

Dr. E. Allen Richardson  
Curtis Hall 237, ext. 3320  
[arichard@cedarcrest.edu](mailto:arichard@cedarcrest.edu)  
FAX (610) 740-3779

Office Hours: T/R 9:00-11:00 a.m.  
and by appointment

CEDAR CREST COLLEGE  
PSY/REL 204 70/80 Psychology of Religion  
Fall 2007  
Thursday 6:30-9:00 p.m. in Curtis 252

As a result of taking PSY/REL 204, students will experience the following outcomes: a critical awareness of the historical connections between the study of psychology and religion which are foundations of Western thought, increased ability to present ideas in writing; familiarity with major theoretical approaches within the discipline, an understanding of the role of coping skills as an important function of religion and an understanding of the psychological dimensions of mysticism. These outcomes will be advanced through the following objectives and modes of evaluation: to understand the work of William James, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Eric Erickson and others theorists, to understand how meaning and the search for significance impacts coping skills, and to understand the similarities and differences between mysticism in theistic and monistic religions. Each of these outcomes will be measured through a combination of two short papers, a term paper (with oral presentation), journal and final examination.

NOTE: Students are required to save a copy on disc of take home exams and papers for the duration of the course.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (8/28)	Course Introduction Requirements of writing courses Writing sample Religious studies and the psychology of religion The numinous and ultimate concerns Participant Observation
Week 2 (9/4)	History of the discipline Conflicts between science and religion Pargament, Chapter 2
Week 3 (9/11)	Early Theorists: Rudolph Otto, William James Religious experience and behavior: measures and perspectives Peer Review of First Paper
Week 4 (9/18)	Freud and Jung The collective unconscious Film: "Architect of the Soul" <b>First Paper Due</b>

Week 5 (9/25)	Erik Erickson, Gordon Allport, Viktor Frankl Frankl, Chapters 1, 2A
Week 6 (10/2)	Religion and coping skills – the search for significance Pargament, Chapters 1 and 4 Peer Review of Second Paper <b>Journals Due</b>
Week 7 (10/9)	The flow of coping Pargament Chapter 5
Week 8 (10/16)	The conservation of significance in religious traditions Pargament, Chapter 8 <b>Second Paper Due</b>
Week 9 (10/23)	The transformation of significance in religious traditions Pargament, Chapter 9 Mysticism and Monism
Week 10 (10/30)	Mysticism and research Mysticism and Theism Peer Review of Term Paper Drafts
Week 11 (11/6)	No Class – Field Experiences; Observations of Religious Traditions
Week 12 (11/13)	Mysticism - conclusion <b>Term papers due</b> <b>Journals due</b> <b>Take home final examination distributed</b>
Week 13 (11/20)	Oral Presentations
Week 14 (12/4)	Oral Presentations

### Course Requirements

Each student will complete two short papers (4-6 pages each), a journal, a term paper (12-15 pages), a take home final examination and an oral presentation. First paper topic: Science and religion are quite separate domains that have experienced conflict. How does the study of the Psychology of Religion, which draws on both areas of study, resolve these differences? Second paper topic: Theorists have used a variety of approaches to define and understand religious behavior including developmental stages (Erickson), coping practices (Pargament), phenomenology (James), The search for meaning (Frankl) and others. As you understand religion, which approach or combination of approaches makes the most sense? Support your position with data or observations from any religious tradition based on ritual, prayer, meditation, belief systems, symbolism and/or myth.

Term Paper: In the Psychology of Religion and Coping, Kenneth Pargament describes the way that religion conserves and transforms frameworks of meaning in order to cope with suffering and change. Using Pargament's approach, choose a religious tradition in which coping has an important role. Demonstrate that role through descriptions of ritual, prayer and/or belief. As part of this project students are required to visit a religious institution connected with the tradition they are observing. A list of sites will be distributed in class. Visits are to be conducted using participant observation methodology.

In addition to this work, students are to maintain a journal throughout the course, including both reactions to the reading, observations about current practice of religion and applications of the discipline.

The class will have opportunities for group review of each of the written assignments.

### Evaluation

Grades will be calculated on the following basis:

	Percentage
Participation	5%
Two short papers	30%
Term paper	30%
Oral presentation	5%
Journal	10%
Final examination	<u>20%</u>
	100%

### Drafts of Papers

Students are required to complete at least one draft of each of the four papers. Drafts will receive a "pencil grade" with the understanding that successive drafts will not be penalized should the quality of the work be reduced (which is usually not the case). Students may complete as many drafts as they wish of each written assignment.

### Texts

The following texts are required for the class:

Kenneth I. Pargament. The Psychology of Religion and Coping Theory, Research, Practice. (New York, Guilford Press, 1997).

Raymond F. Paloutzian. Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality. (New York, Guilford Press, 2005).

**Note:** Readings from the Handbook will be announced at the beginning of the course.

## **THE HONOR CODE**

Students are expected to abide by the principles of the college's honor policy throughout the course. The Honor Code policy can be found in the Customs Book. Any violation will be dealt with according to college procedure.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is “the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work,” (The Random House College Dictionary, Revised Edition, New York: Random House, 1975, p. 1014). The Cedar Crest College Faculty Handbook (Book Four, Article B, Section 3, p. 14) further defines it:

Any language taken from another source, whether individual words or entire paragraphs, must be placed within quotation marks and attributed to the source, following the citation format specified by the instructor. Paraphrased material from an outside source must also be attributed. In addition, if the student is indebted to another source for a specific perspective or a line of argument—regardless of whether the student has directly quoted the source or not—that debt must be acknowledged.

In consideration of these ideas, all Religious Studies courses will treat plagiarism in the following ways. Inadvertent plagiarism, the occasional failure to include a citation or the occasional use of a phrase from another source or the omission of a reference, represents sloppy scholarship and is subject to the loss of points on the paper or examination on which it occurs. However, the importation of either complete sentences or paragraphs from an external source and integrating them within the body of a paper constitutes plagiarism and will result in a failing grade being given for the entire course.

Academic papers or projects submitted for another college course cannot be re-submitted for any Religious Studies course without the permission of both instructors. Dual submission of papers is a violation of academic policy and will result in a failure for the course.

## **INTERNET SOURCES**

Internet sources on all academic papers must be used with discretion since they represent a surface level of research and are often not subjected to peer review prior to publication. Research papers must include at least ten sources and no more than four internet citations with the exception of on line journals and academic papers available on educational (.edu) sites. Encyclopedias (including Wikipedia) cannot be cited as resources in research papers.

## GRADE REQUIREMENTS FOR PAPERS

An “A” paper must have:

- Excellence in the creative and critical presentation of an argument relevant to the assignment.
- A clearly identified thesis or central idea.
- A structure that connects the ideas in the paper with the thesis.
- A complete bibliography or “works cited” page(s) in appropriate format.
- Clearly articulated relevance and significance of the subject matter.
- The paper must be grammatically correct and relatively free from errors in grammar, syntax or spelling. It must also contain appropriate references in the text and follow an accepted style system.

A “B” paper must have:

- A clearly identified thesis or central idea.
- A structure that relates to the thesis but may lack some connections.
- A bibliography or “works cited” page(s) that is relatively free from error.
- Appropriate connections with the assignment.
- The paper must be relatively free from errors in grammar, syntax or spelling. It must also contain appropriate references in the text and follow an accepted style system.

A “C” paper is identified by:

- A poorly constructed central idea and the absence of a thesis.
- Poor structure.
- Incomplete bibliography, “works cited” and references in the text.
- Appropriate connections with the assignment.
- Errors in grammar, syntax or spelling.

A “D” paper is identified by:

- No central idea.
- Little or no structure.
- Incomplete or missing bibliography, “works cited” and references in the text.
- Abundant errors in grammar, syntax or spelling.
- Unclear or confused relationship to the assignment.

A failing paper is identified by:

- No central idea or structure.
- Failure to include bibliography “works cited” or references in the text.
- Abundant errors in grammar, syntax or spelling.
- Lack of relationship to the assignment.