

Arch City Religion Project
THEO 1000
Dr. Rachel McBride Lindsey

This project is worth 40% of your semester grade. Be attentive to the schedule of deadlines and follow the posted guidelines. Most importantly, have fun!

For this assignment, you will work with a team and choose one of four options:

Object Narrative: Select an object from a local museum, cultural site, or archive and research its history, use, and meaning in relation to religious history, faith, and practice.

Microethnography: Select a community of faith or social justice organization to visit, interview, and analyze in relation to religious history, faith, and/or practice.

Biography: Select an individual (well known or not) to research in relation to the history of religious history, faith, and practice in St. Louis. This can be an individual from any period of history.

Neighborhood Study: Select a neighborhood or streetscape in the metro area to explore, analyze, and map religious presence and/or affiliation.

THEO 1000 emphasizes Christian history and culture but you may select any religious community, object, or space to research for this assignment. If you choose a religious tradition other than Christianity, be sure to research that tradition and avoid comparative theological analysis (in other words, your task will be to research your topic from within the tradition rather than in relation to Christianity).

This assignment builds over the course of the semester. Please mark the following dates in your calendar:

- Group Meetings (2) with Dr. Lindsey. Schedule a time with all (or at least most) of your group members before **Friday, September 15**, to discuss your plans and on or before **Friday, November 10**, to discuss progress on your project and any questions or concerns about the final page. Bring all prepared materials (texts, recordings, images, etc.) with you. (5%)
- Proposal due Friday, September 15, by 5pm. Your one-page proposal must include a title, research question, description of your approach, and plan for research. Each proposal should also designate a team leader and identify how each team member will contribute to the project. Each team member will sign the proposal and work toward completing the assignment. (5%)
- Bibliography due Friday, October 20, by 5pm. This list of sources should include primary and secondary sources you are consulting in the course of research and analysis. At least three of your secondary sources should be books. (5%)
- Website draft due Friday, November 17, by 5pm. This Google Drive portfolio should include the jointly authored, proofread, nearly finalized text of your research as well as separate files for images, audio, video, or other digital content you plan to include on your page. I recommend creating a Google Drive folder early in the process where you can organize and share your content as it develops. (5%)
- Final projects and presentations Wednesday, December 6, and Friday, December 8. The final project includes both your entry on the website and a brief (5 minute) oral presentation to the section (10%)
- Peer Evaluation due Friday, December 8, by 5pm. Each group member will complete a short evaluation (on Blackboard) of their team and its members. Failure to participate and

contribute to the group will adversely affect **your** project grade and could hurt the rest of your team as well. (5%)

- Group Log. Ongoing, due Friday, December 8, by 5pm. This project hub is an ongoing chronicle of independent and collective work on your ACR project. Use it to make plans, track progress, report problems as they arise, and record any other group activity. (5%)

Work in Progress and Submissions

This is a collaborative project. Organization and communication are essential to success. As indicated above, please use Google Drive or OneDrive to plan, compose, and organize your project. However, please submit your *completed* group assignments (Proposal and Bibliography) to the designated folders on Blackboard.

GETTING STARTED

Make a Google Drive (or a OneDrive) folder that everyone in your group can access. Share it with me.

Label the Drive/OneDrive folder using this formula: ACR F17 THEO 1000-[section #] Group [#]

e.g., ACR F17 THEO 1000-56 Group 4

Create designated folders for various components of your project, including proposal, bibliography, text, images, videos, and audio (your page might not have all of these, so choose what is relevant). As you research and begin to write drafts, save your work in progress to these clearly labeled folders. Organization is your friend!

Do not embed images in your final text document. Instead, drop individual image (or audio or video) files into the designated folder in order to ensure better resolution and avoid formatting errors.

Create a document in the main folder called “Group Log” to keep track of brainstorming, progress, schedules, and questions that emerge over the course of the semester.

Compose a research question

How are you going to approach your topic? What methods will you use? What sources will you use? What are the parameters of your research? How is your topic relevant to the study and/or experience of religion in St. Louis? What should we know about this topic?

Make sure your research question structures your trajectory and is focused enough to answer in the course of one semester. You cannot, for example, write an entire history of Buddhism in St. Louis in the space and time allotted for this assignment. You can, however, gesture to a complex history while drilling down into the history of one temple or shrine. Use secondary sources wisely and substantively.

A well-composed research question will help keep your group focused but it is not a contract. You will probably adjust it over the course of the semester—that’s expected as you learn more about your topic. Keep a record of your progress. Your question will be a helpful foundation for your thesis.

Potential Research Topic and/or Sites:

Here are some suggestions to get you going. This list is suggestive, not exhaustive:

People

Sister Antona Ebo
Rabbi Susan Talve
Reverend Traci Blackmon
Father Marek Božek
Reverend F. Willis Johnson
Mother Theresa E. Bolden (COGIC)
Fr. Claude Herman Heithaus, SJ
Maharat Rori Picker Neiss

Places

Central Reformed Congregation
Congregation Temple Israel
Bais Abraham Congregation
Masjid Bilal
St. Louis Islamic Center (Nur Mosque)
Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
St. Mary and St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church
St. Louis Missouri Temple (LDS)
All Saints Episcopal Church
Hospitals
SLU Art Museum (SLUMA)
Community of Christ (various)
Memorial Presbyterian Church (PCA)
St. Louis Chinese Gospel Church
Holocaust Museum of St. Louis
Missouri History Museum
Cemeteries (Catholic, Jewish, municipal, community, garden, etc.)
Washington University in St. Louis
St. Louis Friends Meeting (Quaker)
Missouri Botanical Garden

Blue Lotus Dharma Center
Fo Guang Shan St. Louis Buddhist Center
Wat Phrasriratanarum Buddhist Temple and Meditation Center
Pure Mind Center
Breweries (A-B, Schlaflys, etc.)
Missouri Zen Center
Immigrant and Refugee Women's Program

Neighborhoods/Areas

Central West End
East St. Louis
Midtown
The Hill
“Hallelujah Corners”
Downtown
The Loop
North City
“Holy Ground Collaborative”
South City
West County
North County
Ferguson
Inner-Ring Suburbs (University City, Maplewood, Richmond Heights, Clayton, Brentwood, Rock Hill)

Christian Branches/Denominations

African Methodist Episcopal (AME)
United Methodist Church
Jehovah's Witness
Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)
Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUSA)
Independent Catholic/Old Catholic

Seventh-day Adventist
Society of Friends (Quakers)
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Southern Baptist
Unitarian Universalist
American Baptist
Fundamental Baptist
Black Baptist
Pentecostalism
Christian Scientist
Assemblies of God
Episcopalian
Anglican
United Church of Christ
Church of God in Christ
Church of God
Disciples of Christ
Church of Christ

Objects

Public art
Museum artifacts
Lawn ornamentation
Grand Avenue Water Tower
Religious statuary
Home shrines or altars
Theaters
Buildings
Parks
Headstones
Homes
Heritage Sites
Cinemas (and/or films)
Food