This year's seminar will examine the phenomenon of new religious movements in global perspective. The term "new religious movements" (NRMs) has become, in recent years, the preferred term for what used to be called "cults" and "sects." Although those terms had and still have legitimate sociological usages, over the past few decades they have acquired distinctly negative connotations, so most scholars now use the newer terminology. The study of NRMs has developed into a distinct sub-field within religious studies. We will be examining both its methodological considerations and a wide variety of case studies, ranging from North America to Europe to Africa and Asia.

**Reading:**

Available in Bookstore

On Course Reserve
- See also online books on Links page
Course Requirements and Grading:

1. Participation (25% of course grade). The success of a seminar depends on the active participation of all members. Attendance at all meetings is required, unless you have a legitimate excuse and inform me about it beforehand. You are expected to have read the assigned material and to participate regularly in seminar discussion, both when we have readings to discuss and during the class presentations of case studies.

2. Discussion topics (15%). Each week there is assigned reading (weeks 2-5, 7-9, 12) you will turn in (keeping a copy for yourself) a typed list of topics you would like to discuss, a minimum of two for each chapter or article.

3. Preliminary reports (15%). On October 8 each of you will give an oral report of your preliminary research on your NRM case study (see list next page). This should consist primarily of an objective survey of the history, doctrines, and practices of the NRM.

4. Oral presentation (15%) and research paper (30%) on your case study. The oral presentation will be given during the last two weeks of the semester. This should focus primarily on scholarly research and your analysis of the NRM. The final paper, which will include both the objective description and the scholarly analysis, will be due one week after your oral presentation.

The case studies should deal with topics and questions such as these (not an exhaustive list):

- The origin and historical development of the NRM
- What are the beliefs and practices of the NRM?
- What religious, social, and/or intellectual traditions does the NRM draw upon?
- What social conditions and processes is the NRM responding to?
- Who joins the movement and why?
- How does affiliation satisfy the needs of its members?
- How does affiliation affect members' other social relations?
- Gender relations in the NRM
- Patterns of authority in the NRM
Case study topics (* required):

1. * Scientology
2. * Neo-Paganism, including Wicca
3. * Buddhism in U.S.
4. * ISKCON (International Society of Krishna Consciousness)

* Japan (at least one):
  5. Soka Gakkai
  6. Aum Shinrikyo
  7. Tenrikyo
  8. Rissho Kosei-kai

* China (at least one):
  9. Yiguandao (China and Taiwan)
  10. Falun Gong

11. Unification Church (Moonies)
12. Children of God (The Family)
13. Christian Science
14. Adventists
15. Santeria
16. Rastafari
17. Nation of Islam
18. People's Temple
19. Jehovah's Witnesses
20. Heaven's Gate and other UFO and millennial groups (Y2K)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sep 3</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>&quot; Siegler, <em>New Religious Movements</em>, 8-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sep 10</td>
<td>Quick survey</td>
<td>&quot; Siegler, 24-114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3    | Sep 17 | What are NRMs? | " Saliba, *Understanding New Religious Movements*, ch. 1  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, *Cults and New Religious Movements*, chs. 1-4 |
| 4    | Sep 24 | History of NRMs in the West | " Saliba, ch. 2  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, chs. 5 - 6 |
| 5    | Oct 1 | Various topics | " Melton, "Perspective: Toward a Definition of 'New Religion'"  
|      |       |           | " Partridge, "Alternative Spiritualities, New Religions, and the Reenchantment of the West"  
|      |       |           | " Trompf, "History and the End of Time in New Religions"  
|      |       |           | " Hammer, "Esoterism in New Religious Movements"  
|      |       |           | " Pye, "New Religions in East Asia" |
| 6    | Oct 8 | Preliminary presentations | |
| 7    | Oct 15 | Psychological perspectives | " Saliba, ch. 3  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, chs. 9 - 11 |
| 8    | Oct 22 | Sociological perspectives | " Saliba, ch. 4  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, chs. 7 - 8  
|      |       |           | " Wessinger, "Charismatic Leaders in New Religions"  (Moodle) |
| 9    | Oct 29 | Legal issues & violence | " Saliba, ch. 5  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, chs. 12 - 13 |
| 10   | Nov 5 | No class (senior exercise week) | |
| 11   | Nov 12 | Films | |
| 12   | Nov 19 | Gender issues & the future | " Palmer, "Women in New Religious Movements" (Moodle)  
|      |       |           | " Dawson, chs. 14 - 17 |
| 13   | Dec 3 | Final presentations | |
| 14   | Dec 10 | Final presentations | |