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## Course Syllabus for RELS 100: Religions of the Modern World

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Office Hours: NA

CRN 20521- Spring 2019  
Tuesday 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. We will study of the basic beliefs major 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:**

Jeffrey Brodd 2018. *Invitation to World's Religions* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780190690816.

**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 ideas of others and presenting as one's own writings or 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.

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

**Written/Reading Assignments .....240 pts.**

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. Assignments are **DUE BEFORE** the beginning of class on **Thursday**.

**Research Paper/Project .....190 pts.**

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

**Quizzes ..... 120 pts.**

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 Exam .....150 pts.**

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

**Final Exam ..... 200 pts.**

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 Participation .....100 pts.**

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.

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**Total ..... 1000 pts.**

**GRADING:** To determine your final grade in the course I will calculate the percentage by dividing points earned by points possible. This will give you 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	Assignments Due Before Class on Thursday
Class 1	2/12	<b>Course Introduction:</b> Syllabus, Course Requirements, Overview of Class.	<input type="checkbox"/> No writing assignment due <input type="checkbox"/> No reading assignment due.
Class 2	2/19	<b>AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION:</b> What is religion? Why are People religious? Why are there so many religions? Why is the study of religion important today?	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, Chapter 1; pgs. 3-29 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Both essay questions, 250-300 words for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Introduction to Religion</b>
Class 3	2/26	<b>INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS OF NORTH AMERICA.</b> The practices and beliefs of the Native American peoples in the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 2; pgs. 31-60 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Both essay questions with 250-300 word response for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Indigenous Religions North America</b>
Class 4	3/5	<b>INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS OF AFRICA</b> Exploring the practices and beliefs of the African Religions.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 3, pgs. 61-90 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Both essay questions with 250-300 word response for each question. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Indigenous Religions of Africa</b>
Class 5	3/12	<b>HINDUISM-</b> Covering the teachings, practices, and way of life of this dominate religion in India.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 4; pgs. 91-144 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Hinduism</b>
Class 6	3/19	<b>BUDDHISM-</b> Understanding the life and foundational teachings of Buddha, and the beliefs and practices of this religion today.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd ch. 5; pgs. 145-192. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Buddhism</b>
Class 7	3/26	<b>JAINISM-</b> looking into the religion known as “the way of non-injury” and it’s exemplifying the ideal of nonviolence.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 6; pgs. 193-222. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Jainism</b>

Class 8	4/2	<b>SIKHISM-</b> The religion that intermixes concepts from Hinduism & Islam.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 7; pgs. 223-250 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay Questions- 250-300 wds. Each <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Sikhism</b>
Class 9	4/9	<b>CHINESE RELIGIONS: CONFUCIANISM &amp; DAOISM-</b> Understanding the two Chinese indigenous religions that share a common source spring.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 8; pgs. 251-302 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay Questions- 250-300 wds. each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Confucianism and Daoism</b>
Class 10	4/16	<b>SHINTO-</b> We explore Shinto as a religion of the Japanese people, but also one with close ties to the state and Imperial line.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 9; pgs. 303-330. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Shinto</b>
	4/23	<b>Spring Break- No Class- Study for the Midterm Exam.</b>	No Assignments.
Class 11	4/30	<b>Midterm Exam.</b> <b>ZOROASTRIANISM-</b> A brief discussion of this unfamiliar religion as we begin the monotheistic religions of the Middle East.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, Chapter 10; pgs. 331-360 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No Quiz or Essay Questions Due</b>
Class 12	5/7	<b>JUDAISM-</b> Understanding the religion of the Jewish people- origins, teachings, traditions, and practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 11; pgs. 361-418 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Judaism</b>
Class 13	5/14	<b>CHRISTIANITY-</b> A real look into the world's largest religion which was ushered in through Jesus Christ of Nazareth.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 12; pgs. 419-478 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds each. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Christianity</b>
Class 14	5/21	<b>ISLAM-</b> Discussing the 2nd largest religion in the world founded by Mohammed and rooted in the Qur'an.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reading-</b> Brodd, chapter 13; pgs. 479-536 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing-</b> Essay questions- 250-300 wds <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiz on Islam</b>
Class 15	5/28	<b>Religion &amp; Ethics- Application of Religion</b>	<b>RESEARCH PAPERS DUE</b>
Class 16	6/4	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	