

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY  
One University Drive Orange, CA 92866  
COURSE SYLLABUS

REL 333 Interterm 2016  
Religion and Gender in Harry Potter  
Travel: Jan. 4-15, 2016. Chapman classes: Jan 18-27

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**Catalog Description:**

This Interterm travel course explores the global Harry Potter phenomenon through the lenses of religious studies and gender analysis, examining themes in the wizarding world as a common backdrop for the discussion of religion, race, gender, ethnicity, and social class in communities and community formation. Course will take place at Chapman and in London and Oxford, England. Fee: TBD. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

**Why Harry Potter?**

Scholars have argued that the “quasi-alternative, magical world parallels our real-world structures with surprising exactitude,” (Barfield, 27) and suggest that the political tension, the ineffective government, and real world challenges described in the Harry Potter series is what has contributed to its popularity, especially among adult readers. The themes in the wizarding world are socially and politically relevant for today, and allow a common backdrop for the discussion of religion, race, gender, ethnicity, slavery, and social class.

Students will be sorted into four houses. Each house will correspond with the four Harry Potter houses (Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, Slytherin, and Gryffindor) and these groupings will act as theoretical models of societal organizational structures. The houses also correspond with four sub-disciplines this course explores: Religious Studies/Philosophy, Socio-Historical Studies, Business/Marketing, and Theater/English

The houses will function as living and learning communities for the students in the travel class. Each house will have a prefect/discussion leader who will focus discussions around their house topics. The interaction between the houses will be interdisciplinary with each house responsible for leading at least two entire class discussions on their respective discipline. Following the Harry Potter series model, each house will compete for a cup prize based on the concepts and topics covered in the readings and while traveling abroad.

*A mandatory sorting pre-departure meeting will be scheduled in the Fall 2015 semester.*

Students will gain the opportunity to apply a variety of interdisciplinary approaches to texts already familiar to them, demonstrating how literary theory and interdisciplinary analyses work to enlighten all texts, including popular young adult narratives. Most importantly, however, as a travel course, students will be exposed to the real-world culture and physical environment that produced, shaped, and continues to inform the *Harry Potter* Series.

**As admission to Hogwarts is selective, so will be admission to this course. You must fill out an application and sorting quiz as well as interview with the Professor before admittance.**

**Program Learning Outcomes (Religious Studies Department Student Learning Outcomes)**

1. Students will synthesize research results and formulate written arguments on topics in religious studies.

2. Students will analyze and assess the global range of religious beliefs and practices in historical and cultural context.
3. Students will be able to appraise the roles religion plays in community and cultural life.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

This course addresses the Religious Studies Department Learning Outcomes and the GE Program Learning Outcomes through the following objectives:

- Using the metaphorical world of Harry Potter as a form of government, community organization, and society, students will explore civic issues such as rights, social activism, governmental control, war, political conflict, threats of terrorism, power, and authority. The themes in the wizarding world are socially and politically relevant for today, and allow a common backdrop for the discussion of religion, race, gender, ethnicity, slavery, and social class in communities and community formation.
  - (Addresses GE Learning Outcome 7CC and Religious Studies Learning Outcome 2 and 3)
- Students will gain the ability to apply theoretical issues from scholarly articles concerning the global and social problems in the Harry Potter world and apply them to contemporary American society. For example, in analyzing the main character, Harry Potter, as a civic hero, students will understand how individuals are guided by a sense of citizenship and when necessary go against established norms to question authority and create civic change. The issues of slavery and political activism are also explored as the main female character, Hermione, forms a grassroots organization dedicated to equal rights and fair pay for the elves who by the very nature of being racially “other” have been constricted to house slavery. Examples from the fictional world will be juxtaposed with the real world.
  - (Addresses GE Learning Outcome 7CC and Religious Studies Learning Outcome 2 and 3)
- Students will gain oral exposition skills as they will be required to lead one small group (house) discussion during the course as well as prepare a group researched presentation to middle schools.
  - Upon return to Chapman, students will research and prepare multimedia presentations and educational booklets to accompany group presentations to local middle schools. Each house will give a presentation designed around a specific social action or community project that encourages the middle school children to follow the Harry Potter character’s examples for civic and social change. Suggested presentation topics are the promotion of literacy, gender and racial equality, social justice, environment issues.
    - (Addresses GE Learning Outcome 7CC and Religious Studies Learning Outcome 1)
- Explore from a first-hand perspective the socio-cultural, historical, and economic basis behind the global Harry Potter phenomenon. Students will engage the cultural background of the Harry Potter novels and reflect upon its impact on society through readings in critical literary, race, gender, performance and philosophical theory. Students will then apply these theories to produce two written critical analysis papers and as research for a group representation.
  - (Addresses GE Learning Outcome 7CC and Religious Studies Learning Outcome 1)
- Develop writing and critical thinking skills. Critical thinking develops the ability to construct and discern relationships, analyze arguments, and solve complex problems Students will develop effective communication skills through a variety of methods. In the area of written exposition students will improve their writing skills by writing critical analysis papers. Engagement in active learning with fellow students and faculty will be gained through class discussions.
  - (Addresses Religious Studies Learning Outcome 1)
- Most importantly, however, as a travel course, students will be exposed to the real-world culture and physical environment that produced, shaped, and continues to inform the Harry Potter Series, and to examine from their own experience how community identification develops.
  - (Addresses GE Learning Outcome 7CC)

## General Education Learning Outcomes

7GC Connects contemporary social and/or environmental topics to their origins and analyzes their effects on our increasingly globalized world.

- All travel courses fulfill this GE

7CC Engages in the theoretical and/or applied aspects of political, civic or social engagement in group affiliations

## Content: Lecture and Readings Topics

Theodicy

Magic vs. Religion

Death and resurrection

Free will and destiny

Morals and values

Rituals and rites of passage

Feminism

Gender construction

Concepts of the “other” in religion and society

Racism and ethnicity

Social activism

## **Required Readings (Selection from the following books):**

Heilman, Elizabeth E. *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York. Routledge, 2008.

Heilman, Elizabeth E. *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Anatol, Giselle Liza. *Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays*. Santa Barbara, Ca. Praeger, 2009.

Anatol, Giselle Liza. *Reading Harry Potter Critical Essays*. Santa Barbara, Ca. Praeger, 2003.

Gunelius, Susan M. *Harry Potter. The Story of a Global Business Phenomenon*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

## **Hogwarts Class Readings:**

**All students must read these. Other readings will be assigned according to your Hogwarts house.**

Beaton, Tishca. "Taking Time. Harry Potter as a Context for Interdisciplinary Studies." *English Journal* 95.3 (2006), 100-103.

Belcher, Catherine. "Harry in the Classroom." 57-75. In Belcher, Catherine L. and Stephenson, Becky Herr. *Teaching Harry Potter. The Power of Imagination in Multicultural Classrooms*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Belcher, Catherine. "Harry on the Border between Two Worlds. Reading Harry en Español in a Mexican American Border Community." 35-57. In Belcher, Catherine L. and Stephenson, Becky Herr. *Teaching Harry Potter. The Power of Imagination in Multicultural Classrooms*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Bilxer, Andrea. "What We Muggles Can Learn about Teaching from Hogwarts." *The Clearing House*, 84: 75–79, 2011.

Birch, Megan. "Schooling Harry Potter: Teaching and Learning, Power and Knowledge." *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter* 2nd New York: Routledge 2009 103-120

Heilman, Elizabeth E. *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York. Routledge, 2008.

Skulnick, Rebecca and Jesse Goodman. "The Civic Leadership of Harry Potter: Agency, Ritual and Schooling." In *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York, Routledge, 2003, 261-277.

Taub, Deborah J. and Heather Servaty-Seib. "Controversial Content: Is Harry Potter Harmful to Children?" in *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Heilman, Elizabeth E. New York. Routledge, 2008. 13-32.

Turner-Vorbeck, Tammy. "Pottermania: Good Clean Fun or Cultural Hegemony." In *Harry Potter's World*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: Routledge, 2003, 13-24. Also in *Critical Perspectives on Potter*.

Wang, Alexander. "Authenticity in Harry Potter." In *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York, Routledge, 2003, 279-284.

Whited, Lana A. *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon*. Ed. Lana A. Whited. Columbia: U Missouri P, 2002.

Whited, Lana A. "Harry Potter: From Craze to Classic?" *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon*. Ed. Lana A. Whited. Columbia: U Missouri P, 2002. 1–12.

### **Instructional Strategies:**

- Classroom meetings on Chapman University's campus prior to and after travel
- Collaborative research project with presentations to local middle schools upon return to Chapman
- Follow up meeting with elementary students
- Travel: Visit London and Oxford for 10 days
- Two critical analysis essays
- Participating in and leading small discussion groups. See below for schedule

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

- 2 weekly critical analysis papers-written while abroad: 30%
- Class Participation including leading a small group discussion: 30%
- Final Project: Multimedia presentations to middle school classes 40%

Classroom meetings on Chapman University's campus prior to and after travel

**Late Assignments and Make-ups:** Please turn in your work at the due date. Late papers will result in a much lower grade. Because you put so much work and effort into your assignments to have them marked down simply because they are late is not helpful for you or for me. This policy can be modified at the discretion of the instructor.

**Class Participation:** Your participation grade will include a combination of factors: class attendance, arriving for class on time, preparation for the class session and discussions, participation in small group discussions, asking and answering appropriate questions during the lectures, attentiveness during class, etc. Simply attending class and not getting involved or spending the entire class period on your computer will not earn you an A in class participation!

In order to prepare for effective and informative class discussions, you are expected to have critically and actively read the assigned material before coming to class that day. Take notes on your reading as you will be expected to utilize them in the class discussions and exercises. The lectures and discussions will presume that everyone has read the primary and secondary texts. Classroom instruction is not a one-way process; rather it

should be a forum for discussion, interaction, and collaborative learning. We can all learn from each other's interpretation of the readings. As everyone's opinion and insight is valued class attendance and active participation is very important.

Grade %	Definition
100-94 A 90-93 A-	Signifies an exceptional and sophisticated level of achievement; displays a superb command of the material and can creatively and elegantly apply it at all levels; presents an insightful and novel view of subject matter; arguments are both inventive and fully supported.
89-87 B+ 86-84 B 80-83 B-	Indicates above average achievement; examines issues thoroughly and critically; demonstrates good grasp of the material and can creatively apply it at most levels; arguments are well supported and display some novel thinking.
77-79 C+ 74-76 C 70-73 C-	Represents an average level of achievement and only a narrow grasp of the material; uncritical about tacit assumptions; arguments reflect the subject matter but evidence is sometimes insufficient or inadequate.
67-69 D+ 64-66 D 60-63 D-	Indicates little understanding of the subject matter and lack of awareness of critical and differing views; arguments are superficial and merely descriptive.
0-59 F	Represents no comprehension of the material and a lack of ability

**Plagiarism policy:** Don't do it!! You will fail the class if you do. I encourage you to study in groups with other students, as well as to do additional research on your own. You may use any books, websites, and other resources to assist your learning the material and concepts presented in class. However, all work you turn in must be your own. When citing someone else's idea, please use proper documentation. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, contact me immediately.

*Also please note Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:*

“Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at [www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx](http://www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx).”

**Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy**

“In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit [www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services](http://www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services) if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.”

**Equity and Diversity:**

“Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.”



## Travel Itinerary and Readings Schedule TBD

- Please re-read all the Harry Potter Books and watch all the movies before the trip ☺
- All readings will be posted by on Blackboard. You will be required to do readings while in England. Our hotel has wifi but it is slow. Bring a laptop or tablet, plan to share with your roommate, or download/print the readings out in advance.

Hogwarts Class Discussion Group Highlighted in Yellow – this is with everyone!

House Discussion Group Highlighted in Blue – Check with your prefect for time and readings

### Academic Bibliography and Course Readings

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- Anatol, Giselle Liza. *Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays*. Santa Barbara, Ca. Praeger, 2009.
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- Anatol, Giselle Liza. "The Postcolonial World of Harry Potter." In Bryfonski, Dedria (ed.). *Political Issues in J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series*. Detroit. Greenhaven Press, 2009.
- Asher, Mary. *The Power of Women in Harry Potter*. Saarbrücken. Verlag Dr. Müller, 2010.
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- Beaton, Tisha, and Tonya Perry. "Harry Potter as a Context for Interdisciplinary Studies." *English Journal* 95, no. 3 (January 2006): 100-103.
- Belcher, Catherine. "Harry on the Border between Two Worlds. Reading Harry en Español in a Mexican American Border Community." 35-57. In Belcher, Catherine L. and Stephenson, Becky Herr. *Teaching Harry Potter. The Power of Imagination in Multicultural Classrooms*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011
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- Carey, Brycchan. "Hermione and the House-Elves: The Literary and Historical Contexts of J.K. Rowlings's Antislavery Campaign." In Anatol, Giselle Liza. Ed., *Reading Harry Potter. Critical Essays*. Westport. Praeger. 2003.

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- Courtney Strimel, "The Politics of Terror. Re-Reading Harry Potter." *Children's Literature in Education* 35.1 (Mar. 2004). 35-52.
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- Ehnenn, Jill R. "Queering Harry Potter." In Thomas Peele (ed.). *Queer Popular Culture*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 229-256.
- Gladstein, Mimi R. "Feminism and Equal Opportunity. Hermione and the Women of Hogwarts." 49-62. In Baggett, David. *Harry Potter and Philosophy. If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*. Chicago. Open Court Press, 2004.
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