

# General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: PHIL 10 Self, Religion, and Society Units 3  
Prefix No. Title

Department: Philosophy School: Arts and Humanities

GE Category (Indicate one category only):

Foundation: A1\_\_\_; A2\_\_\_; A3\_\_\_; B4\_\_\_  
Breadth: B1\_\_\_; B2\_\_\_; C1\_\_\_; C2x; D\_\_\_; E\_\_\_  
Integration: B\_\_\_; C\_\_\_; D\_\_\_; International/Multicultural\_\_\_

Existing Course x; Revised Course \_\_\_; New Course \_\_\_

Course Included in Current GE Program x

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.  
Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

Proposed catalog description: Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

Conceptions of human nature; nature and varieties of religion; personal and social implications and values of religion.

Enrollment limit per section: 40

Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 2; Year 3 4

## Attachments:

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

## Approval for Inclusion in General Education

Department Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

General Education Subcommittee \_\_\_\_\_ Date 12/15/98

Brandt Kehoe 12/22/98  
Associate Provost Date

**Philosophy 10: Self, Religion, and Society**

3 units, no prerequisite

Semester, Year  
Schedule # ?????

**Catalog description:** Conceptions of human nature; nature and varieties of religion; personal and social implications and values of religion.

**General Education:** This course meets General Education requirements. For students with catalogs 1998-99 or earlier, it meets the requirement for BREADTH, Division 6. For all other students, it meets the requirement for BREADTH, Area C2.

**Instructor:** Name  
**Office:** Number  
**Office Hours:** Times (minimum 5 hours/week)  
**Office telephone:** Number  
**E-mail address:** Email  
**Department Office:** Music Building, Room 102; department hours: M-F 8:30-12:00; 13:00-17:00  
**Department telephone:** 278-2621

**Textbooks:** Will include key writings by philosophical and religious thinkers. Additional reading will be taken from at least two of the following four categories of texts: (1) classic primary sources, e.g., the Bible, Plato's, *Apology*, the Vedas; (2) religious or philosophical autobiographies; (3) literature or film expressive of the interrelationships between self, religion and society; and (4) contemporary poetic, literary, philosophical, or spiritual sources.

**Fees:** There are no additional fees associated with this course

**Course goals:**

1. Introduce the student to diverse concepts and evaluations of the interrelationships between Self, Religion, and Society
2. Provide the student with methods and models for better understanding the contemporary global context and the diversity of religious expression.
3. Provide the student with new perspectives on their own self via the examination and evaluation of traditional and contemporary problems and issues.
4. Increase appreciation of the variety of understandings for one's self and other selves.

**Course topics:** Self, Religion, and Society reflects systematically upon the three topics of its title individually and in their interrelationships. Topics would include how religious and philosophical concerns constitute and are constituted by persons and groups. Many philosophical and religious works include in their content explanations of Self, Religion, and/or Society. Thus, the course has a comparative component both among the topics and within particular comparative texts. The topics pay attention to conceptions of Self, Religion, and Society as these are set forth in a range of philosophical and literary texts, which may include aesthetic expressions in videos, music, e.g., J. Cone's, *The Spirituals and the Blues*, and art, e.g. the significance of mandalas.

A. Every section of Phil 10 will cover significant similarities, differences, and interrelationships of religion and philosophy as methods and worldviews for understanding self and society/societal groups.

Attachment #2: General Syllabus

Proposed course: **Phil 10: Self, Religion, and Society**

In addition, each section will include at least three of the four following topics, ranging three to five weeks per topic:

Topic 1. The variety of ways in which religion shapes society and social/economic values as well as shapes the self and self-awareness of individuals in that society, such as the dimensions of personal worth, social role, gender identity, marginality, and mortality/immortality.

Topic 2. The variety of ways in which society and social/economic values shape religious traditions, such as the dimensions of ritual, scriptures, piety, and family.

Topic 3. The variety of ways (justified or unjustified) in which the individual self can conform to or reject the dominant social and religious traditions which shaped that self.

Topic 4. An examination of some non-standard conceptions of selfhood, individuality, and community, e.g., self-hood of machines and non-human animals, and one's relationship to non-human environment.

B. Every section of Phil 10 will include both western and non-western perspectives. Focus would be given to understanding the particular formulations of Self, Religion, and Society in the material as well as models for understanding their interrelationships.

**Assignments:**

1. Information on attendance, homework, class participation
2. Information on methods of testing
3. Writing assignments. *The University General Education policy states that each course in lower division GE must have a 2,000 word writing requirement.* Accordingly, each student will be required to complete writing assignments, consistent with the GE Policy, at a minimum of 2,000 words.
4. Final examination (according to CSUF policy and schedule)

**Evaluation:** Each syllabus will contain a grading policy.

**Criteria for grading:** Each syllabus will state the criteria that will be used in grading.

**Eligibility for a passing grade:** Each syllabus will contain a statement of the necessary conditions for passing the course.

**Grades:** Each syllabus will include a grading scale and an explanation of how grades are to be assigned.

**Course calendar:** The calendar will depend on the texts and approaches chosen. The class time devoted to each topic will range from 2-5 weeks.

**General information:**

Policy on attendance; Policy on missed or late work; Regarding Cheating and plagiarism; Students with disabilities; Others specific policies for this course.

Attachment #3: Typical Syllabus  
Proposed course: **Phil 10: Self, Religion, and Society**

**Philosophy 10: Self, Religion, and Society**  
3 units, no prerequisite

Fall 1999  
Schedule # ?????

**Catalog description:** Conceptions of human nature; nature and varieties of religion; personal and social implications and values of religion.

**General Education:** This course meets General Education requirements. For students with catalogs 1998-99 or earlier, it meets the requirement for BREADTH, Division 6. For all other students, it meets the requirement for BREADTH, Area C2.

**Instructor:** Robert D. Maldonado  
**Office:** Music 107  
**Office Hours:** MWF 9-10; TTh 11:00-12:00  
**Office telephone:** 278-2879  
**E-mail address:** robertma@csufresno.edu  
**Department Office:** Music Building, Room 102; department hours: M-F 8:30-12:00;  
13:00-17:00  
**Department telephone:** 278-2621

**Textbooks:**

James Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope: the essential writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*

Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, trans., *I... Rigoberta Menchú*

Course Packet available in Kennel Bookstore (\* items on course calendar)

**Fees:** There are no additional fees associated with this course

**Course goals:**

1. Introduce the student to diverse concepts and evaluations of the interrelationships between Self, Religion, and Society
2. Provide the student with methods and models for better understanding the contemporary global context and the diversity of religious expression.
3. Provide the student with new perspectives on their own self via the examination and evaluation of traditional and contemporary problems and issues.
4. Increase appreciation of the variety of understandings for one's self and other selves.

**Course topics:** Self, Religion, and Society reflects systematically upon the three topics of its title individually and in their interrelationships. Specific to this course are 1) an examination of several classic texts which examine the role of individual integrity, social responsibility, religion and suffering; 2) Issues of Race, Religion, and Civil Rights via the writings of Dr. King; 3) the role of television in shaping one's identity as well as religious and social discourse; and 4) an indigenous

Quiché woman's autobiography which integrates her views on Religion, Politics, and Land Reform in Guatemala.

**Assignments:**

1. Careful reading of course material prior to the day they appear on the calendar.
2. There will be six short (10 minute) quizzes spaced through the semester at the beginning of the class period. Format will be short answer focusing on content. While comprehensive to the course, the quizzes will emphasize material since the previous quiz (or beginning of class for the first quiz) through the reading for the day of the quiz. The lowest quiz score will automatically be dropped from your evaluation. Missed quizzes may NOT be made up.
3. *The University General Education policy states that each course in lower division GE must have a 2,000 word writing requirement.* Accordingly, each student will be required to complete writing assignments, consistent with the GE Policy, at a minimum of 2,000 words. There will be two 5-6 page papers (approximately 1200-1500 words each). Writing assignments will be graded using the criteria outlined in the section "Criteria for grading" and following the rules and conventions of Standard English will be graded according to grammar, syntax, and style.
  - a. Paper #1 will be a critical reflection on the ways in which religion shapes society and social/economic values as well as shapes the self and self-awareness of individuals in that society (TOPIC 1) explicitly addressing the texts of King and/or Postman.
  - b. Paper #2 will be a critical reflection on the ways in which society and social/economic values shape religious traditions (TOPIC 2) explicitly addressing the text of Menchú.
4. Final examination (according to CSUF policy and schedule). The final will be comprehensive to the course.

**Evaluation:** Credit for all the assignments will be assigned weighted percentages as indicated below:

Quizzes:	30% (i.e., each quiz is worth 6%)
Paper #1:	25%
Paper #2:	25%
Final:	20%

**Criteria for grading:** Grading criteria will be specified for each assignment, but in general:

- "A" (100-90%) be awarded to work showing a high degree of competence, coverage of all parts of the question/issue, and thorough development.
- "B" (80-89%) will be awarded to clearly competent responses, although there may be some weaknesses.
- "C" (70-79%) will be awarded to competent responses, but much less developed and/or more superficial than the above. Responses which are primarily a restatement of the topic; lack focus or pertinent detail; remain general and undeveloped.
- "D" (60-69%) will be awarded to severely underdeveloped or incomplete work.

"F" (0-59%) will be awarded to work with little or no understanding of the question/issue.

**Eligibility for a passing grade:** In order to pass the course, each student must have a final weighted percentage above 59%.

**Course calendar:** The calendar is subject to change. You will know about such changes, if they are required, by attending class.

Week 1 Class 1 Introduction

**Classic formulations of problems for the Self**

**All three of these classic formulations address TOPICS 1-3**

Class 2 Plato's, *Apology*\*

Plato's *Apology* presents Socrates' defense against charges of impiety and corruption of youth. It explores classic issues of the self's relation to the community and to itself (e.g. issues of integrity)

Week 2 Class 1 Plato's, *Crito*\*

*Crito* explores the obligations of the self to the state and in relation to the opinion of the many (contrasted to truth)

Class 2 Job\*

Job is a classic Hebrew wisdom text exploring the relationship between piety and self-interest, retribution and unjust suffering, and the individual's relationship to the deity

Week 3 **King's Philosophy of Religious Nonviolence**

Class 1 **Quiz #1; King, Introduction, pp. 5-20**

The readings cover early works (1957-8): "Nonviolence and Racial Justice"; "The Most Durable Power": "The Power of Nonviolence"; and "An Experiment in Love". Dr. King draws on the Bible, Gandhi, Nygren and others to address the loving and just self in a racist environment. (Topic 1, personal worth, social roles, marginality; Topic 2, piety as influenced by social and cultural forces; and Topic 3, direct action (nonviolent resistance) as a way to resist conforming to racist culture)

**King's Philosophy of Social Integration**

Class 2 King, pp. 43-54, 64-72, 117-125

The readings are: "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience (1961)"; Showdown for Nonviolence (1968)"; and "The Ethical Demands for Integration (1963)". Here King develops his vision for the integrated (not assimilated) society drawing on religious and philosophical traditions. These focus mostly on Topics 1 and 3.

Week 4 **King's Philosophy of the Political: Wedged between Democracy and Black Nationalism**

Class 1 Video, *An Amazing Grace*

This video is a documentary of the civil rights movement focusing on King's role, but situated with the Black Church tradition.

Class 2 King, pp. 189-194

The reading, "Next Stop: The North (1965)", addresses the northern urban areas in the aftermath of the Voting Rights Bill and the Watts riots. King explores how his movement is related and responsive to broad American democratic ideals and the increasing presence of Black nationalism and Black Power. (Topics 1-3)

Week 5 **King's Famous Sermons and Essays**

Class 1 **Quiz #2**; King, pp. 289-302, 231-244

The famous, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail (1963)", explores the relationship between the Black and white churches in their commitment (or lack) to civil rights and how the white moderate church has been influenced by racist and white supremacist values. King calls the white church to resist and join fully in the struggle for civil rights. "A Time to Break Silence" expressly links the Vietnam War to the Civil Rights movement and explicitly attacks Johnson's policy. This is an historic, but little known in the popular curricular King canon. King explicitly calls upon a "Hindu-Moslem-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief" to respond to the interrelationship between racism, militarism, and poverty. (Topics 1, 3)

Class 2 King, pp. 313-328, 509-517

The essay, "A Testament of Hope (Posthumous)", succinctly presents King's analysis of the problems facing civil rights and his grounding in Christian religious vision. *The Strength to Love* is a collection of sermons of which the reading is a chapter, "Antidotes for Fear". King rejected the dichotomy between folk and intellectual preaching. It is a meditation on 1 John 4:18. (Topics 1-3)

Week 6 Class 1 King, pp. 555-633, 253-267

The first reading is an excerpt from the book, *Where do we go from here: chaos or community?* It presents a reasoned defense of nonviolent direct action in response to the increasing influence of black power. His thought is influenced by black power as he tries to show common objectives even as he holds out for his own strategies. (Topics 1-3)

Class 2 Audio, J. Cone's Sermon on Dr. King

Cone is one of the foremost living Black Christian theologians. This sermon articulates important themes from his work, *Martin and Malcolm*. (Topics 1-2)

Week 7 Class 1 J. Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues\**

Cone explores the role of music in the Black community with emphasis on its roles for resistance and articulating alternative critical perspectives to the dominant social system. (Topics 2-3)

**Typography and the Self**

Postman compares and contrasts what he identifies as the Ages of Typography (Print) and Show Business (Television). He explicitly focuses on the role of the individual in the political, educational and religious spheres

Class 2 **Quiz #3**; Postman, pp. vii-30

Readings: "The Medium Is the Metaphor" and "Media as Epistemology" explore the nature of media and how media provide epistemic (limited) perspectives. Topic 1

Week 8 Class 1 Postman, pp. 40-63

Readings: "Typographic America" and "Typographic Mind" presents data to contrast the world before television and explores the consequences of the hegemony of typography on American discourse. Topic 1

Class 2 Postman, pp. 64-80

"The Peek-a-Boo World" presents and contrasts the advent of the juxtaposition of telegraphy and photography in television with its consequent media influenced epistemic shifts. Topic 1

Week 9 **Television and the Self**

Class 1 Postman, pp. 83-113

"The Age of Show Business" and "Now . . . This" develop the concepts of the Age of Show Business, in particular its fragmentation and incoherence. Topic 1

**Television, Religion, Politics, Teaching, and the Self**

	Class 2	Postman, pp. 114-141
		"Shuffle off to Bethlehem" and "Reach Out and Elect Someone" explicitly focus on the influences of the discourse of Television on Religion/Religious practice and on Politics. Topic 2
Week 10	Class 1	<b>Quiz #4</b> ; Video, <i>Still Killing Me Softly</i>
		The video explores the media's presentation of stereotyping women.
	Class 2	Postman, pp. 142-163
		"Teaching as an Amusing Activity" and "The Huxleyan Warning" relates the Age of Show Business to pedagogical issues and offers some concluding remarks. Topics 2-3.
Week 11		<b>I.. Rigoberta Menchú</b>
		Menchú's book is an autobiography, which provides an excellent genre for explicitly focusing on the self. As a roughly chronological account of her life, it is more difficult to annotate the reading assignments in a useful way for the subcommittee. Her book incorporates topics 1-3 in a comprehensive way. For example, she contrasts her experience as a peasant on a coffee plantation with village life during non-harvest seasons and with her experiences as a maid in the city. Thus she situates herself in relation to issues of class and race (indigenous to mixed). She also explicitly connects her work in the Catholic church with her political action in land reform, but acknowledges a division within the church regarding the role religion should take in one's politics. She also connects (through comparison and contrast as well as her own piety) native religious worldviews and practices with those of Christians. In this light she explicitly reflects on Biblical characters and stories with a view to how they are applicable to the Guatemalan situation. Thus her book is a virtual case study for the topics and goals of the course which affords the students the opportunity to do a sustained reading that allows for a critical appropriation and application of methods and models presented in the course.
	Class 1	<b>Paper #1 due</b> ; Menchú, chapters 1-4
	Class 2	Video, <i>When the Mountains Tremble</i>
Week 12	Class 1	<b>Quiz #5</b> ; Menchú, chapters 5-7
	Class 2	Menchú, chapters 8-10
Week 13	Class 1	Menchú, chapters 11-13
	Class 2	Menchú, chapters 13-16
Week 14	Class 1	<b>Quiz #6</b> ; Menchú, chapters 17-20
	Class 2	Menchú, chapters 21-25
Week 15	Class 1	Menchú, chapters 26-30
	Class 2	Menchú, chapters 31-34
Week 16	Class 1	<b>Paper #2 due</b> ; Concluding Issues &
	Class 2	Review

**General information:**

1. Policy on attendance: Attendance is required. More than two noted unexcused absences will result in course grade reduced progressively by thirds (i.e., A => A-; A- => B+; etc.)
2. Policy on missed or late work: Conflicts with the calendar of assignments should be resolved as early as possible. Except for emergencies and very special circumstances, arrangements must be made with me in advance. Missed work (except quizzes, see above) should be completed as soon as possible. All late work without an excuse



- approved by the instructor (e.g., medical) will have the grade reduced progressively by thirds each day it is late.
3. **Cheating and plagiarism.** University policy defines "cheating" as "the practice of fraudulent and deceptive acts for the purpose of improving a grade or obtaining course credit. Typically, such acts occur in relation to examinations. It is the intent of this definition that the term 'cheating' not be limited to examination situations only but that it include any and all actions by a student which are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent and deceptive means." University policy defines "plagiarism" as "a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of another by representing the material so used as one's own work." Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Depending upon the seriousness of the action, the student may be penalized by an "F" on the assignment to an "F" in the course and the filing of a Cheating/Plagiarism Report to be placed in the student's permanent academic record.
  4. **Students with disabilities.** If you are a disabled student, be sure to identify yourself to the University and the instructor so that reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation within the course can be made. Contact Services for Students with Disabilities, Madden Library Room 1049, 278-2811