

THEO/IRST 216-01: Religion, Media, & Pop Culture Spring 2023

Tue, & Thu 12:15 -13:30 Classroom: Fisher Hall 716
Instructor: Greg Jones · Email: jonesg3@duq.edu · Zoom Hours: T, R 10-12pm or by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examination of the religious, theological, and moral issues as well as diverse perspectives raised by various forms of media and popular culture, including: advertisements, sports, movies, television, social media, and music through radio, television, print, and the Internet. Special attention will be given to the nature of their relationship and the theological, religious, and moral issues currently present in their interface. This course ultimately seeks to examine the interplay of media, pop culture, and religion as well as their benefits and drawback in society.

Learning Objectives:

1. To educate students about the intersections of religion, media, and popular culture.
2. To offer students theological insights for critically analyzing popular culture and religion and their roles in today's media.
3. Demonstrate and appreciate how popular culture and religion effectively use social media and other forms of media.
4. Examine and analyze ethical issues within popular culture and religion including: racism, religious bigotry, violence, social justice, criminal justice, and materialism, etc.

Required Textbooks

1. Neil Postman. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. England: Penguin Books, 2005.
2. Pauline Hope Cheong, Peter Fischer-Nielsen, Stefan Gelfgren, & Charles Ess (eds). *Digital Religion, Social Media, and Culture: Perspectives, Practices, and Futures*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2012.
3. Peter F. Fallon. *Cultural Defiance, Cultural Deviance*. Sophia Omni Press, 2013.

1. Procedures: A blend of lecture, power point presentations, class discussions, interactive use of the Blackboard, and appropriate audio-visual materials. It is expected that students will remain current with the required readings and manifest a willingness to participate in class discussions. **Attendance and participation in class are required.** This involves being present, being current with readings, and active participation in class discussions. Attendance will be taken in each class. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices for the purpose of communication or entertainment during class hours is prohibited.

Points will be deducted from the attendance grade for unexcused absences from class. Excused absences are serious sickness, death (family member), and sports (if I receive notification well before the absence). All others will be considered unexcused.

2. **Assignments/Quizzes:**