Required Texts:

Achebe -- Arrow of God
Gill -- Native American Religions
Kellerman -- The Ritual Bath
Strenski -- Course Reader

Office hours: Tu Th 1030-1200 HMNSS 2621, X5986 or Chair's Office, HMNSS, RLST Dept Suite X5111

Course requirements

1. Total of three in-class 15 minute Scantron and short answer quizzes and two 3 page take-home essays = (2/3 course total)
2. Final examination = (1/3 course total)--Scantron and short essays
3. Attendance and participation in sections. Failure to attend and participate in section discussions will result in a significant reduction of the final grade.

Schedule of Class Meetings: all items are included in class reader or in required books

8 Jan Introduction

13 Jan What Is Religion? And How Should We Study It?
(Ninian Smart), "Introduction"

15 Jan Racism and the Burden of (Colonial) History

20 Jan Racism Is Everybody's Problem: The Ethical Dimension of Religion

22 Jan At Home and the World: What Is Ritual?
Kellerman, The Ritual Bath. Jacob Neusner, "Back to the Fold, Not to the Faith". Mud People

27 Jan Indigenous Peoples, Christopher Columbus and their Religions: Doctrinal Dimension
Gill, Native American Religions, ch 1-2, 4 (pp 83-97)

QUIZ TODAY IN CLASS covering material from 8 to 22 Jan
29 Jan Film: "Black Robe": Seeing All the Dimensions of Religion Together
Brian Moore, Black Robe, excerpts
Take-home review essay assignment on "Black Robe" (3 pages, double-spaced. due 5 Feb in class): Comment critically, with explicit reference....

3 Feb Religion of "Natural Man": Irrational, Magical, and Just Like Us?
(Marcel Mauss), The Gift. (Claude Lévi-Strauss), ch IX, "The Sorcerer and His Magic". Gill, Native American Religions, ch 3, 4 (pp. 97-113) and ch 5.

5 Feb Mexico as Mirror: So Near to God, So Far from the United States
Take-home review essay assignment on "Black Robe" is due today in class

10 Feb Living the Day of the Dead: The Ritual Dimension
"Amistad" Special Assignment Due (See Below)

12 Feb Mexico as the Indianation: The Old Myths Do Not Die
Jacques Soustelle, from The Daily Life of the Aztecs; Richard Rodriguez, "The New Native Americans". B. Traven, "When the Priest Is Not at Home" B. Traven, "Conversion of Some Indians"  Slides: Yucatan, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guadalajara

17 Feb Religion and Politics: What Was, What Was Lost, and What Might Yet Be
Film: "The Mission"
Take home review essay assignment on "The Mission" (3 pages, double-spaced. due 24 Feb):
Theme: "Do the Guarani use Christianity and/or does it use them?" Tell me precisely how in terms of specific incidents in the film.

19 Feb La Virgen de Guadalupe's Religion: National Identity through Political Myth
QUIZ TODAY IN CLASS covering materal from 27 Jan to 17 Feb

24 Feb Religion in West Africa
Take home review essay assignment on The Mission is due today in class.
Achebe, Arrow of God, Tom Lawson, "Yoruba Worldview"

26 Feb Religious Experience in Africa: The ways of the gods are not our ways
Achebe, Arrow of God
African masks (slides) Jed Perl on Art. "Formal Africa"
3 Mar  African Religion as Art and Intelligence
Achebe, Arrow of God. Victor Turner, "Muchona, the Hornet"

5 Mar  Film: "The Long Search" -- "Zulu Zion"

10 Mar  Religion in the New Africa
(Ninian Smart), ch 6. "Africa and Beyond". "Missa Luba" (audio).

12 Mar  Religion in the New Africa continued

QUIZ TODAY IN CLASS covering material from 19 Feb to 10 Mar

17 Mar  Review: The Future of Religion and Ethnicity

"Amistad" Special Assignment
Date due: 10 Feb

Students are offered a chance to do an EXTRA short paper on "Amistad"
based on the following question.

"Specify cases in 'Amistad' in which religion figures. As specified in
these cases, evaluate the role religion plays in the action of the film."

By 'evaluate' I mean for you to spell out what significance these instances
of religion have concerning the role and nature of religion as depicted or
suggested by the film.

The grade given on this paper can then be used to replace the LOWER grade
of the other two required papers. THIS IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE OTHER
TWO PAPERS. Thus, if the "Amistad" option is chosen, three papers are done,
and the lowest grade of the three dropped.
Select a location

http://www.wlu.ca/~wwwaar/religious_myths_and_rituals-stronski.html