



**IDS 2935 (section 23053):  
Religion, Social Movements, and Social Change  
Fall 2020 (Quest 2, Trial 2)**

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Schedule: Tuesdays period 5-6 (11:45-1:40); Thursdays period 5 (11:45-12:35)

Office Hours: by appointment (zoom and phone)

## **I. DESCRIPTION**

This class explores the role of religion in movements for social change. We will address core questions in the study of social movements – how movements emerge, why people join, how they mobilize resources, what strategies and tactics they employ, and what goals they seek – by examining a range of case studies, including civil rights and anti-racist organizing, environmental protection, LGBTQ rights, animal rights, immigration reform, and gender justice. We will pay particular attention to the distinctive ways in which religion enters into the formation, identity, practices, and outcomes of various movements.

This course is taking place during a time of radical changes in social movements and political culture, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, protests against police violence, the rise of authoritarianism, and the US presidential election. Class readings, activities, and discussions will address these events and help us analyze and evaluate them. We will pay particular attention to the role of the media (including social media) in both interpreting social changes and contributing to them. We will explore, for example, the ways that movements have adjusted to the pandemic by moving many activities online, and also the ways that the pandemic itself has generated moral and political issues and even become a focus of protests.

As a Quest 2 course, this class is not a broad survey but rather a focused examination of the ways that perspectives, methods, and resources from the social and behavioral sciences can help us understand and address real-world issues. It will be organized around a number of guiding questions:

- How and why do people organize collectively to address social problems?
- How do religious ideas, communities, and leaders contribute to social movements?
- How do faith-based movements contribute to the solution of social problems?
- How do social movement activists use tools and data from the social and natural sciences to strengthen and understand their work?
- How do social movements use social media and other virtual resources in their organizing efforts?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected religious communities and social movements, both in the issues they address and in the ways they address them?

We will explore these questions by reading literature from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including economics, history, political science, psychology, religious studies, and sociology. We will also read primary sources, including documents produced by the movements themselves and oral histories. In addition, we will examine scientific research, survey data, and other resources that movement activists use to understand the problems they are addressing, public attitudes towards these issues, and effective ways to resolve problems. Students will also engage in independent and group research throughout the semester, documenting the ways organizations and congregations are responding to contemporary challenges.

This course meets the general education requirements for Diversity (D) and Social/Behavioral Sciences (S), as well as 2000 words towards the university writing requirement. It also counts as an elective for Religion majors and minors. Please see separate sheet for Quest and General Education goals, objectives, and learning outcomes.

### **Writing Requirement**

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. This course carries 2000 words that count towards the University Writing Requirement. You must minimum grade of C (2.0) for the course. It is possible to fail to meet the writing requirement and still earn a minimum grade of C in a class, so students should review their degree audit after receiving their grade to verify receipt of credit for the writing component. The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written work with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support (when appropriate), style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics, using the writing rubric attached to this syllabus. More specific guidelines for individual assignments will be provided later in the semester.

I encourage you to seek help from the university's Writing Studio ([www.writing.ufl.edu](http://www.writing.ufl.edu)), which offers support for writing in all fields and can be very helpful both in developing your first drafts and in polishing those drafts.

I recommend the Chicago manual of style (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>) as a guide for writing format and style. However, you may use a different style guide, as long as you check with me first and make sure to use the same format consistently.

## II. CLASS POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Attendance and Participation*: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Please let me know about any planned absences (for religious holidays, athletic events, or other reasons) as soon as possible. For unplanned absences (due to illness or emergency), please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation (e.g, doctor's note).
2. Please read and follow the [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#), produced by the UF Center for Teaching Excellence.
3. *Make-up policy*: I will arrange for a make-up or early in-class exam only with sufficient notice. If you do not receive an extension from the instructor, assignment will be marked down a half grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
4. *Honor Code*: The honor code applies to this and all courses taken at UF: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment" (<https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>). The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines may result in judicial action and sanctions, as specified in the Student Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>).
5. *Accommodation for Disabilities*: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.
6. *Counseling and Emergency Resources*: Please let me know if you need support facing challenges that affect your academic performance. There are many resources available for students, and I will be glad to help you get the assistance you need in order to thrive at UF. Some resources include:
  - a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career

counseling;

b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;

c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;

d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

e. For security issues, please contact the University Police Department: 392-1111, or 911 for general emergencies.

7. 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.

8. Privacy: Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

### **III. ASSIGNMENTS, READINGS, AND SCHEDULE**

#### **Readings**

All required readings will be available on our course Canvas site or online.

If possible, I recommend that you purchase Paul Almeida, *Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization* (California, 2019), which is an excellent introduction to the study of social movements. I have posted the required chapters on Canvas, but I think you will find the rest of the book very helpful if you are able to read it.

#### **Required Assignments**

1. Active, informed *participation* in class discussions, which will take place via Zoom meetings. We will meet via Zoom during scheduled class periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for group discussions and regular small group activities. On most Tuesdays, you will be broken into small groups for about half the class.

2. *Two short essays* based on the readings (1000 words min each), due Sun. 9/27 and Sunday 11/8; 25% of total grade each.

***Your other assignments will be based on your engagement with a specific movement.***

Working in small groups, students will choose an organization or religious community to study. We will select five movements to study in class on Oct. 15. You will conduct primary research to the extent possible, including analysis of primary documents and social media, interviews, and participant-observation to the extent possible given the requirements of social distancing. Your research will support several assignments, both individual and collective:

3. *Annotated Bibliography and class presentation (group project)*: As a group, develop an annotated bibliography of articles, both scholarly and journalistic. Choose appropriate readings for the class day which will be devoted to your movement during Module 5. Develop a short presentation on the reading(s), highlighting themes we have discussed throughout the class. Due Sunday, 11/8 by midnight. 10% of total grade.

4. *Interview* a member of the organization or congregation (individual project). We will develop our interview instruments (list of open-ended questions) as a group. Students follow oral history methodology, which we will learn in conjunction with the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program. You must transcribe the essay and submit it. (There are a number of free transcription programs and apps, including Google Keyboard and Transcribe.) Interview transcription is due by Sunday, 11/29. 10% of total grade.

5. *Research report* ((individual project). Write a report on your experience researching a contemporary movement, focusing on (a) the role of religion, and (b) the organization's adaptation to a post-COVID society (about 750-1000 words), due December 16. 20% of total grade.

6. *Poster* (group project) about the movement, addressing the origins, strategies, and goals, due December 8. As a group, create as a PowerPoint slide, which you will present during the last week of class. 10% of total grade.

## **Schedule**

### *Introduction to the Class*

Tu 9/1 Introduction to the class

Activity: In small groups, use [Perusall](#) to annotate James Ormrod, "Practicing Social Movement Theory in Case Study Groups." *Teaching Sociology*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (April 2011): 190-199.

### *Module 1: Understanding Social Movements*

Th 9/3 Gunder Frank and Fuentes, "Nine Theses on Social Movements." *Economic and Political Weekly* 22, No. 35 (Aug. 29, 1987): 1503-1507; 1509-1510

Tu 9/8 Paul Almeida, "Chapter 1: Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Action," in *Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization*,

pp. 1-18.

Activity: Group brainstorm. First, make a list of all the contemporary social movements you can (collectively) think of. Then make a list of ways to categorize movements (e.g., kind of membership, goals, organizational form, tactics, relationship to religion, relationship to power structures, etc.). Last, use this list to categorize the movements on your list. What comparisons and contrasts do you find?

Th 9/10 Almeida, "Chapter 2: How to Study Social Movements," in *Social Movements*, pp. 19-43.

Tu 9/15 Almeida, "Chapter 3: Theories of Social Movements," in *Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization*, pp. 44-62.

Activity: What methods and theories are most helpful for studying social movements? How do methods and theories need to change in order to understand contemporary movements? How do methods and theories account for religion – or not? What is a theory supposed to do, anyway?

Th 9/17 Almeida, "Ch. 4: Social Movement Emergence" and "Ch. 5: "The Framing Process"

Tu 9/22 James Downton and Paul Wehr, "Persistent Pacifism: How Activist Commitment Is Developed and Sustained." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (Sep., 1998): 531-550.

Participation," Recommended: Almeida, "Chapter 6: Individual Recruitment and in *Social Movements*

Activity: Zoom visit with Mennonite pastor

Th 9/24 Gregory L. Wiltfang and Doug McAdam, "The Costs and Risks of Social Activism: A Study of Sanctuary Movement Activism." *Social Forces*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (June 1991), pp. 987-1010.

Activity: Zoom with Chris Lomelin

Recommended: Almeida, "Ch. 7: Movement Outcomes"

**Sun 9/27 First paper due at midnight**

*Module 2: Understanding Religion's Role in Social Change*

Tu 9/29 Richard Brown, "Social Movements, Politics, and Religion in a Postliberal Era." In *Culture, Capitalism, and Democracy in the New America* (Yale University Press).

you last week. After your categories?  
 Activity: List as many possible relationships of religion to social change as can, with examples for each. Look at your list of movements from thinking more about religion, do you want to change any of your categories?

Th 10/1 Social Jack Delehanty, “How We Think about Religion and Why it Matters for Movements.” [Mobilizing Ideas blog](#).

Tu 10/6 Charles Peek et al., “Religion and Ideological Support for Social

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Case of Animal Rights.” *Journal for the Social Scientific Study of Religion*

3 (Sep., 1997): 429-439.

Rachel L. Austin and Clifton P. Flynn, “Traversing the Gap between Religion and Animal Rights: Framing and Networks as a Conceptual Bridge.” *Journal of Animal Ethics*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 2015): 144-158.

Activity: I will assign each small groups a particular movement. You will discuss the way religion shapes and justifies the ideologies of this movement.

Th 10/8 Pass 99, No. 2 Andrea Rottman, “God Loves Them As They Are: How Religion Helped Gay Rights in Wisconsin.” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, (Winter 2015–2016): 2-13.

Tu 10/13 Religious Laura Leming, “Church as Contested Terrain: Voice of the Faithful and Agency.” *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (Sep.,

2006), pp. 56-71.

David Crary, [“Three of the Nation’s Biggest Religious Denominations in Turmoil over Sex Abuse, LGBT Scandals.”](#) *PBS NewsHour* (March 3, 2019).

Activity: Research the ways that movements within the Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and United Methodist Churches are addressing internal scandals. What movements have emerged within each religious institution to address these issues? What strategies have they used? How have they related to institutional leadership? What differences do you see between these movements and social movements that emerge outside any established institution?

Th 10/15      **Choose your movement!** Today in class we will select five movements that you will study in small groups. The last module of the class and your last three assignments will build on your research on these groups.

Also today in class, we will develop our interview questions.

*Module 3: “Traditional” (Face to Face) Organizing*

Tu 10/20      Saul Alinsky, 13 rules for organizing

Activity: Zoom with organizer from congregation based organization

Th 10/22      Dennis Jacobsen, *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing* (Fortress Press, 2001), Ch. 3-4.

Tu 10/27      Richard Wood, “Faith in Action: Religious Resources for Political Success in Three Congregations.” *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Winter, 1994): 397-417.

Activity (with your research group): How does your movement organize locally?

Th 10/29      Amy Hay, “A New Earthly Vision: Religious Community Activism in the Love Canal Chemical Disaster,” *Environmental History* 14, No. 3 (July 2009), pp. 502-526.

Activity: Zoom with Vickie Machado

*Module 4: New modes of organizing*

Tu 11/3      Jonathan A. Obar, Paul Zube and Clifford Lampe, “Advocacy 2.0: An Analysis of How Advocacy Groups in the United States Perceive and Use Social Media as Tools for Facilitating Civic Engagement and Collective Action,” *Journal of Information Policy* 2 (2012), pp. 1-25



**Choose days for research presentations during Module 5.**

Activity (with your research group): How does your movement use social media?

Th 11/5  
(April 23, Erica Lizza, [“Race, Religion, and Black Lives Matter.”](#) *Berkley Center* 2018).

Vincent Lloyd, et al. [“Religion, Secularism, and Black Lives Matter.”](#) *The Immanent Frame* (Sept. 22, 2016).

Patrisse Alejandra Molina, [“BLM is a ‘Spiritual Movement,’ Says Co-Founder Cullors.”](#) *Religion News Service* (June 15, 2020).

Hebah Farrag, [“The Spirit in Black Lives Matter: New Spiritual Black Radical Organizing.”](#) *Transition*, no. 125 (2018), pp. 76–88.

**Annotated bibliographies due by Sunday, 11/8**

Tu 11/10  
A Dewey M. Clayton, “Black Lives Matter and the Civil Rights Movement: A Comparative Analysis of Two Social Movements in the United States.” *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 49, no. 5 (2018): 448-480.

Activity: Zoom with [Dr Zoharah Simmons](#)

Th 11/12  
protests: Ryan Gallagher et al., “Divergent discourse between protests and counter-protests: BlackLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter.” *PLOS One* (April 18, 2018).

**Sun 11/15 Second short essay due by midnight**

*Module 5: Case Studies*

Readings and activities for the last five days of class will focus on the movements we selected as the focus for small group research. Each group will provide articles and offer a short presentation for the day devoted to their movement. The second half of our Tuesday classes (11/17, 11/24, and 12/1) will be devoted to discussions in your research groups.

Tu 11/17 TBD

Th 11/19 TBD

Tu 11/24 TBD

Th 11/26 Thanksgiving; no class

Tu 12/1      TBD

Th 12/3      TBD

*Wrap up*

Tu 12/8      Posters due by 10 am.

Activity: Groups present and discuss posters.

Wed. 12/16    Reflection paper due

**RUBRICS AND GRADING SCALE** – attached