

Course Syllabus and Schedule

RELS 1— CRN 20521 — Spring 2016

Imperial Valley College

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Ron Griffen

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Meetings: Wednesday 6:30 p.m.-9:40 p.m. — Room 403

I. Course Description

RELS 100 is an introduction to the concepts of what makes a religion a religion and why that might matter. We will study the basic beliefs, history and traditions of several of the world's major religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Objectivity and openness are important characteristics of this study, seeking to understand the significance of religious pluralism.

Course Textbooks: *12 Steps to a Compassionate Life* Karen Armstrong. *World's Religions* Huston Smith.

II. Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend all class meetings, arrive on time and remain for the entire class period.

Students are responsible for material covered in their absence.

III. Course Development and Grading

There will be short written assignments, homework, quizzes, group presentations, a **research paper/project (P &P)** a Mid-term Exam and a Final Exam.

Grade Structure

Class Participation & Attendance	10%
Written Assignments/ Homework	25%
Research P & P	25%
Quizzes	20%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%

IV. Grade Distribution

Course grade will be a percentage of the points earned divided by the points available.
A: 94-100% A-: 90-93% B+: 87-89% B: 84-86% B-: 80-83% C+: 77-79% C: 74-76%
C-: 70-73% D: 60-69% F: Less than or equal to 59%

V. IVC Drop Policy

A student who fails to attend the first meeting of a class may be dropped by the instructor immediately following that class. Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students enrolled. Instructors are expected to take a student's attendance record into account in computing grades. A student may be excluded from further attendance in a class during any semester when absences after the close of registration have exceeded the number of class hours which the class meets per week. If you stop attending class and intend to drop, it is your responsibility to drop the class.

VI. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity includes a commitment neither to engage in nor tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another person's work as one's own, using Internet sources without citation, stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, and facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty. Sanctions for breaches of academic integrity may range from F for the assignment to F for the course.

VII. Student Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of the course the student will be able to:

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

VIII. Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)

Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor of the DSPS office as soon as possible. The DSPS office is located in the Mel Wendrick Access Center, Building 2100
760.355.6313 or 760.355.4174

Please silence your cellphones for the duration of the class!!

Schedule — RELS 100 — Spring 2016

- 2/17 Introduction to the study of religion: what is it and why study it?
Read: *Point of Departure*-Smith and *Wish for a Better World*-Armstrong
Indigenous Religion. Read: Smith— *The Australian Experience* through
Conclusion
- 2/24 Hinduism. Read: Smith— *What People Want* through *Many Paths to the
Same Summit*

Assignment: 700 word essay on the core beliefs of Hindus.

- 3/2 **Essay on Hinduism due. Quiz - Hinduism**
Jainism. Sikhism. Read: Smith— *Appendix on Sikhism*
- 3/9 Buddhism. Read: Smith— *The Man Who Woke Up* through *The Image of
the Crossing*

Assignment: 700 word essay on the Four Noble Truths.

- 3/16 **Essay on Buddhism due. Quiz - Buddhism. Student Presentations.**
- 3/23 Confucianism. Read: Smith— *The First Teacher* through *Ethics or
Religion?* Daoism Read: Smith— *The Old Master* through *Conclusion*

3/30 **Spring Break. No Class**

4/6 **Exam. Covering Eastern Religious Traditions.**

4/13 Judaism. Read: Smith—*Meaning in God through Israel*

Assignment: 700 word essay on Jewish Holy Day.

4/20 **Jewish Holy Day assignment due. Quiz on Judaism. Student Presentations**

4/27 Christianity. Read: Smith—*The Historical Jesus through Protestantism*

Assignment: 700 word essay on Christian pluralism.

5/4 **Christianity. Essay due on Christian Pluralism. Quiz on Christianity. Student Presentations.**

5/11 Islam. Read: Smith—*Background through Whither Islam?*

Assignment: 700 word essay on The Five Pillars of Faith.

5/18 **Essay due on Five Pillars of Faith. Quiz on Islam. Student Presentations**

5/25 **Student Presentations**

6/1 Toward a Compassionate Life. Read: Armstrong

6/8 **Final Exam**