Instructor: Dr. Elijah Siegler  
Email: sieglere@cofc.edu  Office phone: 843-953-3910  
Office: 4 Glebe St. #201  
Office Hours: MWF 12-1 and by appointment (either in my office or by Zoom)

This course covers American religious history from the sixteenth century until today, including the religions of Native Americans, Puritans, Southern enslaved peoples and slave-owners, evangelicals, Jews, Catholics, Mormons, New Agers and many others, with some emphasis on the religion of U.S Southerners. Students will learn how religion in America intersects with politics, culture and race. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the religions of the Charleston area and to explore their families’ religious history. This course will be conducted entirely on Zoom.

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:  
- Identify important names, dates, places, institutions, denominations and concepts from four centuries of American religious history.  
- Appreciate how religion interacts with other important concepts in America, such as politics and law, race and ethnicity, commerce, and popular culture.  
- Analyze in speech and writing how religion shapes important issues in American life.  
- Understand the “lived” dimension of religion in American history, including in their own community and their own family.

This course will fulfill the General Education Student Learning Outcomes:  
Student Learn Outcome #1: Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted or valued in various expressions of human culture.  
Student Learn Outcome #2: Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments.  
These two learning outcomes will be assessed in the final exam, which will ask students to identify and interpret primary sources from American religious history.

There are two Required Texts:  
1) A History of Religion in America: From the First Settlements Through the Civil War by Bryan Le Beau; *Identified in the schedule below as HRA1*  
2) A History of Religion in America: From the End of the Civil War to the Twentieth-First Century by Bryan Le Beau; *Identified in the schedule below as HRA2*  
*Both are also available as e-books*

There are also required short readings, numbered 1-29, on OAKS.
Course Requirements:
--Participation and attendance including leading discussions in the “Breakout Room” and posting informed questions and comments on Zoom chat: 10%
--A 3 pp. reflection paper based on *A History of Religion in America: From the First Settlements Through the Civil War*, due on Feb 8: 10%
--Three asynchronous quizzes, to be announced in class: 1% + 2% +2% = 5%
--Oral Presentations in pairs, including slides; see OP in schedule for staggered due dates = 10%
--A 6pp. paper based on your family’s religious history, due on April 12 = 20%
--Midterm exam on March 3: 20%
--Final exam on April 28: 25%
Note: Both the midterm and final exams will have synchronous (multiple choice, short answer) and asynchronous (essays for which you will get the questions in advance) components.

We will review and discuss each assignment before it is due. There will also be various opportunities to gain bonus marks including 1) presenting “Religion in the News” in class 2) attending relevant extra-curricular events and writing them up.

All work must be original and all sources correctly cited. The university’s Honor Code will be strictly enforced. Students can find a complete version of the Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook, available online.

Grading Scale: A: 93-100; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 61-62 F: 60 or below.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

Mon 1/11: Introductions: What is religion? What is America?
Read: Studyreligion.org

Wed 1/13: What were the First Religious Encounters in Colonial America?
Read: HRA1 4- very bottom of 9, 15-23; OAKS 1 (“Green Corn Ceremony”)

Fri 1/15: How were the Colonies Religiously Distinct?
Read: HRA1 27-28; 33-36; OAKS 2 (“Constitutions of Carolina” Articles 95-113 only)

Mon 1/18- MLK Jr. Holiday- NO CLASS
Watch *The Witch* (Eggers, 2015) streaming on Kanopy and elsewhere

Wed 1/20: Discussion of *The Witch*

Fri 1/22: What do We Owe to Puritan Theology and Values?
Read: HRA1 28-32, 36-41; OAKS 3 (“Sinners in the Hand of An Angry God”)
Mon 1/25: What were the Religious Views of the Founding Fathers? 
Read: HRA1 45, 48-60, 64-67, 68-69; OP 1 and 2

Wed 1/27: How Did Religion Change Dramatically in the 19th Century? 
Read: HRA1 71-83, 87-99; OP 3, 4, and 5

Fri 1/29: How Did Women and Catholics Challenge the Protestant Establishment? 
Read: HRA1 99-103, 115-120; OP 6

Mon 2/1: How did Enslaved Peoples Express Themselves Religiously? 
Read: HRA1 107-115

Wed 2/3: How was Religion Used to Both Justify and to Condemn Slavery? 
Read: HRA1 134-138, 139-145, 148; OAKS 4 (Grimke); OAKS 5 (“Pro-Slavery Sermon”)

Fri 2/5: Who are the Mormons? 
Read: HRA1 120-125; OAKS 6 (Joseph Smith); OAKS 7 (“Most American Religion”)

Mon 2/8: How Did Native American Religions Change? 
Read: HRA2 9-14; OAKS 8 (“Catawba Interpretation”)

Paper due: HRA1 analysis

Wed 2/10: A Virtual Tour of KKBE Synagogue, Est. 1749 Special Guest: Rabbi Greg Kanter 
Read: HRA2 4-6, 41-43; OAKS 9 (“Pittsburgh Platform”)

Fri 2/12: How Did Southern Jews Exemplify the Immigrant Religious Experience? 
Special Guest: Dr. Shari Rabin 
Read: OAKS 10, 11, 12 (all by Dr. Rabin)

Mon 2/15: What is the “Third Great Awakening?” 
Read: HRA2 15-20; 30-32; OP 7, 8

Wed 2/17: What is the Social Gospel? 
Read: HRA2 32-37, last paragraph of 45-47; OP 9, 10

Fri 2/19: What is the “Fundamentalist vs. Modernist” Battle? 
Read: HRA2 58-65, 89-102

Mon 2/22: How are Religion and Science Related? Special Guest: Dr. Bryan Le Beau 
Read: HRA2 65-76

Wed 2/24: What is Pentecostalism? 
Read: 76-83; 102-107; OP 11
Fri 2/26: What are Examples of Religiously Creative Americans?
Read: HRA2 middle of 19- bottom of 21, 107-113; OAKS 13 (“Metaphysical Healing”); OAKS 14 (“Séance Spiritualism and Race”); OP 12, 13

Mon 3/1: Catch up, Discussion, Exam Review

Wed 3/3: Midterm Exam

Read: HRA2 6-8

Mon 3/8: What Is Civil Religion? (ASYNC class)
Watch: “Religion for Breakfast” on YouTube

Wed 3/10: Discussion of Civil Religion Videos
Read: OAKS 15 (Bellah); HRA2 124-126

Fri 3/12: What is Southern Civil Religion? Special Guest: Dr. Adam Domby
Read: OAKS 16 (Wilson); OAKS 17 (Baker); OAKS 18 (Domby)

Mon 3/15: How Did Religion Change in the Post-WWII Period?
Read: HRA2 126-141; OP14

Wed 3/17: What was Religious About the Civil Rights Movement? Special Guest: Prof. Damon Fordham
Read: HRA2 142-146, 155-161

Fri 3/19: What was Religious About Other Protest Movements?
Read: HRA2 163-173; OAKS 19 (Mary Daly) OP 15, 16, 17

Read: HRA2 173-176; OAKS 20 (“Asian Religions in America”)

Read: HRA2 184-201; OAKS 21 (Falwell)

Fri 3/26: How Does Studying American Religious History Help Us Understand the Trump Era?
Read: OAKS 22 (Jemison), OAKS 23 (“Jerusalem Embassy”) OAKS 24 (“Bible Prophecy”)

Mon 3/29: How have the Courts Affected American religion?
Read: HRA2 141- 142; 201-208; OAKS 25 (Yoder v Wisconsin); OP 18

Wed 3/31: How Has Evangelicalism Influenced American Culture?
Read: OAKS 26 (“Jesus and John Wayne”)

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Fri 4/2: How Has the Fear of Satan Influenced America? Special Guest: Dr. Gene Gallagher
Read: OAKS 27 (Gallagher)

Mon 4/5: What Is the Temple of Satan? (ASYNC class)
Watch: Hail Satan? (Lane, 2019) streaming on Hulu

Wed 4/7: Discussion of Hail Satan?

Fri 4/9: How Have Native American Religion and Politics Intertwined?
Special Guest: Dr. Suzanne Crawford O’Brien
Read: HRA2 161-163; OAKS 28 (O’Brien)

Mon 4/12: What is the Future of Religion in America?
Read: HRA2 217-222, 230-236
Paper due: Family religious history

Wed 4/14: How should American Religious History be Written and Taught?
Special Guest: Dr. Bryan Le Beau
Read: HRA1 1-3; HRA2 ix (bottom of page)-xiii

Fri 4/16: How Are Spirituality and Technology Linked? Special Guest: Dr. John Modern
Read: OAKS 29 (Modern)

Mon 4/19: Final Discussion and Exam Review

Wed 4/28: 9-10AM Final Exam

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PRO TIPS
--Honor Code: Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. Students can find a complete version of the Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook, available online.

-- Communication: Email me at siegler@cofc.edu if you have any individual issues regarding the course. I will respond within 24 hours, (48 hours on weekends). We can also arrange to meet at your convenience in my office or on my personal Zoom link: https://cofc.zoom.us/my/elijahsiegl (Meeting ID: 970 905 9200)
Log in Frequently to OAKS and check your email. OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted. Readings will be found at the Content Tab; Quizzes and the Assignment Drop Box will be found under the Grades tab. So you need to access OAKS several times a week; remember that I can see when you log onto OAKS and monitor your progress! Also, check your CofC email frequently because I will often send you updates and advice that way. Keep up with the course schedule, and be aware that the most current copy of the course schedule will be on OAKS.

--Technology Support: If you are having trouble with any particular link in OAKS, you may contact me directly via email at sieglere@cofc.edu. For tech troubles related to your CofC login, OAKS, or computer problems, please contact the CofC IT department at helpdesk@cofc.edu or by phone at (843) 953-3375. Instructions on how to use OAKS can be accessed here: http://it.cofc.edu/education/webcoaks/oaks/index_old.php. (Computer failure and/or unavailability does not constitute an excuse for failure to complete an assignment on time. If you experience recurrent technical problems that prohibit you from completing multiple assignments, you may be asked to withdraw from the course.)

--Other Types of Support: The Center for Student Learning (CSL) will provide online academic support services in course content, writing skills, and study strategies. For more information regarding CSL, please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843) 953-5635.

Students with documented disabilities who have been approved to receive accommodation through SNAP should feel free to discuss this during office hours. For more information, contact Disability Services at snap@cofc.edu.

--Mental & Physical Wellbeing: At the college, we take every students’ mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at http://counseling.cofc.edu or 843.953.5640 3rd Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting “4support” to 839863, visit http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.