
RELIGION 230: RELIGIOUS APPROACHES TO DEATH AND DYING

Instructor: Dr. Onishi

Skidmore College

Office: Ladd Hall 210

Office Hours: Thursday. 2-4, and by appt.

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Time: WF 8:40-10:00am

COURSE DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVES

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Analysis Papers (x4) = 10% each (40% total)
2. Cosmogram Project (30% total)
3. Final Reflection Paper (15% total)
4. Learning Finale (10% total)
5. Participation (5% total)

BOOKS TO PURCHASE

Robert Pogue Harrison, *Dominion of the Dead*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. 978-0226-31793-9.

_____. *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. ISBN: 978-0-226-31807-9.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2012. 20th edition. ISBN: 978-0062508348.

- Other texts available as PDFs via our class Blackboard site.

WHAT IS DEATH?

1/25: Introduction: Ariès and the Denial of Death

1/27: *Forests*, p. 1-13.

2/1: *Dominion of the Dead*, Preface and Chapter 1.

A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

2/3: Gilgamesh

Analysis Paper #1 Assigned

2/8: Gilgamesh + *Forests*, p. 13-20.

2/10: Christianity (Kramer +)

2/15: Christianity (Ars moriendi)

2/17: "Transcendent Man" and Transhumanist FAQ 1-19. (*Thursday night?*)

Analysis Paper #2 Assigned

2/22: *Tang Lecture: Cosmograms*

AN UNCROSSABLE DISTANCE

2/24: *Dominion of the Dead*, Chapter 4 + Torajans (TED Talk)

3/1: Torajans

3/3: *Talking to the Dead*

Analysis Paper #3 Assigned

3/8: *Talking to the Dead*

3/10: **Group Meetings with Onishi (Thursday + Friday)**

*** Individual Visit Report Due**

3/15: **Spring Break**

3/17: **Spring Break**

ABSURD REPETITION/FOUNT OF MEANING

3/22: Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

3/24: Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (Newheiser)

3/29: **Group Presentations**

3/31: Buddhist approaches to death (Kramer)

4/5: *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*

4/7: *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*

Analysis Paper #4 Assigned

SOCIAL FORCE

4/12: *Dominion of the Dead*, Chapter 9

4/14: Antigone

4/19: Antigone

4/21: Evita (Thursday night)

NECESSARY LIMIT

4/26: Thoreau, *Walden*

4/28: *Forests*, 220-232 + *Dominion of the Dead* p. 37-44.

5/2: *Learning Finale*

***Final Reflection Paper due 5/4 at 9am.**

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend all classes. Attendance is constituted by more than your mere presence in the classroom. Teaching and learning at Skidmore is characterized by close readings of difficult texts and close learning with colleagues. Thus, you cannot participate in our class if you have not properly prepared for it. Attendance is counted when one is physically present, has completed the assigned readings and other tasks for the colloquium, and is ready to discuss, argue, and dialogue with his/her peers and instructor about them. Anything less than this will be considered an absence. If you are not prepared to participate in the discussion, I may ask you to leave.

If you are absent for any reason, I expect you to notify me. I will take every absence into consideration when it comes to calculating your final grade in the course.

PLAGIARISM:

All cases of suspected plagiarism will be taken to the Honor Council for official investigation. The consequences for any student found guilty of plagiarism range from suspension to expulsion.

The following summary will help you think about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it:

See: www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism:

"WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?"

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

ACCORDING TO THE MERRIAM-WEBSTER ONLINE DICTIONARY, TO "PLAGIARIZE" MEANS

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

BUT CAN WORDS AND IDEAS REALLY BE STOLEN?

According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ARE CONSIDERED PLAGIARISM:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (see our section on "fair use" rules)
- Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism. See our section on [citation](#) for more information on how to cite sources properly."

LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted without an instructor-approved extension, which will be granted in cases involving documented illness, family emergencies, or other health-related issues.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Computers, tablets, and cellphones are not allowed in class for personal or academic use. If you have a documented need to use computers for note-taking purposes, please notify me ASAP.