

RELS 6101
APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION
Mon., 6:30-9:15
Macy 110

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Office Hours: Tue., 12:30-2:00 and by appointment, Macy 202A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course seeks to orient you intellectually to the academic study of religion. Because religious studies is a broad, multi-faceted field of inquiry (if it can, in fact, be meaningfully conceptualized as a single “field” or “discipline”), a single, semester-long course—even a number of such courses—simply cannot cover all the relevant material. In organizing the content of the course, I have identified concepts central to scholarly inquiries about religion and then selected readings that complicate those concepts in order to foster careful and critical thinking about the field of study of which we are a part.

This course also seeks to orient you practically to the academic study of religion. Because neither this course nor your coursework as a whole can teach you everything you need to know to answer the questions that brought you here, you must learn how to pursue those questions on your own. To this end, we will spend a good deal of time developing the skills—reading carefully, thinking critically and writing persuasively—that are key to success in the academy.

Finally, this course provides an opportunity to make decisions about your relation to the academic study of religion. By engaging materials that form the heart of a number of conversations in religious studies as a testing ground, you will have the opportunity to think about the kind of scholar you want to be and begin to identify approaches that might help you investigate the questions that interest you. At the same time, you will be able to assess how your existing skill set needs to be modified, improved and supplemented so that you can succeed as a scholar of religion.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Mark C. Taylor, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

Kate L. Turabian et al., *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Unless indicated, all other readings are available through electronic reserve.

Please bring the relevant readings to each class session.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

To succeed in this course, you must be proactive. This includes both doing the work outlined in the syllabus and taking initiative if problems arise. If you do not understand the material or my expectations, if life is impinging on you in some way, or if my teaching style is not working for you, *please* let me know. I will do what I can to help, but I am completely unable to remedy the situation if I do not know there is a problem. *I want every student to succeed in this class.* In selecting readings, crafting assignments, setting a schedule and articulating expectations, I have tried to create a framework that will enable this. In presenting material and responding to assignments, I strive to provide clear guidance that will help you achieve this goal. I will not, however, hunt you down, or pester you, to make sure you are doing the work required of you.

CLASS PREPARATION

You are, at a minimum, expected to do all assigned readings before class. In addition, as a graduate student, you should (1) make sure you understand the reading—including mastery of unfamiliar vocabulary and investigation of relevant historical and cultural background, (2) be able to summarize the reading—including the author’s main point, the evidence marshaled to support that point, the chief rhetorical strategies employed to make the argument persuasive, and any notable short-comings in the analysis, (3) take reading notes that will enable you to locate important passages during class discussion, and (4) prepare a set of observations and questions, as well as think about possible connections between the readings, that will help advance class discussion.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to (1) attend, and be on time for, all class meetings; (2) read carefully all assigned readings prior to the class session for which they are assigned; (3) participate actively and productively in class discussions; (4) be familiar with the syllabus; (5) take responsibility for fulfilling the requirements of the course; and (6) check your 49er Express e-mail accounts regularly for course announcements and personal communications from the instructor.

You are **NOT** expected to agree with the views espoused by the instructor, the course materials or other students; you are expected to manage any disagreement respectfully and productively.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Consistent with the University’s commitment to inclusivity, I pledge to do my best to run the class in a manner that is respectful of difference, including but not limited to, physical and mental ability, age, socio-economic status, religious identity, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality and veteran status. You are expected to be respectful of these differences in your conduct in class and on campus.

As future members of the academy, you should begin writing in a way that recognizes diversity. In other words, you should strive, at the very least, to use gender-inclusive language and also to be mindful of metaphors that may have problematic racial, ethnic, class or sexual connotations.

ACCOMMODATION OF DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that qualifies you for accommodations, please provide a letter from Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. For more information regarding accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (www.ds.uncc.edu).

ATTENDANCE

As a graduate student, school should be your first priority. This means you should attend and be on time for all class meetings. Because life does not always accommodate our priorities, you will be given one excused absence for the semester. *Every absence after that, for whatever reason, will result in a full letter deduction from your final grade for the course. Any two instances of arriving late or leaving early will count as an absence.* If you are absent from class, you are responsible for getting any announcements, lecture notes, handouts or assignments.

The exception to this rule is absences necessitated by religious observance. You may miss two classes for religious observance, but you must provide me with written notice (which includes e-mail correspondence) of the classes you will be missing for this reason no later than **Monday, September 13.**

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

I will communicate with you as a class and as individuals using the 49er Express e-mail system. You are responsible for checking this e-mail account regularly and responding promptly to any e-mail requests.

CLASS DECORUM

(1) Be on time for class. If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so as unobtrusively as possible. (2) Cell phones must be turned off prior to class. If your cell phone rings, or I observe you text-messaging during class, it will result in a full letter deduction in your grade for the course. (3) Computers may only be used to take notes during class. If I observe you using your computer for any other purpose, it will result in a full letter deduction in your grade for the course.

SCHEDULE

Aug 23 **Introduction to Course**

Aug 30 **“Religion”**

Jonathan Z. Smith, “Religion, Religions, Religious,” in *Critical Terms*

Clifford Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 87-125 (New York: BasicBooks, 1973).

Talal Asad, “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category,” in *Genealogies of Religion*, 27-54 (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

Wade Clark Roof, “Blood in the Barbecue?,” in *God in the Details*, ed. Eric Michael Mazur and Kate McCarthy, 109-22 (New York: Routledge, 2001).

Edward R. Gray and Scott Thumma, “The Gospel Hour,” in *Gay Religion*, 285-302 (Lanham, MD: AltaMiraPress, 2005).

Also read Kent L. Brintnall, “Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ* and the Politics of Resurrection,” *English Language Notes* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 235-40, and be prepared to discuss it as a piece of writing.

As soon as possible, review Turabian’s Manual for Writers, chapters 15-17 and 20-25. Before the end of the semester, make sure you have read the Graduate Student Handbook, www.religiousstudies.uncc.edu/graduate/handbook.htm

Sept 6 **Labor Day – NO CLASS**

Sept 13 **“Religion”**

Sigmund Freud, “Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices,” in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. IX, trans. James Strachey, 117-27 (London: Hogarth, 1959).

Sigmund Freud, *Future of an Illusion*, in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XXI, trans. James Strachey, 15-33 (London: Hogarth, 1961).

Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XIII, trans. James Strachey, 119-61 (London: Hogarth, 1953).

Sigmund Freud, “The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex,” in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XIX, 173-79 (London: Hogarth, 1961).

Sept 20 **Sacred & Profane**

Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995), 21-44, 207-41.

Mary Douglas, *Purity & Danger* (New York: Routledge, 1966), 7-52.

Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1-18, 56-79, 90-112.

Sept 27 **Ritual**

Catherine Bell, “Performance,” in *Critical Terms*

Victor Turner, *Ritual Process* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 94-130.

Caroline Walker Bynum, “Women’s Stories, Women’s Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner’s Theory of Liminality,” in *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 27-51 (New York: Zone Books, 1991).

Adam Seligman et al., *Ritual and Its Consequences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 17-42, 69-101.

Oct 4 Sacrifice

Jill Robbins, "Sacrifice," in *Critical Terms*

Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Functions*, trans. W.D. Halls (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 1-49.

Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986), 11-39.

Georges Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 43-57.

Jonathan Z. Smith, "The Domestication of Sacrifice," in *Relating Religion*, 145-59 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Nancy Jay, "Throughout Your Generations Forever," in *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: A Reader*, ed. Jeffrey Carter, 370-83 (New York: Continuum, 2003).

Oct 11 Fall Break – NO CLASS

Oct 18 Myth

Bruce Lincoln, "Mythic Narrative and Cultural Diversity in American Society," in *Myth and Method*, ed. Laurie L. Patton and Wendy Doniger, 163-76 (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996).

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jakebson (n.p.: Basic Books, 1963), 206-31.

Mircea Eliade, *Myth & Reality*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 1-20, 92-113.

Bruce Lincoln, "Epilogue: Scholarship as Myth," in *Theorizing Myth*, 207-16 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Oct 25

Text

David Tracy, "Writing," in *Critical Terms*

Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Image/Music/Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, 155-64 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).

Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image/Music/Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, 142-48 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).

Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard & Sherry Simon, 113-38 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977).

Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 21-30, 43-51, 68-85.

Nov 1

American Academy of Religion – NO CLASS

Nov 8

Sacred Text

Lynn Huber, "Sexually Explicit? Re-Reading Revelation's 144,000 Virgins as a Response to Roman Discourses," *Journal of Men, Masculinities and Spirituality* 2, no.1 (January 2008): 3-28 (to be distributed).

Robert Allen Warrior, "A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians," in *Voices from the Margin*, ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah, 277-85 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995).

John Reeves, "Problematizing the Bible . . . Then & Now," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 100, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 139-52 (to be distributed).

Joseph Blenkinsopp, "What Happened at Sinai? Structure and Meaning in the Sinai-Horeb Narrative (Exodus 19-34)," in *Treasures Old and New: Essay in the Theology of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 155-74 (to be distributed).

Stephen Moore, *God's Gym* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 37-72.

Nov 15

Ideology

Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of the Right*," "Thesis on Feuerbach," *Capital* (excerpt), in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 53-65, 143-45, 319-29.

Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," in *Mapping Ideology*, ed. Slavoj Žižek, 100-40 (New York: Verso, 1994).

Delores Williams, "Black Women's Surrogacy Experience and the Christian Notion of Redemption," in *Cross Examinations*, ed. Marit Trelstad, 19-32 (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006).

Vincent Harding, "Religion & Resistance among Antebellum Slaves, 1800-1860," in *African-American Religion*, ed. Timothy E. Fulop & Albert J. Raboteau, 107-30 (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "Slave Songs and Spirituals," in *Afro-American Religious History*, ed. Milton C. Sernett, 110-32 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985).

Nov 22

Evidence

Donald Lopez, "Belief," in *Critical Terms*

Robert H. Shart, "Experience," in *Critical Terms*

Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale and David M. Halperin, 397-415 (New York: Routledge, 1993).

Hayden White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," in *Critical Theory since 1965*, ed. Hazard Adams & Leroy Searle, 395-409 (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 1986).

Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard & Sherry Simon, 139-64 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977)

Nov 29 Subjectivity

Charles E. Winquist, "Person," in *Critical Terms*

Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 3-49.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977), 32-69, 135-41, 265-92.

Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*, ed. Diana Fuss, 13-31 (New York: Routledge, 1991).

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 181-90.

Dec 6 Concluding Thoughts

Robert Orsi, "Snakes Alive!" in *Between Heaven and Earth*, 177-204 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Andrea Sun-Mee Jones, "What the Doing Does," *Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory* 6, no. 1 (December 2004): 86-107, www.jcrt.org/archives/06.1/jones.pdf (to be accessed by student)

ASSIGNMENTS

You must submit all assignments by e-mail (kbrintna@uncc.edu). If I am unable to open your attachment, I will notify you as soon as possible. If you do not submit a readable version with 24 hours of my notification, it will be graded at my discretion.

All assignments must be double-spaced and conform to the relevant word-count limitation. ***I will not read any text beyond the word count, and your assignment will be graded only on the portion that conforms to the assignment parameters.***

No late papers will be accepted.

You should privilege depth over breadth in your writing. ***It is better to address a small point, and do it well, than to try something grand, and do it superficially.*** I am not asking you to be *comprehensive* and *exhaustive*, but I expect you to provide sufficient detail to flesh out generalizations and to show some kind of mastery over the topic(s) on which you choose to write. Most importantly, your writing should be *accurate* and *thoughtful*. ***Remember you will not be in the room when I am reading your paper, so what you put on the page must be a clear, complete and precise statement of your ideas.***

Your assignments will be evaluated, in part, on the quality of your writing. Your writing should be free of spelling, grammatical and typographical mistakes. ***I want to spend my time engaging your ideas, not copy-editing your prose.*** Careful proofreading demonstrates your seriousness as a scholar; don't let stylistic errors distract from the quality of your thinking. Spellchecking is not a substitute for proofreading, but it is the bare minimum you should do before submitting an assignment. ***Any assignment that has typographical errors that would be caught by spellchecking will receive a grade of U and returned without comment.*** Failure to correct writing mistakes in subsequent assignments will negatively influence my evaluation of your work. I will rely on Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers, 7th ed.*, to resolve questions about grammar and style.

Your writing should include accurate and adequate citations. The Department of Religious Studies' writing guidelines (www.religiousstudies.uncc.edu/research/writingguide.htm) provide sample citation forms, consistent with the style guidelines outlined in Turabian's *Manual*. ***You should also familiarize yourself with and conform your conduct to the University's Code of Student Academic Integrity. Plagiarism on any assignment will result in a failing grade for the course.***

THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 5PM ON RESPECTIVE MONDAYS DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER:

EXPOSITORY ESSAYS (15%)

You must write **three (3)** expository essays, of no more than 300 words each, over the course of the semester. These essays should focus on one essay, article or book excerpt from that week. These essays should articulate as clearly, concisely and completely as possible the main ideas of the reading, the evidence that supports that main idea and the general character of the analysis. These essays should not include any commentary, criticism, extension or application of the idea(s) unless absolutely necessary to explain them. As you are writing these essays, imagine that you are writing a larger piece in which you are presenting your own argument, but need to refer to the work under consideration in order to develop your own thought. How can you adequately, sympathetically and briefly characterize another person's idea so that your reader can understand it, without being overwhelmed by detail and distracted from the larger point you are making?

Quotation Analysis (15%)

You must write **three (3)** quotation analysis essays, of no more than 250 words each, over the course of the semester. (The quotation will not be included in the word count.) These essays should select a sentence or two—or, if absolutely necessary, a paragraph—that adequately captures the most important idea in an essay, article or book excerpt from that week. These essays should explain the meaning and significance of the quotation and how it relates to the author's larger argument or ideas. Avoid quoting the thesis sentence of the essay; try to locate some more evocative or memorable turn of phrase that will let you tease out the central idea. As you are writing these essays, imagine that you are writing a larger piece in which you are relying upon the work under consideration. What sentence or brief passage can you quote to give your reader a flavor of the author's thought and writing style while still being able to formulate your own argument in sympathetic, if critical, engagement?

Analytic Essays (30%)

You must write **three (3)** analytic essays, of no more than 1000 words each, over the course of the semester. These essays may focus on a single reading, connect readings from a given week, or connect readings from a given week and previous weeks in the course. These essays must, however, develop an argument, insight, or idea that is yours in relation to the materials of the course. These essays may express disagreement with an author, rely on an author's ideas to interpret a text or analyze some material, or modify an author's approach to defend it from criticism. As you are writing these essays, imagine that you are writing for a public beyond your instructor or this class and that you must make an interesting, engaging, worthwhile contribution to the scholarly understanding of religion using materials from the course. How does some subset of the materials allow you to do that? These essays will be evaluated on the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument, the accuracy of your interpretation of the materials under discussion, the adequacy of any critical engagement with those materials and your ability to circumscribe the scope of the discussion to make your point in the word count provided.

Writing Analysis (10%)

You must write **two (2)** writing analysis essays, of no more than 500 words each, over the course of the semester. These essays must focus on a single reading. Although you may write about a book excerpt, I would encourage you to write about something we are reading in its entirety. These essays should discuss the content of the reading only insofar as you must give some account of the content to understand the stylistic and rhetorical choices made by the author. These essays should discuss the clarity of the author's writing, the organization of the piece, the kind of language used, the kinds of evidence relied on, how that evidence is presented and treated, the nature of transitions, how the author begins and ends the piece, etc. In other words, what kind of writing is this? What are this author's rhetorical and stylistic strategies? In what way do they succeed or fail? How does the style support, or detract from, the argument? Are there ways you can imagine yourself imitating this style? If so, how? If not, why not? If you were writing about this topic would you employ a different style? What kind of style, and why? In other words, you should say something more than the writing was clear (or was not), that you liked it (or did not). Think about how the essay was written, why, and whether you would ever try and write in a similar fashion. Although these essays are focused on writing, you should still have some central claim that organizes your analysis. In other words, your evaluation of the author's writing still needs to be presented in the form of an argument.

THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 5PM ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 13. (Given the work required for the book review and the annotated bibliography, I strongly encourage you to work on these assignments during the course of the semester.)

Book Review (10%)

You must write a book review, of no more than 750 words, of a book published 2008 or later in the field of religious studies (broadly understood). A good book review provides a clear and accurate description of the book's subject, the strengths and weaknesses of its argument, as well as the effectiveness of its style, and an account of the kinds of scholars who might find it useful. Book reviews are written as a service to other scholars: you are helping them decide whether they should take the time to read the book, and why. You should read reviews in the *Journal of*

*the American Academy of Religion, Journal of Contemporary Religion, the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, or other scholarly journals for examples. **You must obtain approval of the book you intend to review.***

Annotated Bibliography (10%)

You must submit an annotated bibliography that is relevant to the question(s) you hope to investigate over the course of your graduate study. An annotated bibliography should provide a full, accurate citation of each source listed as well as a few sentences that explain the general content of the source, the organization and scope of its argument, the sources on which it relies and its usefulness as a resource. Your annotated bibliography must include at least fifteen book-length works—either monographs or edited collections, as well as twenty-five journal articles or book chapters. (Don't "buff up" your numbers by listing several entries from a single edited collection or special journal issue. If you find three or more essays in a single source, list it as a book-length resource.) Obviously, it is unlikely that you can read carefully this much material in the course of a semester. One goal of this project is to learn how to skim a resource to determine its basic structure, content and usefulness for your research. In addition to the list of resources, your annotated bibliography must also include a brief description (no more than 100 words) of the project/question/topic that organizes your bibliography.

Summary Memo (10%)

You must write a summary memo that gathers what you have learned in the course of the semester. This memo is intended to be useful to you as you pursue the rest of your graduate training. As such, its length and content is left to your discretion, but you should make sure you exercise this discretion wisely. Additionally, the balance between summarizing ideas and meditating on the development of skills is also left largely to you. If there was an essay we read over the course of the semester that struck you as enormously helpful and generative, then that should feature prominently in your memo. (In fact, you might want to consider other works by that author or from that field and include a preliminary discussion of them.) On the other hand, if there were approaches or questions we considered that you found particularly unhelpful or limited, you should articulate that reaction as clearly and carefully as possible. (Sometimes it's only through eliminating options that one arrives at the ideas one finds most interesting.) Or, you may have had particular insights about how you write, or read, or engage another person's ideas that you want to record. This assignment is intended to serve as a foothold and memorialization. A semester from now, a year from now, two years from now, when you are in another class, or starting to work on your comprehensive exams, or finishing your master's thesis, or contemplating further graduate study, I want you to be able to return to this memo as an aid in clarifying your thinking or reminding yourself what you wanted to accomplish in your studies. With that goal in mind, I will assess the memo's clarity, comprehensiveness and level of detail.

WRITING ANALYSIS

Each week, except for our first meeting, we will spend time analyzing and discussing each other's writing. The first time we do this as a group, I will use a piece of my writing as our example. After that, I will select examples from among the students in the class—sometimes I will select a piece of writing for its strengths and sometimes for its weaknesses. I will always circulate these anonymously and I will never identify a student author (although you are free to self-disclose). To succeed in the academy, one must learn both how to accept and give constructive criticism.

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

As the Graduate Student Handbook states, "Graduate school employs a less calibrated grading system than that typically found in undergraduate studies. The range of grades uses in graduate courses is A (commendable), B (satisfactory), C (marginal), and U (unsatisfactory)." Under exceptional circumstances, a grade of I (incomplete) can be assigned at my discretion.

- A** Exceptional work that distinguishes you from your peers and evinces exhaustive preparation and superior performance in every aspect of the assignment. Careful, accurate, complete, sympathetic interpretation of the text(s). General observations supported by specific detail from the text(s) under analysis. Contains a strong and clear thesis. Contributes something particularly interesting, unique or creative above and beyond class materials and discussion. Clear and well-organized writing free of grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. *An A paper, at the graduate level, should teach me something about the material that I have not discovered on my own.*
- B** Strong work. Attentive to the most significant details of the text(s). Conversant with the themes, questions and issues of the course. Has an obvious main point. Presents a reasonable interpretation supported by sufficient evidence. Clear and well-organized writing free of serious grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. *The Department requires a B average or higher in all course work in order to qualify for the master's degree; you must also receive a grade of B or higher in this course to complete the master's degree.*
- C** Signals trouble and indicates your work falls below the threshold of acceptable graduate work. Equivalent to a D or F in undergraduate study. Failure to understand the text(s) on significant points, or an incomplete explanation of them. Failure to comprehend the themes, questions and issues of the course. Unclear or unsupported thesis. Analysis at too general a level. Writing unclear, unstructured or with numerous grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Failure to improve in analytic precision or clarity of expression over previous assignments. *One final grade of C automatically generates an individual written warning from the Dean of the Graduate School and may prevent you from pursuing further graduate work; a second C is sufficient grounds for your permanent dismissal from the program.*

U Unacceptable work. Analysis proceeds at a very general level. Analysis gets significant details wrong or ignores issues that are inconsistent with the paper's main point. Discussion fails to engage course materials. Significant problems with the clarity or organization of the writing. Significant issues with grammar, spelling or style. ***The receipt of a U in any single graduate course while at UNC Charlotte results in an immediate academic suspension, which effectively ends your graduate career at this institution.***

If you come to class, participate in discussion, work hard on your assignments and improve over the course of the semester, I will take that into consideration when translating your individual assignment grades into a course grade.