

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD: INTENSIVE PROGRAM

REL 2250 08 (3 Credits)
Spring 2010 Intensive Term 1
Tuesdays 6pm-10:15pm (Jan 19 – Mar 2)
Classroom: SM 204

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CC3 MWF 10-11am T/R Noon-1pm
Drop-ins Welcome
Best by Appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Critical survey of world religions exploring the beliefs, rituals, sacred texts and ethical ideals of representative religious manifestations of the past and present. Explores the history, mythology, wisdom, symbols and art of each spiritual tradition. Covers characteristic traits and patterns in pre-modern, modern and post-modern religious worldviews. Recognizes the growing presence and influence of world religions in American culture. Examines the role assigned to women by world religions and the importance given to building a just and peaceful society.

TEXTBOOKS

Living Religions: A Brief Introduction by Mary Pat Fisher(2nd Edition, Pearson/Prentice Hall 2002)
ISBN-10: 0205635644 | ISBN-13: 9780205635641

Companion Website: www.prenhall.com/fisher (Click 5th Edition and “Jump To” to do the Homework)

OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

This class is designed to help you formulate methods and concepts in interpreting the study of religions and culture. We will examine major religions and their major divisions -- African and Amerind, Hinduism and Buddhism, Chinese and Japanese, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

You will grow in awareness of the fundamental spiritual questions of life and of your own religious and ethical assumptions by studying key features of some major religious traditions.

POLICY

I respect the fact that all of you, as working adults, have different levels of interest, time and energy to devote to the study of world religions. I also understand that, as Intensive Term Students, you have seven weeks in which to do your reading and writing. What follows below is a blend of *opportunities* for those who want to learn more and of *course-requirements* for becoming well educated adults. In order to set a less stressful pace for yourself, it is highly recommended that you begin working on your reading, writing and final project assignments before or as early in the semester as possible.

You should expect to earn as high a grade as your effort deserves. **Earning an “A”** entails that you come to all classes, on time, with your reading and writing assignments done *beforehand*. It means that you will regularly and/or frequently contribute to the discussions and lectures with relevant data, “show and tells”, pertinent questions, informed insights and reasonable judgments.

For my part, I promise to do everything I can to ensure your success in this class. I will be in class, on time, and will try to make the lectures and discussions as interesting and engaging as possible. I will give your ideas, written and oral, the consideration and respect they deserve.

You are encouraged to use your own personal experiences and growing knowledge in your major discipline to enrich the subject matter of this course, both in the discussions and in the essays. You should also learn to evaluate and verify your own opinions by testing them against the ideas and methods being considered in the course.

PROCEDURE

We will proceed by instructor presentations, discussions, visitations, writings and films according to the attached schedule.

1) “Students are required to attend all classes” (NDNU Catalog).

50% of your grade is based on your participation in class --- half of this is met by attendance, the other half by contribution to the discussion. Intensive students are allowed (not recommended) only one absence.

2) “Students are held accountable for all assignments in each course” (NDNU Catalog).

Written work: You are to keep a written record of all your learning experiences-- class-notes, reading-notes, personal questions and reflections, and answers to the assigned discussion questions and/or essays, website quizzes—in some kind of a Folder. These documents will serve as evidence to help the instructor give a fair grade for the time and effort you spent on the course. These Folders are due at the beginning of each class each week. Try not to be late with this work.

Oral Work: Questions and comments are welcome at any time. As they stimulate the learning process, they also aid the students overall grade.

You, as individuals or in groups, are welcome to make 10-15 minute oral presentations and lead discussions on topics which catch your interests. These can be enriched with music, graphics, texts, artifacts handouts, activities, etc., according to the different intelligences and learning styles of the presenters and engaging the rest of the class. Some presentation suggestions: Yoga, Tai-Chi, Zazen, Tallit, Iconography (i.e. images of gods and goddesses), Salat, I Ching etc.

HOMEWORK

For each of the seven major religions, keep a **separate manila Folder** in which, over the course of the semester, you scrapbook the following kinds of materials:

Before each class, you are expected to read, according to the schedule, all the selected chapters in the textbook. Use the **Review and Discussion Questions** at the end of each chapter as an outline for a 4+ page review and reflection essay due each week. It should be an informal “appreciative and critical inquiry”, recording which beliefs and practices you liked best and least about a particular tradition, and why. This written work will form the basis of the lectures and discussions each week. It will also serve as evidence to the instructor that the texts are being read in a timely fashion. The essay and web quizzes must show evidence (e.g. page numbers in parentheses) that they are based on Fisher’s **Living Religions** and its website. The Folder is due each week according to the Schedule.

Please: it is very important that you keep your Folder work up to date, otherwise the class time will make little sense and you will have no relevant or informed contribution to the discussion. It is unacceptable to hand in a pile of Folders at the end of the course.

If you *must* be absent for the one allowed class, as a make-up, you are to do the same written work for Chapter 10 on Sikhism and Chapter 11 on New Religions. Other students are welcome to do the same out of interest or for extra credit.

You are also to visit the *Companion Website* at <http://www.prenhall.com/fisher> (5th Edition) and explore the learning aids and resources available there. You are to print and hand in at least two of the exercises each week for each Folder. All the scriptures of the world’s religions are there online for your perusal. There are also interesting special topics to learn and write about for extra credit, make-up work for absence or tardiness, and/or personal enrichment, or to develop an in-class presentation.

You are to keep a record of 2 questions, 2 comments and 2 images from each film viewed. Whatever else you find relevant and interesting in newspapers, magazines and on the internet can be shared at the beginning of each class during a “Show and Tell” session.

You are required to visit 1 place of **non-Christian** worship different from your own, keep notes on your experience of the religious service and environment, enriching your ideas with those you have learned from the textbook, and write a Reflection Paper of **10+ pages**, which is due on the last day of class as your Final Project/Exam.

NOTES

- You are encouraged to visit and explore the learning resources of the Tutorial Center under the direction of Dr. Peggy Koshland-Crane (x3670)

- Students with learning disabilities or other special circumstances are encouraged to disclose these to the instructor, and/or contact Dr. Peggy Koshland-Crane, the Director of the Academic Success Center (x3670)
- The Writing Center run by the English Department is another academic resource available to students.
- You should familiarize yourselves with and make use of the Library’s collection pertinent to this course, including materials from the open stacks, reference section and academic journals.
- Homework is not to be done during class times.
- You should make copies of all your work to keep for yourselves and in case something is lost.
- Please turn off all electronic devices during class. No texting, twittering, phoning. Only learning is allowed

Essays and papers are judged according to the following criteria:

- ✓ Substantial – i.e. gives evidence of hard work and effort
- ✓ Creative – i.e. innovative, artistic, distinctive
- ✓ Informed – i.e. full of data, quotes, ideas, expert opinion from the textbooks
- ✓ Personal – i.e. reflective of one’s own experience and ideas and expressions
- ✓ Social – i.e. applicable to issues of social justice
- ✓ Contemporary – i.e. related to world events
- ✓ Integrative – i.e. exhibits unity and coherence with other areas of study

Mandatory: Separate title page (Name, date, course, chapter etc.), 12 point font, New Times Roman type, double spacing even between paragraphs, numbered pages, single spaced quotes 1 inch margins, spelling and grammar checked by computer.

Recommended: Final draft submitted to the Writing Center

DATE Term 1	READINGS	TOPIC/FOLDER
Jan 19	Ch 1 and 2	Responses and Indigenous
Jan 26	Ch 3	Hinduism and Jainism
Feb 2	Ch 4	Buddhism
Feb 9	Ch 5 & 6	Chinese and Japanese
Feb 16	Ch 7	(Zoroastrianism) & Judaism
Feb 23	Ch 8	Christianity
Mar 3	Ch 9	Islam FINAL PROJECT DUE