

RELG 219, Discussion Section 2, Friday 9:00-9:50am, Maury 104

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Office Hours: Friday 10:00am – 11:00am, Friday 12:00pm – 1:00pm, and by appointment, Halsey Lounge

Welcome to discussion section for Religion 219, Religion and Modern Fiction. The ultimate goal of this class is to expand your intellectual horizons by discussing the primary texts that you've been assigned to read by Professor Bouchard. These fiction texts offer (to varying degrees) elements of religious meaning, and we will discuss their form and content as it pertains to this overarching theme. This class will also serve as a bridge to assist you in course assignments.

DISCUSSION SCHEDULE (subject to change)

1/27 – <i>Heart of Darkness</i>	3/17 – <i>I and Thou</i>
2/3 – <i>Heart of Darkness</i> and <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>	3/24 – <i>A Canticle for Leibowitz</i>
2/10 – <i>A Passage to India</i>	3/31 – Flannery O'Connor, selected stories
2/17 – <i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i>	4/7 – NO SECTION
2/24 – NO SECTION	4/14 – <i>Beloved</i>
3/3 – <i>Gates of the Forest</i>	4/21 – <i>Gilead</i> (might be rescheduled)
3/10 – NO SECTION (Spring Break)	4/28 – <i>Life of Pi</i>

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **Reading:** While I will not require written responses to the books that we are reading, I do require active participation in class discussion by everyone. I will, at times, randomly call on students to select and read a favorite or problematic passage from their reading and lead discussion on that selection. If I call on you, and you are unprepared (and have clearly not read the work), you will receive a “U” (unprepared) for that day. I reserve the right to give quizzes on the readings, or begin to require written responses on a weekly basis if I feel that the section as a whole is coming to class unprepared for discussion.
- 2) **Weekly Questions:** I expect every student to come to class with at least ONE written question or issue in regards to the reading for that week. I will ask students for their question/issue at the start of each class, and we will use these to structure the discussions that we have about the texts.
- 3) **Community (aka, the Aretha Franklin factor):** A discussion section is a community that is built on the mutual *respect* and consideration that each member gives to every other member of the class. Please listen to what your classmates have to say, and show consideration for differing viewpoints. Respond thoughtfully to each other, in a constructive manner.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You will be allowed two unexcused absences during the semester before your grade begins to drop. Beyond that, each absence will drop your grade by 2/3 of a letter (e.g. an A will drop to an B+, an A- to a B, etc.). If you have any sort of emergency (medical with doctor's note, family), or religious observance, that forces you to miss a class, PLEASE absolutely come see me, call me, or email me about it—I'm tough, but not inflexible. Regarding lateness: two lates count as one absence. Note: I will also be taking “unofficial attendance” at lectures—looking around to see who is habitually missing, who is asking good questions, or making smart comments.

GRADES

Class participation is part of your entire grade for this course. I will be looking for the following things: the amount of preparation you have put into reading and analyzing materials for the discussion, the overall quality of your responses and contributions in class, and your consistent involvement in discussions.

HOW TO REACH ME

Please feel free to email me and set up an appointment to discuss any questions/ comments/ anecdotes/ issues you might have. It is best to email me to tell me you're coming to my office hours—if not, I'm liable to be grabbing coffee in the West Range Café, or chatting with Doug in the Religion office. I'm also available at various other times (my schedule is fairly flexible), so if you want to meet with me, definitely contact me and we'll sort something mutually agreeable out. If you desperately need to call me (e.g. it's some sort of emergency), my home phone number is 295-5603, but please call only between 10am and 10pm. I prefer to be contacted via email.