REL5332  Special Topic in Religious Studies II: Religion and Economic Life Term 2 2016 – 17

Instructor  Dr. Au Yik Pui, Tanya 歐亦沛博士
Lecture  Friday 7:00pm – 9:30pm
Venue  CKB_UG03
E-mail  Tanya_jmu@yahoo.com.hk

Course Description

This course explores the multifaceted relationships between religion and economic life, including: (a) the support, critique, and shaping of economic life by religious traditions; (b) the economic interpretation of religious phenomena; (c) the religious dimension of economic activities.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After the completion of this course, the student is expected—
1. To become aware of and interested in the multifaceted relationships between religion and economic life;
2. To have enhanced understanding of the major theoretical issues concerning religion and economic life.
3. To be acquainted with significant studies in both economic dimensions of religious phenomena and religious dimensions of economic phenomena;

Course Schedule (tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Key Concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan 13</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
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<td>2 Jan 20</td>
<td>Why Economics and Religion?</td>
<td>Relationship between economics and religion, the metaphor of “boundary” and “border”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recommended Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Reading Topics</td>
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<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Chinese New Year Holiday—No class</td>
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<td>3 Feb</td>
<td>Judaism and Economic Life</td>
<td>Recommended Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Feb</td>
<td>Christianity and Economic Life</td>
<td>Recommended Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Feb</td>
<td>Islam and Economic Life</td>
<td>Recommended Readings:</td>
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<td>-The significance of the Mishnah in the Jewish economic life</td>
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<td>-Judaism and capitalism, Jewish contribution to mass consumption</td>
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<td>-Concepts of wealth, poverty, stewardship, and the nature of work in OT and NT</td>
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<td>-Protantism and the rise of capitalism</td>
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<td>-Christian responses to consumerism</td>
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<td>-<em>Qur’an</em> teachings on economic activities, <em>haram</em></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Recommended Readings</td>
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<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
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<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Group Presentation # 1 (Group 1 and 2)</td>
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<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Group Presentation # 2 (Group 3–4)</td>
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<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Easter—No class</td>
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<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>Group Presentation # 3 (Group 5–6)</td>
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<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>Group Presentation # 4 (Group 6–7)</td>
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- Consumer capitalism  
- The sacredness of consumption  
- Branding of faiths  
- Quasi-religious corporation  
- Amway and Walmart as case studies
### Assessment scheme (details to be announced)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Class participation (20%)</strong></th>
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<td>Students are expected to have NO more than 2 absences in this course. Students’ participation in class discussion is strongly encouraged.</td>
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<th><strong>Proposal of group presentation (10%)</strong></th>
<th>Mar 3, 2017</th>
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<td>2–3 students in a group need to write up a 2 to 3 pages of group presentation proposal. The proposal should include the following details: Tentative title, research issues/questions, reasons for/importance of the presentation, and a working bibliography.</td>
<td>Each group hands in one hard copy of the proposal before the lecture ends.</td>
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<td>Students have the liberty to propose any inter-discipline study on religion and economics. Should students have questions, please come to see the instructor in good time.</td>
<td>Include the SID names of each member in the proposal</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Group presentation (30%)</strong></th>
<th>According to the designated dates, please prepare enough hard copies of handouts for the whole class</th>
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<tr>
<td>Each group has to deliver a <strong>30-minute in-class presentation</strong>, and to provide a 2-page single-line spaced summary of their research findings and evaluation of the research issues for distribution to the class as a handout.</td>
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<th><strong>Term paper (40%)</strong></th>
<th>May 5 2017, by 11:00pm</th>
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<td>Students have write an <strong>individual paper</strong> developed from their group presentations or otherwise.</td>
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<td>Length (excluding footnotes and bibliography):</td>
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<td>English, approx. 4000 words, Chinese 5000 words</td>
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**Students have to submit their final papers and the signed VeriGuide statements to the Blackboard by 11:00pm on May 5, 2017. Late submission will be penalized; 5 points will be deducted for each day of late submission or part thereof. **Late submission over 5 days may risk receiving a zero mark.** Papers will not be graded until the signed VeriGuide statements have been sent to the instructor. Late submission of VeriGuide statements may cause points deducted. |
Marking scheme

A, A- a more comprehensive understanding of relevant idea and knowledge with a clear presentation; a clear thesis and a certain extent of originality; dialogue with different scholarly works.

B+, B, B- a good understanding of relevant idea and knowledge with a clear presentation and reference to scholarly works; a relatively less-defined and less argued thesis.

C+, C, C- a relatively weak of understanding of relevant idea and knowledge; weak presentation; unclear thesis, and even contradiction; reference is limited.

D+, D, F showing little understanding of relevant idea and knowledge; no reference to scholarly works; weak presentation.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on honesty in academic work submitted by students, and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on cheating and plagiarism. Any related offence will lead to disciplinary action including termination of studies at the University. All student assignments in undergraduate and postgraduate programs should be submitted via VeriGuide with effect from September 2008: https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/

Read further: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/
Reference


Beaudoin, Tom. *Integrating Who We are with What We Buy.*” Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2003.


葉菁華等編：《信仰市場・消費教會：消費主義與當今教會》。香港：基督教文藝出版社有限公司, 2013。

薛勇民等著：《走向晉商文化的深處》。北京：人民出版社，2013。