

# HISTORY 490

## CAPSTONE RESEARCH SEMINAR

### RELIGION IN AMERICA

**Christopher Jones**  
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**Office: 2109 JFSB**

**Office Hours: Th, 9:30-11:00 am (in person or on Zoom)**

**Winter 2023**  
**Section 005 (2114 JFSB)**  
**MWF 11-11:50 am**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The course represents the culmination of your years spent studying history at BYU. You will each research, write, and present an article-length piece of original historical scholarship. It should be based on research in primary sources, engage with the relevant historiography, and provide a fresh perspective or unique contribution to our collective knowledge of the past.

The course is structured around the theme of “religion in America,” each word of which is open to broad interpretation and methodological approach.

#### **COURSE FORMAT AND OBJECTIVES:**

The central aim of the course is for students to research, write, revise, and present an original piece of scholarship dealing with some aspect of “religion in America.”

In line with BYU’s Mission and Aims, this course should provoke reflection on how studying history (or family history or history teaching) at BYU has been intellectually enlarging, spiritually strengthening, character building, and helped inspire you to a life of service and learning.

Unlike other classes, our meeting schedule together will vary throughout the semester. That time will be spent discussing, critiquing, and engaging assigned readings and one another’s work, as well as presenting our research-in-progress to one another in several stages. There are no prepared lectures – students are expected to come to class having completed any assigned reading and/or writing and to be ready to discuss it with classmates.

#### **REQUIRED READING:**

You are not required to purchase any books for this class. All required readings will be made available via Learning Suite or through the library.

You may want to purchase a copy of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (sixth edition or newer). The book is available for checkout and on several reference shelves in the HBLL, as well.

#### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

There are eight graded components to this course:

##### **1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION – 5%**

Because we meet only a handful of times over the course of the semester, students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussion. This necessitates reading the assigned

material before class and coming prepared to critically and thoughtfully discuss it with both your classmates and myself. Classes will be graduate seminar-style.

You are also required to attend at least 5 individual meetings with me over the course of the semester. Appointments during office hours can be made online at <http://calendly.com/jonesofficehours>. Appointments during class meeting times labeled “Individual Meetings” in the syllabus can be made via email.

## 2. PRIMARY SOURCE/TOPIC PAPER – 5%

This essay outlines a potential research topic for your paper and identifies the primary sources you plan to use to write it. The essay should be ~2 pp. long, and should clearly identify the who, what, where, and when of your chosen subject. It should also include a formal bibliography of the primary sources.

## 3. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY – 5%

This essay describes the “state of the field” on your chosen research topic. It details not only what others have written about the subject, but why and how trends have changed over time. Your essay should also detail how your research speaks to that earlier work and what kind of contribution it will make. The essay should be ~3 pp. long. Parts of this essay may be used in both the prospectus and the final paper. It should also include a formal bibliography of ~8-12 secondary sources (scholarly books and articles) relevant to your chosen topic.

## 4. PROSPECTUS – 10%

Building on your primary source/topic paper and historiographical essay, this document outlines your paper topic, explains how other historians have approached the subject, and details the primary sources you intend to use. This paper is due early in the semester, and you will not know everything about your subject yet. That is okay. But your prospectus must suggest a working argument for the final paper. It should also include a formal bibliography of relevant secondary and primary sources. You will each give a 5-minute oral presentation of your prospectus in class.

## 5. CRITIQUE OF PEER PROSPECTUS – 2.5%

Each student will write a ~2 pp. critique of a peer’s prospectus.

## 6. FIRST DRAFT – 10%

This is a full draft of your essay, including footnotes/endnotes. Your argument should be clear and well-developed, your supporting evidence convincing, your writing interesting, and your conclusions significant.

## 7. CRITIQUE OF PEER FIRST DRAFT – 2.5%

Each student will write a ~2 pp. critique of a peer’s first draft.

## 8. FINAL DRAFT – 60%

The final paper should be ~20-25 pp. long, written in 12-point, Times New Roman font (or equivalent), with one-inch margins on all sides. It should be well written, clearly argued, and stylistically polished, with all sources properly cited.

## GRADING SCALE:

93-100%	A
92-90%	A-
89-87%	B+
86-83%	B

82-80%	B-
79-77%	C+
76-73%	C
72-70%	C-
69-67%	D+
66-63%	D
62-60%	D-
60-0%	F

## POLICIES AND REMINDERS:

This class is intended to be a space to critically and thoughtfully discuss history. Please feel free to ask questions and offer opinions during class (in fact, your grade depends on it!), but always treat your classmates and your professor with respect. Disagreement is allowed, but personal attacks and insults are not. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. If you experience a problem, please report the situation to the professor immediately.

## A NOTE ON TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices in class for taking notes and/or viewing reading materials. Each of us learns and takes notes differently. Regardless of your preferred method, please do your best to not distract the class or your fellow students. To that end, please silence your electronic devices when attending class in person and use them only to take notes or access course materials. I reserve the right to ask students to put electronic devices away at any point.

## LEARNING DURING A PANDEMIC

As we continue living through a global pandemic, please attend to your health and consider that of others in the class. If you get sick during the semester, please stay home. I will work with you to ensure you do not fall behind.

## CHILDREN IN CLASS

As part of my commitment to helping all students succeed, I have implemented the following policies regarding children in class:

1. All breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary.
2. Non-nursing babies and young children are welcome whenever alternate arrangements cannot be made. As a parent of four young children, I understand that babysitters fall through, partners have conflicting schedules, and other issues arise that leave parents with few other options.
3. In all cases where children come to class, I invite parents/caregivers to sit close to the door so as to more easily excuse yourself to attend to your child's needs. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates (or move to another seat if a classmate arrives with a child).
4. All students are expected to join with me in creating a welcoming environment that is respectful of your classmates who bring children to class.
5. Finally, I understand that among the most difficult aspects of parenting young children is sleep deprivation and exhaustion. The struggles of balancing school, work, childcare, and other day-to-day activities is tiring, and I will do my best to accommodate any such issues while maintaining the same high expectations for all students enrolled in the class. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

## UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT SUPPORT

In accordance with the policies of both BYU and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I am committed to supporting students regardless of their immigration status. I expect that every class member will heed President Russell M. Nelson's call to abandon attitudes and actions of prejudice. Each of us should strive to create a campus in which students and faculty are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (Ephesians 2:19)."

I am available to listen and support you in a safe, compassionate, and confidential manner. Without jeopardizing your student status, there are resources on campus to address concerns that may interfere with your academic, social, and personal success at BYU. To learn more, please contact the Office of International Student & Scholar Services at 801-422-2695 or visit [dreamers.byu.edu](http://dreamers.byu.edu).

**Honor Code:** Students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at (810) 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

**Preventing Sexual Harassment:** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Brigham Young University prohibits unlawful sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. The university also prohibits sexual harassment—including sexual violence—committed by or against students, university employees, and visitors to campus. As outlined in university policy, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are considered forms of "Sexual Misconduct" prohibited by the university.

University policy requires all university employees in a teaching, managerial, or supervisory role to report all incidents of Sexual Misconduct that come to their attention in any way, including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Incidents of Sexual Misconduct should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [t9coordinator@byu.edu](mailto:t9coordinator@byu.edu) or (801) 422-8692. Reports may also be submitted through EthicsPoint at <https://titleix.byu.edu/report> or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours a day).

BYU offers confidential resources for those affected by Sexual Misconduct, including the university's Victim Advocate, as well as a number of non-confidential resources and services that may be helpful. Additional information about Title IX, the university's Sexual Misconduct Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found at <http://titleix.byu.edu> or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

**Students With Disabilities:** If you suspect or are aware that you have a disability, you are strongly encouraged to contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC) located at 2170 WSC (801-422-2767) as soon as possible. The disability will be evaluated and eligible students will receive assistance in obtaining reasonable University approved accommodations.

**Mental Health:** Mental health is real and can adversely affect your academic performance and quality of life. If you experience significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems eating and/or sleeping, please consider reaching out to BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS - 1500 WSC, 801-422-3035, <http://caps.byu.edu>). Counselors there offer confidential individual and group counseling, as well as stress management services at no cost for full-time students.

## CLASS SCHEDULE + READINGS

## WEEK 1 (January 9-13)

January 9	Introductions
January 11	History and the Aims of a BYU Education
January 13	What is <i>Religion</i> ? Where is <i>America</i> ? Michael J. Altman, "Introduction: Something Someone Calls Religion, Somewhere Someone Calls America," <i>American Examples: New Conversations about Religion, Volume 1</i> (University of Alabama Press, 2020), 1-24. Available via LS; Catharine L. Albanese "Exchanging Selves, Exchanging Souls: Contact, Combination, and American Religious History," in <i>Retelling U.S. Religious History</i> , ed. Thomas A. Tweed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) 200-26. Available via <a href="#">HBLL</a> .

## WEEK 2 (January 16-20)

January 16 NO CLASS: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 18 Visit to Special Collections (Meet at 1130 HBLL)

January 20 Visit to Church History Library in Salt Lake City  
We will meet at the CHL at 2:00 pm. This is entirely optional but strongly recommended. If you attend, please come prepared having completed the online training for the CHL and having requested at least one source to see.

## WEEK 3 (January 23-27)

January 23 Reading Religion  
Read: Benjamin E. Park, “I Object to the Names Deism and Infidelity’: Theodore Parker and the Boundaries of Christianity in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Journal of Religion & Society* 15:1 (2013): 1-24. Available [here](#); Jeffrey P. Moran, “The Scopes Trial and Southern Fundamentalism in Black and White: Race, Region, and Religion,” *Journal of Southern History* 70:1 (February 2004): 95-120. Available via JSTOR [here](#).

January 25                    Reading Religion, Part II

Read: Judith Weisenfeld, "Framing the Nation: Religion, Film, and American Belonging," *Journal of Mormon History* 45:2 (April 2019): 23-48. Available via JSTOR [here](#); Alexis Wells-Oghoghomeh, "When Souls Gather: Women and Gendered Performance in Religious Spaces," chapter 6 in *The Souls of Womenfolk: The Religious Cultures of Enslaved Women in the Lower South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020): 194-233. Available via HBLL [here](#).

January 27 Reading Religion, Part III  
Read: Emily Conroy-Krutz, “Engaged in the Same Glorious Cause’: Anglo-American Connections in the American Missionary Entrance into India, 1790-1815,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 34:1 (Spring 2014): 21-44. Available via JSTOR [here](#); Christopher Cannon Jones, “A verry poor place for our doctrine’: Religion and Race in the 1853 Mormon Mission to Jamaica,” *Religion & American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 31:2 (Summer 2021): 262-295.

Available via LS.

WEEK 4 (January 30-February 3)

January 30

Style Matters

Read: Emily Raboteau, "Searching for Zion," *Transition* 97 (2007): 52-89.  
Available via [HBLL](#); Christopher Grasso, "Deist Monster: On Religious Common Sense in the Wake of the American Revolution," *Journal of American History* 95:1 (June 2008): 43-68. Available via [HBLL](#); Onaje X.O. Woodbine, *Black Gods of the Asphalt: Religion, Hip-Hop, and Street Basketball* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 89-105. Available via [HBLL](#).

February 1

Historiography

Read: Kevin M. Schultz and Paul Harvey, "Everywhere and Nowhere: Recent Trends in American Religious History and Historiography," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78:1 (March 2010): 129-162; Available via [HBLL](#). Sylvia R. Frey, "The Visible Church: Historiography of American Religion since Raboteau," *Slavery & Abolition* 29:1 (March 2008): 83-110. Available via [HBLL](#);

February 3

Interpreting Sources and Making Original Arguments: An Exercise

\*PRIMARY SOURCE/TOPIC PAPER DUE BY 11:59 PM

(you are required to meet with me at least once prior to submitting your paper)\*

WEEK 5 (February 6-10)

February 6

Individual Meetings

February 8

Individual Meetings

\*HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE BY 11:59 PM\*

February 10

Oral Presentations in History: A Primer

WEEK 6 (February 13-17)

February 13

Historiography Presentations

February 15

Historiography Presentations

February 17

Individual Meetings

\*SATURDAY, FEB. 18: PROSPECTUS DUE BY 11:59 PM  
(one copy to Professor Jones; one to peer reviewer)\*

WEEK 7 (February 20-24)

February 20

NO CLASS: President's Day

February 22

Individual Meetings

February 24

Prospectus Presentations

**\*SATURDAY, FEB. 25: PROSPECTUS CRITIQUES DUE BY 11:59 P.M.  
(one copy to Professor Jones; one to peer)\***

## WEEK 8 (February 27-March 3)

February 27 Prospectus Presentations

March 1 Citations Workshop

## March 3 Individual Meetings

## WEEK 9 (March 6-10)

## March 6 Individual Meetings

## March 8 Individual Meetings

## March 10 Individual Meetings

## WEEK 10 (March 13-17)

## March 13 Individual Meetings

## March 15 Individual Meetings

March 17 NO CLASS: Spring Break

## WEEK 11 (March 18-22)

\*SATURDAY, MARCH 25: FIRST DRAFT DUE BY 11:59 PM.

ANSWER IS 3.0 (1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0)

## WEEK 12 (March 27-31)

\*SATURDAY, APRIL 1: FIRST DRAFT CRITIQUES DUE BY 11:59 PM.

WEEK 13 (April 3-7)

## WEEK 13 (April 3-7)

April 5            Individual Meetings

April 7            Individual Meetings

**WEEK 14 (April 10-14)**

April 10            Individual Meetings

April 12            Individual Meetings

April 14            Individual Meetings

**\*April 15: FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 11:59 PM\***

**WEEK 15 (April 17-19)**

April 17            History and the Aims of a BYU Education, Revisited

April 19            Concluding Thoughts