possible.

5.4 Discussions

This course will broach potentially controversial topics related to, among others, religion, death, and nationalism. As such, it is important to keep in mind that some may have especially strong views associated with these topics, and that those views ought to be respected. I expect all discussions in this course, whether in-person or online, to be held in an academically respectable manner. This includes allowing others to fully

express themselves (by not interrupting them) and responding respectfully (by addressing the ideas and not attacking the person). If you have nothing nice to say, do not say anything. Students who fail to comply with basic rules of conversational etiquette will face appropriate consequences, which may include reporting to the university, removal from the classroom, and/or failure of the course.

6 How to Succeed in this Course

This course will feature lots of discussion, a fair amount of reading, and a bit of writing. To do well, you'll need to make sure you **stay on top of the reading** so that you can partake in our discussions—which will be important for helping you complete the weekly WPs. As such, you'll need to make sure to do all of the readings for a particular day *before that day*. I have tried to keep the readings short and interesting and have also indicated which ones you can/should skim. I expect you to read the others thoroughly; in some classes you may be expected to complete a reading comprehension pop-quiz.

To do well on the WPs, make sure to **pay attention to our class discussions!** What we do in class will help to serve as a model for the kind of analysis I expect in the WPs. I suggest you start the writing process on Thursday. Try to figure out what particular topic you want to write on and what sources you'll be using. On Friday, read your sources and start writing. On Saturday, fine-tune what you have. Grading rubrics will be posted to Canvas, so make sure to look at those! And if you ever have any questions, please don't hesitate to email me!

Finally, **send me emails and come to my office hours!** If you ever have further questions, want something clarified, are looking for reading suggestions, or just want to talk, I am here and happy to help however I can. If my normal office hours don't work, just send me an email and we can work out another time.

7 Campus Resources

Important: If you feel that you may need particular accommodations in this course, please contact both me and the [Disabilities Services Center \(DSC\)](#) as soon as you can so that we can make sure the appropriate accommodations are made in a timely manner. The DSC can be reached at 949-824-7494 and/or through their website. Please note that in order to request accommodations, you must first [register](#) through the DSC.

The following are a number of other campus resources that you might find useful as you navigate your way through this course (and general college life!):

- The [Writing Center](#) offers free feedback and advice on papers. Appointments can be made [online](#) and [peer tutoring](#) is available on a first-come, first-served basis most days of the week during the summer. If making an appointment, it's suggested that you try to do so during the first week of the quarter or else on Thursday/Friday afternoons/evenings.
- UCI's [libraries](#) are an excellent source of research materials. They not only house tens of thousands of physical books, but also provide access to a wide variety of

- academic journals and publishing houses. You can access many of these resources online as long as you are on campus, or else through [UCI's VPN](#) when off-campus.
- The [Counseling Center](#) offers a variety of professional mental health and wellness services. They are open Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm and can be reached at 949-824-6457.

8 (Tentative) Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Please check Canvas for the most up-to-date version of our schedule—and especially of our readings! Links in the below lead to Canvas or to the readings. Please make sure to do each reading *before* the class under which it appears! Also, make sure to **read/skim each reading in the order listed below**.

I've tried my best to keep your reading to less than 25 pages/session (excluding the ones I ask you to skim—I really do mean you should skim them!). Readings marked with a † are important! You will have to complete worksheets and groupwork related to them in class, so make sure you read them carefully!

1.1 (date) *What is this Course?*

Readings: N/A!

Pre-course survey due today 8am PDT

1.2 (date) *What is Religion?*

Readings: [Encyclopèdie](#); Selections from Mill, James, Durkheim; Excerpt from Arai Hakuseki (in Josephson (2012)); [Smith \(1998\)](#)†; Murguia (2005) (skim)

Writing Project I: Is X a religion?—due 5pm PDT Saturday ()

2.1 (date) *What is Science?*

Readings: Selections from Popper, Hubbard, [McLean v. Arkansas](#); chapters from March and McEvers (2008) and Duncan and Tyler (2008) (skim); [Thagard \(1978\)](#)

2.2 (date) *What is Religion-and-Science?*

Readings: Barbour (1990) (skim), Harrison (2006)†

Writing Project II: Is X (a) science?—due 5pm PDT Saturday ()

3.1 (date) *Conflict/Warfare*

Readings: Selections from Draper, White, Russell; [Dawkins \(1996\)](#)†; [Hall \(1986\)](#)

Mid-session Survey due today at 8pm PDT

3.2 (date) *Harmony/Integration*

Readings: [DeWitt video](#); Yalcinkaya (2010) (skim); Wright (2017); Subramaniam (2019)†

Writing Project III: Evaluate one of the authors—due 5pm PDT Saturday ()

4.1 (date) *Dialogue*

Readings: Qidwai (2019)†; Chiang (2019) (skim)

4.2 (date) *Separation/Independence*

Readings: Tolstoy (1882); [Gould \(1997\)](#)†; [National Academies entry](#) (skim)

Writing Project IV: Evaluate one of the authors—due 5pm PDT Saturday ()

5.1 (date) *What Methods?*

Readings: Selections† from Stark, T. Smith, Numbers; [Johnson et. al \(2021\)](#)

5.2 (date) *What Matters?*

Readings: Numbers (2019)†; [Rios 2021](#)†

Final Reflection—due XXX

End-of-session survey due XXX

9 Course Readings

There is no required textbook for this class; all readings will be made available electronically on our course website, which can be found [here](#).

The following is a list of sources from which the course readings will be drawn, with links to external sites when possible.

Barbour, Ian. *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*. HarperCollins Publishing, 1990.

Chiang, Ted. “Omphalos”. In *Exhalation: Stories*, 2019.

Dawkins, Richard. [Science Versus Religion](#). 1996

Draper, John. *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*. 1874.

Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. 1912.

Duncan, Todd and Craig Tyler. *Your Cosmic Context: An Introduction to Modern Cosmology*. 1 ed. Pearson, 2008.

[“Evolution Resources at the National Academies: Science and Religion”](#). The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Accessed 28 July 2021.

Gould, Stephen. [“Nonoverlapping Magisteria](#). 1997.

March, Marion D. and Joan McEvers. *The Only Way to Learn Astrology, Volume 1: Basic Principles*. 2nd ed. ACS Publications, 2008.

Hall, Norman F. and Lucia K. B. Hall. [“Is the War Between Science and Religion Over?”](#) American Humanist Association, 1986.

Harrison, Peter. “‘Science’ and ‘Religion’: Constructing the Boundaries”. *The Journal of Religion*. 2006, Vol. 86(1) 81-106.

Hubbard, L. Ron. *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Bridge Publications Inc., 2007.

James, William. *Varieties of Religious Experience*. 1902.

Johnson, Courtney, Cary Lynne Thigpen, and Cary Funk. [“On the Intersection of Science and Religion”](#). Pew Trend Magazine, Winter 2021.

Josephson, Jason Ānanda. *The Invention of Religion in Japan*. The University of Chicago Press, 2012.

McLean v. Arkansas, [529 F. Supp. 1255](#) (E.D Ark. 1982).

- Mill, John Stuart. *Auguste Comte and Positivism*. 1865.
- Murguia, Salvador Jimenez. "Re-Enchanting a Religio-Scientific Experience: Understanding the Extraordinary within the Pana-Wave Laboratory." *Epochè: The University of California Journal for the Study of Religion*. 2005, Vol. 23(2) 225-251.
- Numbers, Ronald. "Revisiting the Battlefields of Science and Religion." In *Rethinking History, Science, and Religion*, ed. Bernard Lightman, 2019.
- Popper, Karl. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. 1959.
- "Religion." [The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project](#). Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan Library, 2005. Web. 26 July 2021. Trans. (by Susan Emanuel) of "Religion," *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. 14. Paris, 1765.
- Rios, Kimberly. "Examining Christians' Reactions to Reminders of Religion-Science Conflict: Stereotype Threat versus Disengagement." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. 2021, Vol. 47(3), 441-454.
- Russell, Bertrand. *Religion and Science*. 1935.
- Smith, Jonathan Z. "Religion, Religions, Religious." In *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor, 1998.
- Stark, Rodney. *For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery*. Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Subramaniam, Banu. *Holy Science: The Biopolitics of Hindu Nationalism*. University of Washington Press, 2019.
- Thagard, Paul R. "Why Astrology is a Pseudoscience." *PSA: Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association*. Vol. 1978, 223-234.
- Tolstoy, Leo. *A Confession*. 1882.
- Qidwai, Sarah A. "Reexamining Complexity: Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Interpretation of 'Science' in Islam". In *Rethinking History, Science, and Religion*, ed. Bernard Lightman, 2019.
- White, Andrew D. *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*. 1895.
- Wright, Robert. *Why Buddhism is True*. Simon & Schuster, 2017.
- Yalcinkaya, M. Alper. "Science as an ally of religion: Muslim appropriation of 'the conflict thesis'". *The British Journal for the History of Science*. 2010, Vol. 44(2), 161-181