Gender, Religion and Human Rights (ANT 3930)
T: 5-6 CSE E222
R: 6 CSE E222

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The intersection of gender and religion remains a complex issue in the context of human rights and international development. Human rights activists and feminists tend to present religion as an anti-thesis to women's rights and gender equality and often accuse religious authorities of holding conservative views of female sexuality and for preserving religiously inspired principles hostile to women's rights. References to the oppressive role of religion also dominate global policy discourses and have served as a key-motivating factor for a number of Western interventions in the global south. But are patriarchal religious institutions and norms as universal as the global human rights and development discourse suggest? In recent years, a more positive engagement with religion has also emerged, reflected among others in a body of literature that highlights religion as a potential resource for development and social change. A number of scholars have pointed out that this rather recent turn to religion is particularly associated with issues related to women' reproductive and sexual rights. Feminist inspired anthropologist have also shown that there exist religiously informed practices and institutions that not only empower women, but also reflect women's religious power and authority. Taking a non-normative, critical, anthropological and interdisciplinary approach, this course aims to explore the assumptions, challenges and potential of cross-cultural perspectives in negotiating gender, religion and human rights. The course intends to bring together anthropological work on religion and more recent work in the discipline on gender, sexuality, and feminist theory to consider the complex relationship between gender, religion and human rights in an increasingly interacting, globalized world.

General Course objectives

The following are the objectives I as an instructor have for this course

- ➢ Ensure that students master the course subject matter
- ➢ Ensure that students engage in discussions in a respectful way
- ➢ Develop students' ability to use course concepts in thinking and problem solving
- ➢ Prepare students to be life-long learners

➢ Develop students' interpersonal and team interaction skills
➢ Have students enjoy the course

Student learning objectives

When finished with this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Describe and explain the role of women in different religious traditions, including the role of women in religious leadership (SLO1)
- Provide an overview of the different positions to religion within the field of international development and human rights (SLO1)
- Engage in critical discussions about common representations and misrepresentations of women in religion (SLO2)
- Engage in critical discussions about the relationship between religion, gender and human rights (SLO2)
- Engage in critical discussions of concepts such as gender equality and gender justice (SLO2)
- Employ competing anthropological and social theories and theoretical terms to critically discuss the relationship between religion, human rights and gender
- Read and/or analyze newspaper articles, blog-post or videos/films that address the relationship between gender, religion and human rights using an anthropological lens (SLO2)
- Use relevant research to explore and test ideas and to support or refute generalization (SLO2)
- Discuss contested ideas and topics with members from other cultures in an informed, and thoughtful and respectful manner (SLO3)
- Employ basic ethnographic methods such as qualitative interviews, informal conversation and participant observation (SLO3)

Course structure

This class is structured after the team-based-learning (TBL) strategy, first developed by Larry Michaelsen. The course encourages collaboration and active learning for individuals and teams. While content knowledge also is an important part of the TBL strategy, the course will have a major focus on how to apply the concepts and theories that are introduced. The TBL strategy is specifically designed to enhance your problem solving skills and to develop your level of critical thinking. TBL allows you to engage with me and other students in the class, and you will have plenty of opportunity to get to know people and to make new friends. Most in-class time will be spent working on team activities. For those of you who have negative experiences with group work I want to emphasize that TBL was developed in order to avoid common drawbacks and flaws associated with traditional group work. You should therefore not assume that TBL is equivalent to regular group work or group projects. TBL is different. It is a strategy that is well researched and a

number of studies have shown that it has improved student performance. TBL is currently being used in a number of disciplines, including medicine, history, literature, anthropology and law.

Teams will be formed during the second week of the semester. Each team will have their own team folder, where scores of the team Readiness Assessment Test (tRAT, see below for more information) and other assignments will be recorded.

The course is divided into six modules. The syllabus for each module, including learning outcomes (which I encourage you to use actively for the Readiness Assessment Tests) will be posted on Canvas. Each module will contain specific learning objectives for that module and readings that will enable you to reach these objectives. Below is a *preliminary* schedule. Since this is a new course, you should expect changes in the syllabus. Follow CANVAS rather than this syllabus, as I may not be able to update the syllabus for every change that occurs. The easiest way to stay updated on readings and expectations is to check the MODULES folder in CANVAS.

Required texts

Bowie, F. (2006) The Anthropology of Religion

Abu-Lughod, L. (2015) Do Muslim Women need saving?

Van Klinken, A. (2016) Transforming Masculinities in African Christianity: Gender Controversies

Gaudio, R. (2009) Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City

PDF files of other required readings are available at the course e-learning website (Canvas).

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE
INTRODUCTION:
Tuesday August 22
Intro: Gender, Religion, Culture and Human Rights
Student expectations exercise
Team Formation: CATME

Thursday August 24
The Basics of Team-Based-Learning
Grading
Practice Readiness Assessment Test
READ:
Syllabus
Bayes, J.H. & Tohidi, N. (2001) Introduction
WATCH: Beijing +20 - Let's Not Wait another 20 Years for Gender Equality
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYwZN4rmCDc

MODULE I: IS CULTURE AND RELIGION BAD FOR WOMEN?
Tuesday August 29: **Module I Readiness Assessment Test**
READINGS:
Moller Okin, S. (1999) Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?
Merry, Sally E. (2005) Introduction. In Human Rights and Gender Violence
Tohidi, N. & Bayes, J.H. (2001) Women Redefining Modernity and Religion in the Globalized Context
Applications and Cross-cultural communication activity

Thursday August 31
READINGS:
Parekh, B. (1999) A Varied Moral World
Nussbaum, M.C. (1999) A Plea for Difficulty

Tuesday September 5
READINGS:
Dustin, M. (2012) Deference or Interrogation? Contrasting Models for Reconciling Religion, Gender and Equality

MODULE II: FEMINISM(S), GENDER AND RELIGION
Thursday September 7: **Module II Readiness Assessment Test**
READINGS:
Beasley, C. (1999) Starters on the feminist menu: liberal, radical and Marxist/socialist feminism
Nicholson, L. (2010) Feminism in "Waves": Useful Metaphor or Not?
Mahmood, S. (2001) Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival
Baden, S. & Goetz, A.M. (1997) Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]? Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing

Tuesday September 12
Ali, S.R. et al. (2008) A Qualitative Investigation of Muslim and Christian Women's Views of Religion and Feminism in Their Lives

Thursday September 14
Mahmood, S. (2011) Religion, Feminism and Empire: The New Ambassadors of Islamophobia

Tuesday September 19
Eriksen, A. (2014) Sarah's Sinfulness. Egalitarianism, Denied Difference, and Gender in Pentecostal Christianity

MODULE III: GENDER, RELIGION AND FAMILY LAW
Thursday September 21: Module III Readiness Assessment Test
READINGS:
Joffe, L. F. (2013) Introduction. Theorizing Conflicts between Women's Rights and Religious Laws
McClain, L. C. (2013) Marriage Pluralism, Family Law, Jurisdiction, and Sex Equality in the United States

Tuesday September 26
ETHNOGRAPHY:

Thursday September 28
ETHNOGRAPHY:

Tuesday October 3
ETHNOGRAPHY:

MODULE IV: RELIGION, REPRODUCTION AND SEXUALITIES
Thursday October 5: Module IV Readiness Assessment Test

Inhorn, M. (2011) Globalization and gametes: reproductive 'tourism,' Islamic bioethics, and Middle Eastern modernity
Reproductive Strategies and Islamic Discourse
Czarnecki, D. (2015) Moral Women, Immoral Technologies: How Devout Women Negotiate Gender, Religion, and Assisted Reproductive Technologies

Tuesday October 10
Cohen, E. (2012) Fetuses in a Thai Buddhist Temple as Chaotic Irruption and Public Embarrassment

Thursday October 12
Plummer et al. (2008) Aborting and Suspending Pregnancy in Rural Tanzania: An Ethnography of Young People's Beliefs and Practices
Abortion in Latin America – see book by Emma Tomalin

Tuesday October 17
Boellstorff, T. (2005) Between Religion and Desire: Being Muslim and Gay in Indonesia

MODULE V: DO (MUSLIM) WOMEN AND GAYS NEED SAVING?
Thursday October 19: Module V Readiness Assessment Test
Mohanty, C.T. (1988) Under Western Eyes: Feminist scholarship and Colonial Discourses
Haritaworn, J. et al. (2006) Gay Imperialism: Gender and Sexuality Discourse in the 'War on Terror'

Tuesday October 24
Bracke, S. & Fadil, N. (2011) 'Is the Headscarf Oppressive or Emancipatory?' Field Notes from the Multicultural Debate

Thursday October 26

ETHNOGRAPHY: Do Muslim Women need saving?

Tuesday October 31
ETHNOGRAPHY: Do Muslim Women need saving?

MODULE VI: RELIGION, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
Thursday November 2: Module VI Readiness Assessment Test
Razavi, R. & Jenichen, A. (2010) The Unhappy Marriage of Religion and Politics: problems and pitfalls for gender equality
Tomalin, E. (2010) Introduction
Balchin, C. (2011) Religion and Development: A Practitioner's Perspective on Instrumentalisation

Tuesday November 7
Kirmani, N. (2011) Engaging with Islam to promote women's rights: exploring opportunities and challenging assumptions

Thursday November 9
Østebø, M. & Østebø, T. (2015) Are Religious Leaders a Magic bullet for Social Change?

Thursday November 14
ETHNOGRAPHY: Gendered Paradoxes part 1

Tuesday November 16
ETHNOGRAPHY: Gendered Paradoxes part 2

Tuesday November 21
Research project presentations

Tuesday November 28
Research project presentations

Thursday November 30
NO CLASS – THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday December 5
NO CLASS – FINAL PAPER DUE

Each module will follow a sequence known as the Readiness Assurance Process.

Readiness Assurance Process (RAP)

The RAP is an integral piece of the TBL Strategy. This process allows you numerous opportunities to demonstrate that you comprehend the readings and course concepts, while receiving immediate feedback on your progress. The RAP takes place in a sequence containing the following components:

1) **Readings**

At the start of each module, you will complete a number of readings outside of class. These readings contain the core concepts and ideas of that particular module. While these will not be the only reading for each module, they will provide you with the foundation that will be built upon with supplemental readings later on in each module.

2) Individual Readiness Assessment Test (I-RAT)

The first in-class activity for each module is the I-RAT, which is based on the assigned readings. These are in the form of a short quiz featuring multiple-choice questions focused on the key concepts and ideas of the readings. They are designed both to assess comprehension as well as to maintain accountability for reading the assignments on time. You will take the I-RAT on Learning Catalytics so you have to bring your laptop or a device where you can do this during the assigned time in class. Your I-RAT scores will be anonymous.

3) Team Readiness Assessment Test (T-RAT)

Right after finishing the I-RAT you will take the same test as a team. You are allowed to discuss the questions as a team and decide on an answer for each question. You will also take the t-RAT on Learning Catalytics. (If this by any chance should not work, you will take the team using a special "scratch-off" answer sheet that immediately tells you whether you have the correct answer.) The teams T-RAT scores will be posted on Canvas so teams can monitor one another's performance.

4) Appeals

After the T-RATs are completed, teams can appeal any question they missed on the team test. Appeals are only granted when an argument is presented demonstrating comprehension of the concepts. An appeal must be submitted in writing and explain in a couple of short paragraphs why the team believes its answer to be correct. *Direct evidence from the reading must be used and cited.* Appeals are to be submitted me by e-mail within 24 hours after class. If the appeal is successful, the points will be added to the team score as well as for any individual that answered the same way as the team. Any team members who had the question correct initially will continue to receive credit on the question. ONLY the members of a team that appeal will be eligible for a change in score, meaning each team must complete and submit a separate appeal. If an appeal is unsuccessful (or your team does not submit an appeal) you will not receive points of the question, regardless of whether or not other teams successfully appeal the question.

Applications

Most of the class meetings will consist of team-based activities that will allow you to apply the material learned from the readings. I will assign different types of applications including gallery-walks (more information in class) and debates. Most of the application exercise will, however pose a question (often based on a news article, a case, a film), and require that you as a Team make a decision. Your Team will need to poll each member, listen to each member's ideas and their explanation for why their idea should be supported, and then reach a Team consensus. At the end of your deliberation, all of the Teams will simultaneously show their decisions. Then we will

discuss the question as a class. Over the semester we will do many smaller applications. 6 randomly selected Team Applications will be graded. The Team Portion of each graded application is worth 20 points and will be posted on Canvas.

Essay

You will work on an essay through this semester. The essay should be maximum 3000 words in length. The objective of this paper is to help you develop your writing abilities. As part of the group applications we will work on how to hammer out arguments and on how to support an argument through active and critical engagement with course theory and literature. In this essay you are challenged to work on this at an individual level, but you will also get feedback from your peers during the writing process. More information about the format of these essays will be given in class and posted on Canvas.

Peer Evaluation

One of the most significant concerns with working in a group and receiving team grades is that some of the members of the team may work harder than others or "free-ride" off those in the group willing to put in more effort. You will be given a chance to evaluate your team member peers during the course. There will be an informal evaluation at the mid-term point, used as feedback for individual team members. At the end of the semester, each of you will complete a confidential "peer evaluation" to assess the contribution of the other members of your team. You will be evaluating each member on his or her participation in team activities. (Did they come to class regularly? Where they prepared for the day's activity? Did they contribute productively to the team? Respect others' ideas?) These evaluations are completely anonymous and give you a chance to reward or punish teammates based upon their team efforts. I will provide more information about this in class and a copy of the evaluation form will be posted on Canvas.

Grading

Grades are based on three categories of evaluations

A) Individual Performance
- a. 6 IRAT scores, 28 points each   168
- b. 5 Reflections / applications – 20 points each   100
- c. Essay (including draft, peer feedback and final paper)   300
- d. Attendance   100

B) Team Performance
- a. 6 GRAT scores, 28 points each   168
- b. 5 graded team applications (30 points each)   150

C) Team Contribution

a.	Mid-term peer evaluation	100
b.	Final peer evaluation	100

You will decide, as a class, how much each category above will contribute to your final grade. We will decide these proportions during the second week of the course. Your final grade will be determined by your standing in the overall distribution within our class.

Grading scale

GRADE	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
TOT %	94-100	88-93	82-87	76-81	71-75	66-70	61-65	56-60	51-55	46-50	40-45	<40

Class requirements and assignments

UF Policies

Academic Honesty: When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: *"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."*

On work submitted for credit by UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied: "*On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.*"

Campus Helping Resources: Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The UF Counseling and Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students.

1. *Counseling and Wellness Center*, http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/

2. *Student Health Care Center: http://shcc.ufl.edu/*

For an overview of various resources see http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help

Disabilities: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, 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.

Technical assistance: For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu

- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2

- https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml