Boston University College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
725 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 106, Boston, MA 02215
T: 617-353-2401 E: pgl@bu.edu

CAS/GRS New Course Proposal Form
This form is to be used when proposing a new CAS or GRS course.

This form should be submitted to Senior Academic Administrator Peter Law (617-353-7243) as a PDF file to pgl@bu.edu. For further information or assistance, contact Associate Dean Susan Jackson (617-353-2410; sjackson@bu.edu) about CAS courses or Associate Dean Jeffrey Hughes (617-353-2690; hughes@bu.edu) about GRS courses.

DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: Religion

DATE SUBMITTED: 9/1/2016

COURSE NUMBER: CAS RN 248

COURSE TITLE: Food and Religion

INSTRUCTOR(S): Deeana Klepper

TO BE FIRST OFFERED: Sem./Year: ___S___ / ___17____

SHORT TITLE: The “short title” appears in the course inventory, on the Link University Class Schedule, and on student transcripts and must be 15 characters maximum including spaces. It should be as clear as possible.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is the description that appears in the CAS and/or GRS Bulletin and The Link. It is the first guide that students have as to what the course is about. The description can contain no more than 40 words.

Explores the intersection of religion and food, using food to learn about religion and religion to study the role of food in human societies. Topics include feasting; fasting; feeding God(s), spirits, ancestors; eating/not eating animals; ingesting alcohol and psychoactive plants.

PREREQUISITES: Indicate “None” or list all elements of the prerequisites, clearly indicating “AND” or “OR” where appropriate. Here are three examples: “Junior standing or CAS ZN300 or consent of instructor”; “CAS ZN108 and CAS ZN203 and CAS PQ206; or consent of instructor”; “For SED students only.”

1. State the prerequisites:
None

2. Explain the need for these prerequisites:

CREDITS: (check one)
Provide a rationale for this number of credits, bearing in mind that for a CAS or GRS course to carry 4 credits, 1) it must normally be scheduled to meet at least 150 minutes/week, AND 2) combined instruction and assignments, as detailed in the attached course syllabus, must anticipate at least 12 total hours/week of student effort to achieve course objectives.

In addition to meeting for three 50-minute class sessions, there will be a number of experiential assignments and regular outside reading and writing that will require students to spend at least 12 hours per week outside of class time. (see syllabus)

DIVISIONAL STUDIES CREDIT: Is this course intended to fulfill Divisional Studies requirements?

☐ No.
☒ Yes. If yes, please indicate which division ___humanities____________________ and explain why the course should qualify for Divisional Studies credit. Refer to criteria listed here and specify whether this course is intended for “short” or “expanded” divisional list.

All Religion courses at the 200 level fulfill divisional studies in the humanities. Like other 200 level religion courses, this course will introduce students to a range of world religions as well as to approaches to thinking about religion. Students will develop a critical and reflective perspective on specifically religious aspects of the intersection between biology and culture.

HOW FREQUENTLY WILL THE COURSE BE OFFERED?

☐ Every semester  ☐ Once a year, fall  ☐ Once a year, spring  ☐ Every other year
☐ Other: Explain:

NEED FOR THE COURSE: Explain the need for the course and its intended impact. How will it strengthen your overall curriculum? Will it be required or fulfill a requirement for degrees/majors/minors offered by your department/program or for degrees in other departments/school/colleges? Which students are most likely to be served by this course? How will it contribute to program learning outcomes for those students? If you see the course as being of “possible” or “likely” interest to students in another departments/program, please consult directly with colleagues in that unit. (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course is intended to serve students in specific other programs. See FURTHER INFORMATION below about cognate comment.)

Apart from our curricular preparation of majors and contribution to undergraduate education in CAS, the Religion department serves hundreds of BU students in other schools and colleges. It is important for us to have a range of courses at both the 100 and 200 levels to meet student demand. Many students at BU are very interested in food, its preparation, and its meaning. This course will draw on an existing student interest in order to introduce students to a broad range of religious traditions and to expand students’ understanding of what we mean by the term “religion.”
ENROLLMENT: How many undergraduate and/or graduate students do you expect to enroll in the initial offering of this course? 25-30

CROSS-LISTING: Is this course to be cross-listed or taught with another course? If so, specify. Chairs/directors of all cross-listing units must co-sign this proposal on the signature line below.
No

OVERLAP:

1. Are there courses in the UIS Course Inventory (CC00) with the same number and/or title as this course?
   X No.
   ☐ Yes. If yes, any active course(s) with the same number or title as the proposed course will be phased out upon approval of this proposal.
   NOTE: A course number cannot be reused if a different course by that number has been offered in the past five years.

2. Relationship to other courses in your program or others: Is there any significant overlap between this course and others offered by your department/program or by others? (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course might be perceived as overlapping with courses in another department/program. See FURTHER INFORMATION below.)

   There is no overlap with current offerings in the religion department. There is a very small degree of overlap with a course in the anthropology department, AN 308 Food, Culture, and Society, but that course does not focus particularly on religion, as you can see in the course description:

   “AN 308: Study of foodways, culinary social history, and diet and food ecology with special attention to Asian societies and Boston’s food culture. Examines the use of food and cuisine as a focus for identity, national development, and social change.”

   Furthermore, the anthropology course is offered at the 300 level in a social science department while the new proposed course will be offered at the 200 level in a humanities department. We will also try not to schedule the courses in the same semester. AN 308 is being offered Fall 2016, and we will offer RN 2XX in Spring 2017.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: What, if any, are the new or special facilities or equipment needs of the course (e.g., laboratory, library, instructional technology, consumables)? Are currently available facilities, equipment, and other resources adequate for the proposed course? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

   I would like to engage in food preparation in MET Gastronomy kitchens three times a semester to add a practical component to the course. I have had a positive response from the Gastronomy program faculty coordinator, but I have not yet gotten permission from the person who controls the kitchen. If I cannot get access to the MET kitchens I will find another space to use.
STAFFING: How will the staffing of this course, in terms of faculty and, where relevant, teaching fellows, affect staffing support for other courses? For example, are there other courses that will not be taught as often as now? Is the staffing of this course the result of recent or expected expansion of faculty? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

This course will be offered in place of older courses that no longer meet the needs of students. Because it is an elective, if there is no faculty member available to teach it in a given year, it can simply be postponed until the following year.

BUDGET AND COST: What, if any, are the other new budgetary needs or implications related to the start-up or continued offering of this course? If start-up or continuation of the course will entail costs not already discussed, identify them and how you expect to cover them. (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

I would like a budget of $400 to cover the cost of food for the three sessions.

EXTERNAL PROGRAMS: If this course is being offered at an external program/campus, please provide a brief description of that program and attach a CV for the proposed instructor.

FURTHER INFORMATION THAT MUST BE ATTACHED IN ORDER FOR THIS PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED:

- A complete week-by-week SYLLABUS with student learning objectives, readings, and assignments that reflects the specifications of the course described in this proposal; that is, appropriate level, credits, etc. (See guidelines on “Writing a Syllabus” on the Center for Excellence & Innovation in Teaching website.) Be sure that syllabus includes your expectations for academic honesty, with URL for pertinent undergraduate or GRS academic conduct code(s).

- Cognate comment from chairs or directors of relevant departments and/or programs. Use the form here under “Curriculum Review & Modification.” You can consult with Susan Jackson (CAS) or Jeffrey Hughes (GRS) to determine which departments or programs inside and outside of CAS would be appropriate.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT NAME AND POSITION: Deeana Klepper, Associate Professor of Religion and History

DEPARTMENT CONTACT EMAIL AND PHONE: dklepper@bu.edu 617-358-0186

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL: ___________________________ Date 9/7/16

Department Chair

Other Department Chair(s) (for cross-listed courses) ___________________________ Date
Cognate Comment Request

TO: Name: Corky White
Department: Anthropology

FROM: Name: Deeana Klepper
Department: Religion
Telephone: 8-0186 E-mail dklepper@bu.edu

Course Number: CAS RN 248
Course or Program Title: Food and Religion

Our Department/Program would like to request cognate comments on this course (or program). A complete proposal is attached for your review. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kindly return the signed original to me by 9/12/16 so that I may include your comments when submitting our proposal for review and approval. Please do not send any cognate letters directly to the address above. Thank you.

COMMENTS:
This will be a valuable addition to courses on food taught at Boston University. There is no substantial overlap with my own food course, AN 308/708. I look forward to being able to recommend RN 248 to students.

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

Please explain fully any objections.

Signature: Merry I White (submitted directly via email) Date: 9/10/16
Title: Professor, Department of Anthropology
DEAN’S OFFICE CURRICULUM ADMINISTRATOR USE ONLY

CAS/GRS CURRICULUM COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

☐ Approved Date: ________________
☐ Tabled Date: ________________
☐ Not Approved Date: ________________

Divisional Studies Credit:

☐ Endorsed
  ☐ HU
  ☐ MCS
  ☐ NS
  ☐ SS
☐ Not endorsed

______________________________________________________________
Curriculum Committee Chair Signature and Date
Comments:

PROVISIONAL APPROVAL REQUESTED for Semester/Year ________________

______________________________________________________________
Dean of Arts & Sciences Signature and Date
Comments:

CAS FACULTY: Faculty Meeting Date: ________________ ☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved

______________________________________________________________
Curriculum Administrator Signature and Date
Comments:
Course Description

There are an astounding number of ways that people across the globe incorporate food and drink practices into their religious traditions: they feast, they fast, they establish food prohibitions, they display food, they make sacred the act of feeding of others, they offer sacrifices, they ritualize the killing of animals or harvesting of plants for food, they ritually ingest alcohol and psychoactive plants. These practices serve to establish communal boundaries and identities; to build and maintain connections to ancestors, spirits, God(s) or other divine beings; to assure the health and prosperity of individual, family, community, and land, among other things. In this course, we will explore the intersection of religion and food, using food as a way to learn about religion and religion as a way to learn about the role of food in human societies. The course will emphasize, but not be limited to, a North American context.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, you should
• Understand how religious studies scholars approach the subject of food
• Develop a basic understanding of some specific religious traditions (Native American religions (Ojibwe and Coast Salish), Protestant and Catholic Christianity, Judaism, Islam, African Diaspora religions, Hinduism, Jainism, and Confucianism)
• Understand the role of food in religion(s), religious practice, and religious identity (and understand the distinction I’ve just made between these things!)
• Understand the role that food has played in North American religions and religious movements
• Be able to express an informed opinion about whether and how attention to food and foodways might alter our understanding of religion itself

Required Books


Robert C. Fuller, Stairways to Heaven: Drugs in American Religious History (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000) 9780813366128

Plus a set of pdf readings on our course Blackboard site.
Course Requirements:

• Much of the work for this class will happen in the classroom on a daily basis, so it is important to attend all classes and to let me know in advance (if possible) if you need to miss for some reason. You will receive a class participation grade based on attendance (including participation in at least two out of our three outside-of-class experiential sessions), preparation, contributions to class discussion or to Blackboard discussions, and your general engagement with the class. In addition, there will be two short essays, a research paper, a five-minute oral presentation of your research to the class, and a final exam.

The percentage of the grade allotted to each component will be:

class participation (15%)
two 3- to 4-page essays (15% each/30% total)
a 7- to 8-page research paper (20%)
presentation of research to the class (5%)
a final exam (30%)

A brief note on class structure:
There will never be reading homework due on Mondays. Monday sessions will take the form of an informal lecture— I will use the Monday session to provide all of the background information you need to be able to make sense of the readings for the rest of the week, and you will have the opportunity to ask questions, raise points of interest, comment on handouts or video I may be using, etc. Wednesdays and Fridays you will be expected to take a more active role in shaping the class; you should come in having done the reading and be ready to discuss it. Your class participation grade will be based on your engagement in all class components, even though Wednesday and Friday are the primary days for discussion.

A brief note on the oral presentations:
The purpose of the oral presentation is twofold: 1) to exercise your speaking skills by giving you the opportunity to deliver a more polished spoken presentation than is possible in our ordinary discussions and 2) to give you the opportunity to share the fruits of your research labors with a room full of people who will actually be interested in what you have to add to our collective knowledge base. You will be graded on how well you distill your research finds into a form we can appreciate and follow; more details on expectations are found in a rubric on the Blackboard page.

A brief note on the experiential sessions:
In addition to our regular class meetings, we will have three “experiential” sessions in the [X ] kitchen on campus where we will prepare meals discussed in our course readings. No prior cooking experience is required – everyone will have a way to participate. Those new to the kitchen will learn some basic knife skills and cooking techniques, but the goal of this component of the class is to use the experience of cooking and eating together to increase our understanding of the way that specific
meals, ingredients, and material objects function as integral parts of religious practice for the communities from which they are derived.

Students must attend at least two out of three of these sessions (you are welcome, even encouraged, to attend all three). If someone has a class conflict, we will arrange for some kind of alternative activity. The communal aspect of the experience is important, so students are urged to make every effort to be present. Please rest assured that no one will be asked to consume foods that they are allergic to, that violate their religious or ethical standards, or that they just don’t like.

**Special Cooking Sessions**

February 15: Deer, Fish, Rice...Fry Bread: Ojibwe traditions

March 15: Gumbo as Religious Metaphor: African American Traditions

Friday April 21: Eco-Kashrut meets Shabbat dinner: Jewish traditions

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**Policies**

Classroom Etiquette: Out of respect for your fellow students as well as the instructor, please be on time! Late arrivals are distracting. For the same reason, I ask that students only leave the room in the middle of class if it is absolutely necessary. If you know that you will need to leave class early for some reason, please sit near the door and try to exit as quietly as possible. Do check to make sure that your cell phone is off before class starts. We all will appreciate these considerations.

Honesty and Fairness: All students should familiarize themselves with the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code and adhere to it. We will discuss the definition of plagiarism before the first paper is due. Note that I am required to report all cases of academic misconduct to the dean.

Final Exam: The final exam will be held during the block of time designated for it on the university final exam matrix. Please plan your end of semester travels accordingly.
**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Disability Services as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. If you suspect that you may have an undiagnosed disability that is interfering with your success in your coursework, you should consider making an appointment with someone in Disability Services to address the situation. If you go to the webpage linked above, you will find the information you need for getting started. You are also welcome to come see me and I will direct you to the appropriate resources at BU.

**Religious Holidays:** University policy is that students have the right to be excused from class for the observance of religious holidays. However, it is your responsibility to notify faculty ahead of time and to arrange to make up any work you might miss. Any assignments due on a day you are out for religious observance must be completed before your absence.

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**Schedule:**

**Week 1: Introduction**

Friday, January 20

**Week 2: Approaches to the Study of Religion and Food**

Monday, January 23 Background lecture and discussion


**Week 3 Commensality: Eating Together**

Monday, February 6 Background lecture and discussion

**Wednesday, February 8** Daniel Sack, *Whitebread Protestants: Food and Religion in American Culture*, Chapter 2 (61-97)

Week 4 Identity and Social Boundaries: Who We Are/Are Not

Monday, January 30 Background lecture and discussion


First Essay Due on Blackboard 10:00 AM

Week 5 Food as Cosmic Participation

Monday, February 13 Background lecture and discussion


February 15 evening session: Deer, Fish, Rice...Fry Bread: Ojibwe traditions


Week 6: Feeding God: Sacrifices and Offerings

Monday, February 20 President’s Day, NO class

Tuesday, February 21 Monday schedule Background lecture and discussion


Note: February 23 is the last day to drop without a “W”

Week 7 Feeding Others

Monday, February 27 Background lecture and discussion

Wednesday, March 1 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 1-9; 189-195 [Blackboard]; Film: Babette’s Feast [watch in advance of class: on reserve at Geddes Language Center]

Second Essay Due on Blackboard 10:00 AM


I will be arranging for several groups from class to volunteer with one of Boston’s organizations providing food to members of the community in need; participation is optional

Monday March 6-Friday March 10 No Classes: Spring Break

Week 8 Food in Diaspora Communities

Monday, March 13 Background lecture and discussion


March 15 evening session: Gumbo as Religious Metaphor: African American Traditions


Week 9 Food in New American Religions

Monday, March 20 Background lecture and discussion

Wednesday, March 22 Kate Holbrook, “Good to Eat: Culinary Priorities in the nation of Islam and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,” *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*, Chapter 10 (195-213); Elijah Muhammad, *What to Eat* (excerpts)

Friday, March 24 Jeremy Rapport, “Vegetarianism in the Formative Period of the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Unity School of Christianity,” in *Religion,

Week 10 Gender

Monday, April 3  Background lecture and discussion

Wednesday, April 5  Carole Counihan, The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power, 6-24

Friday, April 7  Susan Sered, Women as Ritual Experts: The Religious Lives of Elderly Jewish Women in Jerusalem (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), Chapter 5 (87-102) [Access the ebook directly from the BU Library]

Note: March 31 is the last day to drop (with a “W”)

Week 11 Feasting and Fasting

Monday, March 27  Background lecture and discussion


Friday, March 31  Carolyn E. Ware, Cajun Women and Mardi Gras: Reading the Rules Backward (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 1-18; 35-41

Week 12 Alcohol, Psychoactive Plants, and Altered States of Consciousness

Monday, April 10  Background lecture and discussion

Wednesday, April 12  Robert C. Fuller, Stairways to Heaven: Drugs in American Religious History, vii-ix; 1-50

Note: April 12 is the last day to officially take a leave of absence or withdraw from the university

Friday, April 14  Fuller, Stairways to Heaven: 91-122

Week 13 New Ethical Dimensions of Old Religious Traditions

Monday, April 17  Patriot's Day: No Class
Wednesday, April 19  The Encyclical of Pope Francis on “Care for our Common Home” (Laudato Si)

Friday, April 21  Sarah E. Robinson, “Refreshing the Concept of Halal Meat: Resistance and Religiosity in Chicago’s Taqwa Eco-Food Cooperative,” in *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*, Chapter 14 (274-293); Adamah and Urban Adamah; Magen Tzedek; Uri L’Tzedek’s Tav HaYosher

Friday April 21 evening session: Eco-Kashrut meets Shabbat dinner: adapting Jewish traditions

**Week 14 Food Restrictions in Religiously Pluralistic Societies**

Monday, April 24  Background lecture and discussion


**Research Papers Due on Blackboard 11:59 PM**

Friday, April 28  Presentations of individual research

**Week 15 Presentations**

Monday, May 1  presentations of individual research

Wednesday, May 3  presentations of individual research