

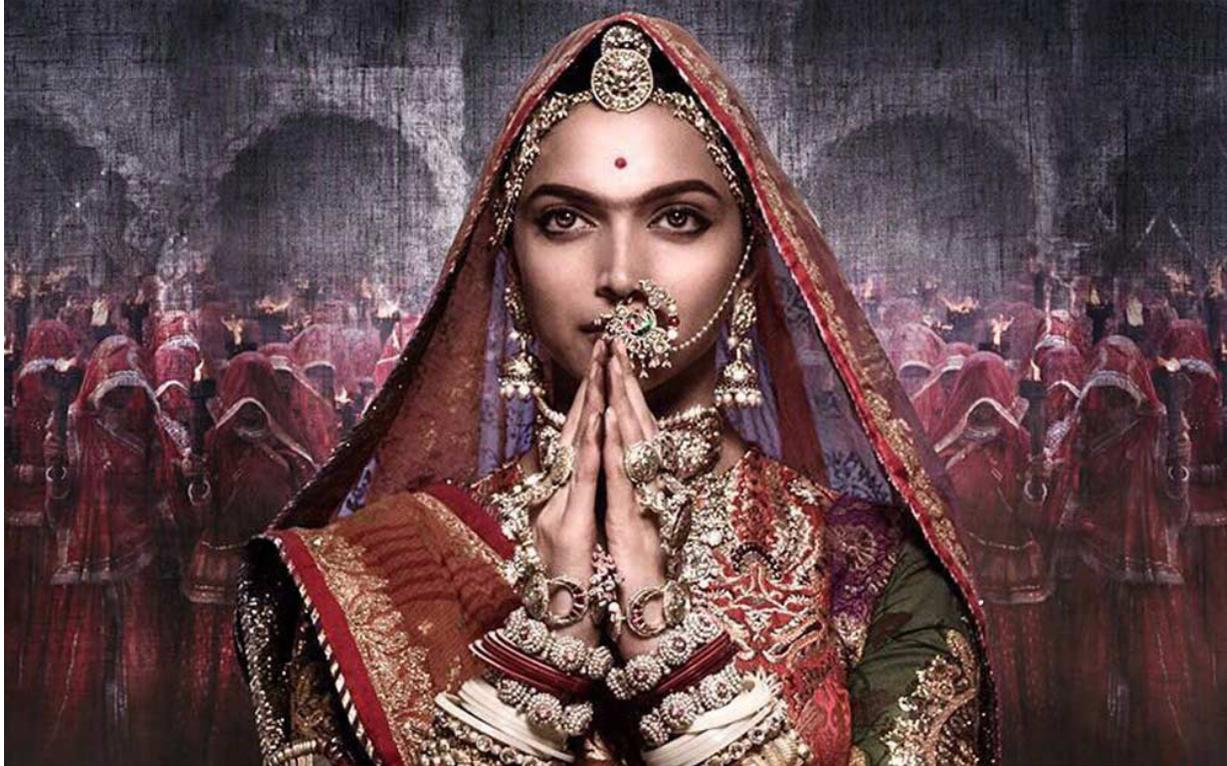
RELI 100.001: Introduction to the Study of Religion

Fall 2021

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45pm EST

Lecture Zoom Meeting ID: 978 6052 6448

(<https://unc.zoom.us/j/97860526448>)



Instructor: Hina Muneeruddin, PhD Candidate

Email: hmunee@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 pm EST or by appointment

Office Hour Zoom Meeting ID: 959 2350 8705

(<https://unc.zoom.us/j/95923508705>)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces the study of religion as a critical, academic discipline—exploring the ways the category of ‘religion’ is deployed, defined, and interpreted. Religion affects the everyday experiences of people around the world. Oftentimes, religious beliefs and practices shape identities, influence cultures, and are inextricably tied to

¹ Deepika Padukone as the character Padmavati in film, *Padmaavat*. <https://www.americanbazaaronline.com/2018/02/09/sanjay-leela-bhansali-throws-indian-women-under-bus-with-padmaavat-432510/>

ideas of race, gender, sexuality, and class. This course introduces the field of Religious Studies by looking at themes and constructions of religion through doctrine, ritual, scripture, mysticism, nationalism, and colonization across two or more religions, including Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, while also introducing theoretical approaches to the study of religion. Readings will include theorists such as Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and Judith Butler in conjunction with ethnographic or case study readings that explore lived religions at the intersections of gender and sexuality.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

This course offers students the opportunity to:

- Understand categories of religion at the intersections of sex, gender, and sexuality through the lens of feminist and critical theory and through the case studies of major religions, including: Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism
- Consider constructions of religion through the context of colonization, religious movements, and nationalist struggles
- Cultivate skills in independent research and scholastic writing through the completion of a final paper

COURSE SITE AND READINGS

You will find the syllabus and all of the electronic readings for this course under the Resource tab of our Sakai course site.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN

You will be expected to complete the reading(s) assigned for each class on, or before, the day that it is listed on the syllabus. Completing the reading means that you have not only read the assigned piece, but that you have spent time putting together your thoughts and questions about the reading, the subject, and how all of these relate to the themes of the course.

- 30% Attendance & active class participation
 - Weekly Discussions Posts (Due every Monday at 5pm OR Wednesday at 5pm on Sakai)
- 15% Midterm Exam (09/16)
- 10% Final Paper proposal & annotated bibliography (Due 10/15)
Must discuss your topic with me by 10/01
- 10% Final Paper Draft of ~2000 words (Due 11/18)
- 35% Final Paper (2500 words, including bibliography) – (Due DURING FINAL EXAM PERIOD)

GRADE POLICY

I will grade all assignments within 2 weeks of submission and return grades through Sakai. All grades will be posted on the Sakai Gradebook. The following definitions of grades will be used to assess the final course grade.

- A — **Mastery** of course content.
- B — **Strong performance.**
- C — An **acceptable performance.**
- D — A **marginal performance.**
- F — For whatever reasons, an **unacceptable performance.** The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content.

The grading scale for the course will be as follows:

94-100 points = A	74-76.9 points = C
90-93.9 points = A-	70-73.9 points = C-
87-89.9 points = B+	67-69.9 points = D+
84-86.9 points = B	64-66.9 points = D
80-83.9 points = B-	60-63.9 points = D-
77-79.9 points = C+	below 60 points = F

ATTENDANCE

Attendance will be recorded for every synchronous Zoom class session (on Tuesdays and Thursdays). You can have up to 2 unexcused absences without penalty. ANY additional absences will receive a 1-point deduction from your attendance grade. Of course, this grade penalty will not apply to any excused absence, such as illness, personal emergency, religious holiday, or student athlete absence.

PARTICIPATION

SYNCHRONOUS CLASS GUIDELINES

Active class participation means that you are not just physically present, but that you are mentally engaged in class. Students are expected to attend all classes; complete all reading; and participate in discussion. To prepare for class discussions, students should mark passages in readings that excite, inspire, disturb, or puzzle so that they can ask questions, articulate confusions and engage in lively but open-minded and respectful

debate. Remember to pay attention to the sources the author has used to support his/her argument.

Since this class heavily depends on active class participation, both during synchronous class session and outside of it, your overall performance in this class will be evaluated based on effort, attention, and participation. You are expected to come ready to discuss the readings. You are also expected to listen to your fellow students and engage constructively in the course.

SAKAI DISCUSSION POSTS

To ensure this, you will be required to post your thoughts and responses to the readings on the Sakai forum discussion area. Out of 24 opportunities for posting, **you will have to post 15 times during the semester (~once a week)** for either Tuesday's discussion (**must post by Monday, 5pm**) or Thursday's discussion (**must post by Wednesday, 5pm**). These postings will be worth 30% of your grade.

This post should be around 300 words and consist of two paragraphs:

- 1) Choose at least 1-2 readings from the day and write about a theme you've gleaned from them.
- 2) Choose one reading and either critique it or compare it to another week's theme or reading or from another course you've taken.

This will allow us as a class to begin with the points raised in online discussion. It will also help me facilitate class discussion for a more structured class-time. Best of all, it will get you to think about the readings prior to class. I will be checking the Sakai discussion forums every week and will determine your level of engagement with your classmates. So please make sure to stay on top of these points.

****Extra brownie participation points to those who write responses or reactions to their classmates' posts.****

MIDTERM EXAM

The midterm exam will consist of terms and short answer questions testing you on theoretical approaches to religion from the first half of the semester. **Your midterm exam will be held on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021.**

FINAL PAPER

You will be required to submit a 2500-word final paper at the end of the course. For this, you must choose a topic we have discussed in class or you may choose your own

research topic, provided that it is discussed with me beforehand. All students are required to meet with me in advance to discuss their paper topic, possible paper thesis, and potential bibliographical references.

Please schedule a time to see me to discuss your topic and materials **before Friday, Oct. 1, 2021.**

You will be evaluated based on your research, the grasp of the readings in this course, your use of primary sources, the depth and clarity of your argument, and overall writing. You must use the Chicago-MLA style of citation for either in-text citations or footnotes. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>

For additional writing guidelines, you may seek the assistance of UNC's Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/>

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is what an annotated bibliography looks like:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>

****Your bibliographies and final paper proposals are due on October 15, 2021.****

PRIMARY SOURCES

We will be using several primary sources in this class. What is a primary source? Here is a useful definition:

http://www.yale.edu/collections_collaborative/primarysources/primarysources.html.

While reading works by historians and others, it is often useful to ask, 'What sources is the author using?' or 'How does a narrative change depending upon the sources used?'

****Your final paper draft will be due on Nov. 18, 2021 and your final paper will be due on DURING THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD.****

EXTENSION POLICY

If you need an extension, simply **e-mail me** before the assignment is due. Together, we will be able to figure out a deadline that accommodates your request.

UNC HONOR SYSTEM

Like all classes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, this course requires strict adherence to the University's Honor System. All students are strongly urged to

become familiar with its terms (at <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/honor-system>). If you ever have questions about the application of the Honor System or the appropriate standards for citing outside materials (including websites), please contact me right away.

PLAGIARISM

The UNC Honor System defines plagiarism as “the deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise” (Instrument of Student Judicial Governance, Section II.B.1.). Refer to the UNC Library site about plagiarism: <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/c.php?g=9028&p=45251>

To ensure that you understand the issues surrounding plagiarism, you will be required to complete a plagiarism tutorial through the UNC Library’s website: <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/plagiarism/purpose>

REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS POLICY

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office (Phone: 919-962-8300 or Email: accessibility@unc.edu). Detailed information about the registration process is available at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/about-ars/policies/student-and-applicant-accommodations>. Additional information about ARS is available at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/about-ars>.

Please contact me as soon as the semester begins if you need accommodations for this course.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES²

[“Keep Learning” site](#): For help with remote learning, Sakai, Zoom, VoiceThread, and other tools, visit

[HealthyHeels](#): For COVID testing and related information and other physical health issues)

[Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#): CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to

² As adopted from Prof. Karen Booth’s syllabus.

consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

[The Learning Center](#): The UNC Learning Center is a great resource both for students who are struggling in their courses and for those who want to be proactive and develop sound study practices to prevent falling behind. They offer individual consultations, peer tutoring, academic coaching, test prep programming, study skills workshops, and peer study groups. If you think you might benefit from their services, please visit their website to set up an appointment: <http://learningcenter.unc.edu>.

[Title IX Resources](#) (regarding discrimination, harassment, violence):

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance ([Adrienne Allison](#)), the [Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), [CAPS](#) (confidential), or the [Gender Violence Services Coordinators](#) (confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

[Undergraduate Testing Center](#) [current availability is limited due to COVID; if you need testing accommodations but are not registered with ARS, please contact your TA or Professor Booth]: The College of Arts and Sciences provides a secure, proctored environment in which exams can be taken. The center works with instructors to proctor exams for their undergraduate students who are not registered with ARS and who do not need testing accommodations as provided by ARS. In other words, the Center provides a proctored testing environment for students who are unable to take an exam at the normally scheduled time (with pre-arrangement by your instructor).

[Writing Center](#): The Writing Center is both online and in-person. This is a wonderful resource to help with your writing assignments in this course (and any assignments in your other courses). You do not need a complete draft of your assignment to visit; they can help you at any stage! You can set up an appointment on their website: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu>. The Writing Center is the Student and Academic Services Building and offers personalized writing consultations as well as a variety of other resources.

[LGBTQ Center](#): Offers programs and support to UNC's LGBTQ community.

Hinasahar Muneeruddin, ABD, is a Safe Zone ally. UNC's Safe Zone program creates a network of allies for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and allied (LGBTQIA) students.

NETIQUETTE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE³

This course seeks to be inclusive of people of all genders, races, cultures, abilities, and sexual orientations. Throughout the course, we will endeavor to embody the principles set out by the University Office for Diversity and Inclusion (<https://diversity.unc.edu>). Please be mindful that, when writing papers, you should use terms like people, world, us, human being, humanity, etc. instead of the terms man, mankind, and men. There are all types of exclusions that have taken place in the history of scholarship; as responsible scholar-citizens in contemporary society and in a global context, we want to make sure that we do not further the subtleties of exclusion. You are expected to use appropriate language in your posts and avoid criticizing others' work. If you have questions about the policy, please consult me.

5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS⁴

I want you to succeed in this class! Here are five tips for success in this class:

- 1) Show up and be engaged: Attendance and Participation comprise 30% of your grade so if you are present, then you are more likely to engage with class material and discussions.
- 2) Read in advance: The readings listed on the syllabus are required in advance of that day's class session. I will assume that you have read in advance of each class session.
- 3) Read, don't skim: Reading in advance does not just mean skimming the article a few minutes beforehand. You should plan to spend approximately 3-4 hours/week completing the readings.
- 4) Take notes: It is VERY important that you actively take notes during class sessions. Making yourself take notes forces you to listen carefully and test your understanding of the material. For more resources on notetaking, please refer to: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html>
- 5) Ask questions: There will be many points in this course that you will be confused with the terminology or class material. If you are ever confused, please ask questions during class or during office hours.

DUE DATES AT A GLANCE

Assignment	Due Date
Weekly Discussion Posts on Sakai	Mondays by 5pm or Wednesdays by 5pm
Midterm Exam	Thursday, Sept. 16

³ Thank you to Prof. Harshita Kamath for this important reminder.

⁴ As adopted from Prof. Harshita Kamath's syllabus.

Discuss research paper topic, thesis, and possible sources with Hina	Friday, October 1 by 5pm by email or during Zoom Office Hours
Proposal & Annotated Bibliography	Friday, Oct. 15 @ 5pm on Sakai DropBox
Final Paper Draft (~2000 words)	Friday, Nov. 18 @ 9:30am on Sakai DropBox
Final Paper (~2500 words)	~DURING FINAL EXAM PERIOD~

SYLLABUS

**Note: This course outline is tentative and can be changed at the discretion of the instructor who will make every effort to inform students far in advance of such changes.*

Week 1: Introductions Thurs. Aug, 19

- Introducing ourselves
- Introductory questionnaire
 - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdAXYKijuYxx1YbYljXyYUn1JGhnFgWU2bzIbZ4S8PEQJuNQw/viewform?usp=sf_link
- Goals of this course
- Review syllabus and other guidelines

Week 2: Defining 'Religion'

- Tues. Aug. 24
 - Podcast: *Keeping it 101: A Killjoy's Introduction to Religion*:
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 101: "What the heck is religion, and what the heck is this podcast?"
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e101>
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 102: "Who gets left out of 'religion'?"
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e201>
- Thurs. Aug. 26
 - Podcast: *Keeping it 101: A Killjoy's Introduction to Religion*:
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 103: "Major Religions? Minor Religions? Must We?"
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e103>
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 104: "World Religions: shall we not"
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e104>

Week 3: Religion, Orientalism, & Knowledge

- Tues. Aug. 31

- Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Preface (optional) and “Introduction,” pp. (1-28)
- Thurs. Sept. 2
 - Podcast “Keeping it 101: A Killjoy’s Introduction to Religion”:
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 201: “Race, Gender, and Sexuality: What’s Religion Got to Do with ‘Em?”
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e201>

Week 4: Race, Religion, & Gender

- Tues. Sept. 7
 - Podcast “Keeping it 101: A Killjoy’s Introduction to Religion”:
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 204: “Race and Religion in South Asia and, Well, Not-the-US”
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e204>
 - Listen to & read notes for Episode 206: “Religion & Gender in Not-the-US”
 - <https://keepingit101.com/e206>
- Thurs. Sept. 9
 - Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. I: An Introduction*, Part II, Chapter One, “The Incitement to Discourse,” (pp. 17-35)
 - ~Come to class with any questions or areas of confusion 
 - ****Will address Midterm Paper guidelines more in depth during class****

Week 5: Race, Religion, & Gender (cont’d)

- Tues. Sept. 14
 - Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Chapter 1: “Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire,” (pp. 2-2 )
- Thurs. Sept. 16
 - Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Chapter 1: “Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire,” (pp. 20-44)
 - ~~**MIDTERM EXAM DUE**~~

Week 6: Hinduism & Widow Immolation

- Tues. Sept. 21
 - Richard King. Chapters 4 & 5. In *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and ‘The Mythic East,’* (pp. 82–117)
 - Watch film, *Mangal Pandey*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmF2SytVwSw>

- Thurs. Sept. 23
 - Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India," in *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*. (p. 88-123)
 - [Recommended] Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (~20 pages)

Week 7: Islam & Gender in South Asia

- Tues. Sept. 28
 - ~~~**GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst**~~~
 - Fuerst, Ilyse Morgenstein. "Gender and Islam in Colonial India" in *Routledge Handbook on Islam and Gender*, ed. Justine Howe.
- Thurs. Sept. 30
 - ****Writing Workshop** 
 - Intro to 'The Problem Model' & will address requirements for final paper proposal & annotated bibliography**
- ~~Friday, Oct. 1 by 5pm: **MUST SEE ME BY/BEFORE THIS DATE RE: FINAL PAPER TOPIC**~~

Week 8: Lived Religions in South Asian Islam

- Tues. Oct. 5
 - Gayatri Reddy, *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India*, "Chapter 5: 'We Are All Musalmans Now': Religious Practice, Positionality, and Hijra/Muslim Identification" (p. 99-110)
- Thurs. Oct. 7
 - Be prepared for in-depth discussion on Reddy's ch pter.

Week 9: Performing Religious Identity in South Asian Islam

- Tues. Oct. 12
 - Joyce Flueckiger, *In Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India*, "Immersed in Remembrance and Song: Religious Identities, Authority, and Gender at the Sama" (p. 201-234)
- Thurs. Oct. 14
 - Be prepared for in-depth discussion on Flueckiger's chapter
- ~~Friday, Oct. 15 by 5pm: **RESEARCH PROPOSAL & ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE**~~

Week 10: Religion, Nationalism, & Partition Violence

- Tues. Oct.19

- Charu Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims, and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*, "Introduction," (p. 1-29)
- Saadat Hasan Manto, Short story: "Khol Do" (TW: sexual violence) (~2 pp.)
- Thurs. Oct. 21
 - ~~FALL BREAK~~
 - Be prepared for in-depth discussion on Gupta's chapter

Week 11: Religion & Nationalism

- Tues. Oct. 26
 - Watch film, *Padmaavat*
 - <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6fg03r>
- Thurs. Oct. 28
 - Baijanti Roy, "Visual Grandeur, Imagined Glory: Identity Politics and Hindu Nationalism in Bajirao Mastani and Padmaavat"
 - "'Padmaavat' is pure misogyny dressed up in diamonds and drama," https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/02/06/padmaavat-is-pure-misogyny-dressed-up-in-diamonds-and-drama/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d7415866b7ae

Week 12: Buddhism as Religion

- Tues. Nov. 2
 - ****Peer-Review Workshop: Final Paper Proposals (attendance is mandatory and will count as portion of final research paper grade)****
- Thurs. Nov. 4
 - Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*, "Chapter 4: Buddhism, A World Religion." (pp. 121–46)

Week 13: Religion, Orientalism, & Gender in Buddhism

- Tues. Nov. 9
 - Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mythic East,'* "Chapter 7: Orientalism and the Discovery of Buddhism." (pp. 143–160)
- Thurs. Nov. 11
 - Liz Wilson, *Buddhism in the Modern World*. "Buddhism and Gender." (pp. 257–72)

Week 14: Embodied Religion in South Asian Buddhism

- Tues. Nov. 16

- Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in India Buddhist Hagiographic Literature*, "Chapter 2: 'Like a Boil with Nine Openings': Buddhist Constructions of the Body and Their Social Milieu, (pp. 41–76)
- Thurs. Nov. 18
 - ~~Thursday, Nov. 18 by 9:30am: PAPER DRAFT DUE~~
 - ****Peer-Review Workshop: Final Paper Drafts (attendance is mandatory and will count as portion of final research paper grade)****

Week 15: Embodied Religion in South Asian Buddhism (cont'd)

- Tues. Nov. 23
 - John Powers, *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism*, "Chapter 1: The Ultimate Man," (pp. 1–23)
- Thurs. Nov. 25
 - ~~THANKSGIVING BREAK~~

Week 16: Student Presentations (I)

- Tues. Nov. 30
 - ~5 min. or less Student Presentations of Final Paper Topics and Theses (presentation will count as part of final paper grade)
- Thurs. Dec. 2
 - Student Presentations (cont'd)

Week 17: Student Presentations (II) & Final Wrap Up

- Tues. Dec. 7
 - Student Presentations (cont'd)
- Thurs. Dec. 9
 - Student Presentations (cont'd)

FINAL EXAM PERIOD:

- Final Research Paper is due!
- Final Reflections & Course Evaluations