

HUMANITARIAN AID

RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Religion 366 | FALL 2017



Course Description: REL 366 (Sec: 60066)

Despite the perception of religious decline, religiously inspired humanitarian organizations, often known as “faith-based” organizations, continue to play a critical role in humanitarian relief and development work at the local, national and international level. The class will explore how modern humanitarian practices intersect with religious traditions that have a long textual and ritual history of dealing with suffering others. It also considers how avowedly secular aid institutions assume a “sacred” purpose in their endeavors to heal.

Drawing on an interdisciplinary set of literature, including religion, anthropology and international relations, the class will investigate new forms and meanings produced at the intersection of religious and secular giving. **When:** Thursday 2-4:50pm

Instructor: Nalika Gajaweera is an anthropologist and research associate at the Center for Religion and Civic Culture with expertise in anthropology of religion, Buddhism, NGO and humanitarianism with an expertise in South Asia. gajaweer@usc.edu