
Course Syllabus for RELS 100: Religions of the Modern World

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Office Hours: NA

CRN 20521-Spring 2018
Tuesdays 6:30-9:40 pm
3 credits
Room 413

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is a study of the world religions that provide structures of belief and meaning for vast numbers of people in America and globally. It is an introduction to the various contemporary religions of the world with an emphasis on their historical development. This will be a study of the basic beliefs in world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as other less known religions. The goal is to gain a basic overview and working knowledge of these religious traditions.

PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES: NONE.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Identify the origin, characteristic beliefs, practices and terminology unique to the world's five major religions and indigenous sacred ways. (ILO2, ILO4, ILO5)
2. Identify and discuss the nature of religious revelation and interpretation of sacred texts. (ILO2, ILO4)
3. Recognize the relationship between religion and culture and the relevance of religious belief and experience to modern life and the human condition. (ILO2, ILO5)

OBJECTIVES: Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify key features of indigenous religions and worldviews.
- Describe the major beliefs of Hinduism during Vedic and modern periods.
- Describe the major developments and beliefs of Buddhism.
- Explain the basic teachings of Sikhism/Daoism.
- Describe the beliefs of Confucianism and Shinto
- Describe the basic beliefs of Judaism.
- Describe the basic beliefs of Christianity.
- Describe the basic beliefs of Islam.
- Discuss the response of the world's religions to contemporary ethical issues.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

- William A. Young 2013. *The World's Religions* 4th. Pearson ISBN: 978-0205917617.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY: Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and stay for the entirety of class. A student who fails to attend the first meeting of a class will be dropped by the instructor as of the first official meeting of that class. Should readmission be desired, the student's status will be the same as that of any other student who desires to add a class. It is the student's responsibility to drop or officially withdraw from the class. Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students.

COMMUNICATION: Students with questions, concerns, or an absence due to an emergency can contact me through email or by my office phone, both of which are listed above.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

- Electronic Devices: Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class, unless otherwise directed by the instructor.
- Food and Drink are prohibited in all classrooms. Water bottles with lids/caps are the only exception. Additional restrictions will apply in labs. Please comply as directed by the instructor.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor or the [Disabled Student Programs and Services](#) (DSP&S) office as soon as possible. The DSP&S office is located in Building 2100, telephone 760-355-6313. Please contact them if you feel you need to be evaluated for educational accommodations.

PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC OFFENSES: Academic honesty in the advancement of knowledge requires that all students and instructors respect the integrity of one another's work and recognize the importance of acknowledging and safeguarding intellectual property.

There are many different forms of academic dishonesty. The following kinds of honesty violations and their definitions are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to serve as examples of unacceptable academic conduct.

- Plagiarism is taking and presenting as one's own the writings or ideas of others, without citing the source. You should understand the concept of plagiarism and keep it in mind when taking exams and preparing written materials. If you do not understand how to "cite a source" correctly, you must ask for help.
- Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment, and the instructor may report the incident to the Campus Disciplinary Officer, who may place related documentation in a file. Acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action. during an examination; (d) allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment; (e) using a commercial term paper service.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Deadlines for all assignments are listed in the course calendar at the end of this syllabus.

Written/Reading Assignments..... 20%

There will be weekly reading assignments from the textbook in preparation for class lectures and discussions. There will be two essay questions for most weeks that require a 250-300 word written response for each question. These assignments are **DUE BEFORE** class begins.

Research Paper/Project.....20%

Each student will be required to participate in a group research project. The project will include group and personal research; a group presentation to the class, and an individual paper to be turned in. The project will involve a comparison of two of the world religions discussed in this course.

Quizzes..... 15%

A short quiz on your weekly readings will be taken most weeks to ensure students are retaining the subject material. The quizzes are **DUE BEFORE** class begins that week.

Midterm Exam15%

The midterm exam will cover the Eastern religions discussed during the first half of the semester. Students will have an opportunity for questions prior to the exam.

Final Exam 20%

The final exam will cover the entire semester's class, but with the heavier emphasis being on the material discussed on the last half of the semester. Students will have an opportunity for questions prior to the exam.

Class Participation10%

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate during class; including our discussion times along with question and answer times. Students are responsible for material covered in absences.

Total 100%

GRADING: To determine your final grade in the course I will calculate the percentage for each category by dividing points earned by the points possible, then multiplying it by the weighted percentage of that particular category. The results of each category will be added together for an overall percentage to receive a letter grade as follows:

90-100% = A 80-89% = B 70-79% = C 60-69% = D < 59% = F

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION: Quizzes and Essay assignments will be taken online through Canvas. The Midterm and Final exams will be taken in class.

LATE WORK WILL BE GREATLY REDUCED IN GRADE: Assignments turned in late will be marked down drastically. Any assignment turned in more than 2 days late will not be accepted. An assignment turned in one day late will constitute a 10% grade reduction and an assignment turned in two days late will constitute another 10% grade reduction, resulting in a total of 20%.

COURSE CALENDAR

These dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Class	Date	Agenda/Topic	Due on this Date
Class 1	2/13	Course Introduction: What is religion? Why are People religious? Why are there so many religions? Why is the study of religion important today?	<input type="checkbox"/> No writing assignment due <input type="checkbox"/> No reading assignment due.
Class 2	2/20	INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS- Looking at the Yoruba people of West Africa & the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) of Northern Great Plains of the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, Chapter 2; pgs. 27-54 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Both essay questions, 250-300 words for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Indigenous Religions
Class 3	2/27	HINDUISM- <i>Many Paths to the Summit.</i> This begins our study of religions originating in Southeast Asia.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 3; pgs. 57-87 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Both essay questions with 250-300 word response for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Hinduism
Class 4	3/6	THERAVADA BUDDHISM- <i>The Middle Way.</i> JAINISM- <i>The Way of Noninjury.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapters 4-5, pgs. 88-115 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Both essay questions with 250-300 word response for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Theravada Buddhism and Jainism
Class 5	3/13	SIKHISM- <i>The Way of the Guru.</i> DAOISM- <i>The Way of Nature-</i> This begins our study of religions originating in East Asia.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 6; pgs. 116-13; and chapter 13; pgs. 263-274 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Sikhism and Daoism
Class 6	3/20	CONFUSCIANISM- <i>The Way of Virtue.</i> MAHAYANA BUDDHISM- <i>The Great Vehicle.</i> VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM- <i>The Thunderbolt Vehicle.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 7, pgs. 133-145; and chapter 8, pgs. 146-164. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz- Confucianism/ Mahayana & Vajrayana Buddhism
Class 7	3/27	SHINTO- <i>The Way of the Kami.</i> This ends the study of religions originating in East Asia.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 9, pgs. 165-178. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz- Shinto

NO CLASS	4/3	• Prepare for Midterm Exam	
Class 8	4/10	MIDTERM EXAM- covering the Southeast and East Asian Religions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- none due. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- none due.
Class 9	4/17	JUDAISM- <i>The Way of Torah.</i> This begins our study of the religions originating in the Middle East.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 10; pgs. 179-205. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Judaism
Class 10	4/24	CHRISTIANITY- <i>The Way of Jesus Christ.</i> The development of Christianity from the time of Jesus to the present.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 11; pgs. 207-233. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions-250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Christianity
Class 11	5/1	ISLAM- <i>The way of Submission to Allah.</i> This class focuses on the development of Islam from the time of the Prophet Mohammed to the present.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 12; pgs. 235-262. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz on Islam
Class 12	5/8	The Ecological/Economic Crises- Humans and resources. Student Presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, Chapter 15; pgs.309-334. <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- None- Be prepared for discussion. <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz- None
Class 13	5/15	War & Capital Punishment- Society and Violence. Student Presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 16; pgs. 338-350 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- None- be prepared for discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz- None
Class 14	5/22	Abortion & Euthanasia- Life & Death. Student Presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading- Young, chapter 17; pgs. 353-368 <input type="checkbox"/> Writing- None- be prepared for discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz- None
Class 15	5/29	Review/preparation for Final Exam. Student Presentations if needed.	
Class 16	6/5	FINAL EXAM	