**COURSE OUTLINE: Summer 2014**

**Pre-class Assignments: Prior to June 16,**

Complete the following five tasks before the first week of the quarter:

* 1. Carefully review the syllabus as it appears on the Canvas site, note questions that you will want to raise during the *Google Hangout* session in Week One.
	2. Select one of three synchronous *Google Hangout* conversation groups by clicking the link on the *Canvas* site. Please be sure to enter these discussion date and time in your personal calendar).
* Mon afternoon, 2:00 - 3:00 PM MST (June 16)
* Tues morning, 10:00 – 11:00 AM MST (June 17)
* Tues evening, 7:00 – 8:00 PM MST (June 17)
	1. Choose a second book to read and discuss from the Additional Reading list in the syllabus. Confirm your selection by clicking the tab on the *Canvas* site which will assign you to the related Reading Group on *Canvas*. There is room for up to seven people in each reading group. Once the groups are established we will set a time during week seven for your group to meet in *Google Hangout* to discuss the book and plan a reading report to share with the class the following week.
* Ward, Pete, 2011, Gods Behaving Badly: Media, Religion and Celebrity Culture, Waco: Baylor University Press (Examines the “veneration” of celebrities to explore how religion interacts with popular culture and draw a distinction between religion and Para-religion.)
* Detweiler, Craig, 2013, *IGods: How Technology Shapes Our Spiritual and Social Live*s, Grand Rapids: Brazos Books (Detweiler provides a Christian perspective on what he calls the "iGods," of our age--Google, Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Pixar, YouTube, and Twitter.)
* Clark, Lynn Scofield, 2013, *The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age*, New York: Oxford (Examines the way families with different social locations relate to digital media. The book combining academic observation with reflection on the range of possible choices.)

* 1. Keep a media log or journal for 48 hours, noting the multiple forms of media that you use. What do you watch, read, and listen to? Are media part of your devotional practice? When do you intentionally use media, and when is it simply a part of your environment? (Think about billboards, recorded messages, your exposure to other peoples cell phone calls, radio, etc.) Looking back over your list, consider when/if you are free of media, and when it is most present in your life? You need not submit your media log, but we will discuss this exercise during the first week’s *Google Hangout* conversation.

**Week One: June 16 - 20,**

**Assignment 1**: Join the *Google Hangout* group discussion you signed up for earlier at the assigned time. You will have the chance to introduce yourself by sharing your geographic location, time at Iliff, degree program and vocational goal. We will discuss any questions arising out of your review of the syllabus. In preparation you should review the syllabus as we will also discuss any questions about the course structure and assignments. In addition we will talk about your experience in keeping a 48 hour media log.

**Assignment 2:** Complete the week’s readings using the reflection questions below to guide your thinking about each essay.

 **By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions from either of the essay.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation. Post a shorter response (75 to 150 wds) in response to one of the posted questions about the other reading.

**By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** log back on and continue the conversation by posting two or more responses to your classmates’ posts and/or their response to your original postings. (One major response should run 75 to 150 words; the others might typically be 20 to 50 words) I may add comments as well.

**By Friday, at 11:59 PM**  Choose a website to follow throughout the first six weeks of the quarter.  The website should relate to a religious issue, community or institution about which you have some interest, though it does not have to be one with which you personally identify. For more information see the Choose a website link on Canvas.

**Assignment 3:** Choose the website you will be following between now and week seven and post it on Canvas **by Friday at 11:59 PM**.

**Reading**: Mahan, Chapter 1, “Relating Media, Religion and Culture”

**Week Two: June 23 - 27**,

**Assignment:** Complete the week’s readings, using the reflection questions below to guide your thinking about each essay.

 **By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions from either of the essay.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation. Post a shorter response (75 to 150) in response to one of the posted questions about the other reading.

**By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** log back on and continue the conversation by posting two or more responses to your classmates’ posts and/or their response to your original postings. (One major response should run 75 to 150 words; the others might typically be 20 to 50 words) I may add comments as well.

**Reading:** Mahan, Chapter 2 “Making and Articulating Religious Identity”

 Mahan, Chapter 8 “Reading, listening, watching”

**Week Three: June 30 – July 4**

**Assignment**: Complete the week’s readings, using the reflection questions below to guide your thinking about each essay.

**By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions regarding the essay.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation.

**By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** log back on and continue the conversation by posting two or moreresponses to your classmates’ posts and/or their response to your original posting. (One major response should run 75 to 150 words; the others might typically be 20 to 50 words) I may add comments as well.

**Reading:** Mahan Chapter 4, “Old and New Media”

**Week Four: July 7 -11**,

**Assignment One**: Complete the week’s readings, using the reflection questions below to guide your thinking about each essay.

 **By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions from either of the essay.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation. Post a shorter response (75 to 150) in response to one of the posted questions about the other reading.

**By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** log back on and continue the conversation by posting two or moreresponses to your classmates’ posts and/or their response to your original postings. (One major response should run 75 to 150 words; the others might typically be 20 to 50 words) I may add comments as well.

**Reading**: Mahan, Chapter 6, “Organized religion in the age of digital media”

 Mahan, Chapter 7, “To censor, shape or engage with media and the arts?”

**Assignment Two**: **By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** post a project proposal of 200-400 words outlining the topic and approach for your individual research paper or project on Canvas.

**Week Five: July 14 – 18,**

**Assignment**: Complete the week’s reading, using the reflection questions below to guide your thinking.

 **By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation. Post a shorter response (75 to 150) in response to one of the posted questions about the other reading.

**By Thursday, at 11:59 PM** log back on and continue the conversation by posting two or moreresponses to your classmates’ posts and/or their response to your original postings. (One major response should run 75 to 150 words; the others might typically be 20 to 50 words) I may add comments as well.

**Reading:** Mahan, Chapter 3, “Believing and Practicing in the Digital World”

**Week Six**, **July 21 – 25,**

Websites: This week we will be discussing the web sites that you have been following by posting and following up *in Google Hangout*. Doctoral student Richard O’Connell (roconnell@Iliff.edu) will respond to the Canvas posts and lead the Google Hangout discussion of the websites.

**Assignment One**: Post a 400 – 500 word description of your website by Tuesday at 12:00 PM. You description should address the Reflection Questions below:

**Reflection Questions:**

1. Discuss what the website suggests about the identity, values and concerns of the institution, group or individuals who produce the website.
2. Discuss the visual, graphic, sound and text elements of its composition. Does the website reflect on itself as a form of mediation?
3. Consider whether the website functions primarily as a source of information about an embodied religious community or practice, or as a center of independent religious community and practice.
4. What source(s) of authority undergird the religious claims made by the website?

**Assignment Two**: We will continue the discussion in a *Google Hangout* session this week. Richard O’Connell will lauch the hangout. Be sure to be available to log on or call in at the appropriate time. Before your *Google Hangout* discussion, read your *Google Hangout* colleagues’ descriptions of their websites which were posted on the *Canvas* site.

**Week Seven: July 28 – Aug 2**, Additional Reading Discussion

This week your Reading Group (which you signed up for at the beginning of the term) will discuss the book you selected on Canvas and preparing an 800-1,200 word Reading Report to introduce the rest of the class to your book. You will be working on your own so you will need to organize the discussion and planning among yourselves.

**Assignment One**: Log on, or call in, for your group’s the *Google Hangout* group discussion of your book. The discussion will focus on the general questions listed hear along with the reflection question below:

1. To whom is the author writing and what are her/his central concerns?
2. What do you know or discern about the authors religious identity and/or theological perspective? Is this overtly identified? If not, where do you find evidence of it?
3. What is the thesis or main argument of this author?
4. What understanding of religion informs this book? How does the book help us understand the connections between religion and media?
5. What does the author want us to do (if anything), and what do you see that keeps us from doing it?
6. At the end of the session we will take some time to make assignments to prepare the Reading Report due the following week.

**Assignment Two:** With the others who read and discussed your additional reading book, prepare an 800 - 1,200 word Reading Review that introduces the book to your classmates. Groups have generally found a coedited *Google Doc* the most helpful way to work on this. Some groups have set up a *Google Doc* and a second *Google Hanout* so they can simultaneously discuss, compose, and edit.

The goal of the review is to embody some core elements of the book’s theory in such a way that those who have not read the book can understand engage the author’s basic ideas. This should *not* be a summary of the entire content of the book, but rather an introduction to, and reflection on, the author’s most central ideas.

The reading review should include the following four sections. You are free to divide them up among you, but each person in the reading group should participate in some way in drafting, reviewing and assembling the document.

* Briefly summarize the thesis and key arguments of book about the relationships of media, religion and culture.
* Discuss one key vibrant example from the book to demonstrate how the book contributes to our understanding of media, religion and culture.
* Highlight two or three insights that emerged from your group’s discussion of the book.
* Who will find this book useful, and how might they use this information? How might these understanding inform the practice of ministry, social change or teaching?

**Due for posting:** Wed of next week, August 6, 11:59 PM

**Week Eight, August 4 – 8**

**Reminder**: **By 11:59 PM Wed,** complete the additional reading assignment byposting your group’s 750-1,000 word Reading Report of the additional book which you read and discussed last week.

**By 11:59 PM Friday**, read the Reading Report from the other two groups, and make at least one substantive comment in response to each. Also, read the comments about your group and respond where that seems helpful to the conversation.

Work on final papers

**Week Nine: August 11 – 15 Closing Discussion**

**Assignment One**: Reading Discussion on Canvas,

Complete the week’s readings, using the reflection questions to guide your thinking about each essay.

**By Tuesday, at 11:59 PM** post an entry (typically 200 to 400 words and not more than 500 words) responding to one of the posted questions regarding the essay.  Use your words carefully to make a succinct comment that adds to the conversation.

**Reading:** Mahan, Chapter 5 “Stability and Change”

**Reflective Questions:**

**Assignment Two**: Concluding Discussion, *Google Hangout*

Thursday 1:30 – 3:00PM MT daylight savings

Thursday 7:00 – 8:30PM MT daylight savings

Friday 10:00 – 11:30AM MT daylight savings

Join the *Google Hangout* group discussion you signed up for earlier at the assigned time. Come prepared to discuss the following:

1. two key learnings or insights you have come to this quarter about religion, media and culture;
2. A key insight about online learning, and/or your own skills or aptitude for online learning;
3. One thing you would change about this course when it is offered again.

**Assignment Three:** complete the Course Evaluation Questionnaire from the dean’s office. I will see these after I post grades and look forward to your feedback!

**Final Projects Due: Sunday, August 17, 11:59PM**

post your independent project for review by the instructor.