



## School of Arts & Sciences Course Syllabus

**Course Number/Title/Credits:** RELU 110/Religion and Values: The Abrahamic Traditions/3 credits

**Catalog Course Description:** This course is a study of religious values within the Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students explore the basic beliefs and practices of these religions. The course addresses the way each tradition approaches several key contemporary ethical issues including the ecological crisis, economic justice, war, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, gender, and sexual orientation.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES and ASSESSMENT:**

Learning Outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know, understand, or be able to demonstrate at the end of a learning experience.

Types of Learning Outcomes include:

- ✓ Course Learning Outcome – Result of finishing a course.
- ✓ Program Learning Outcome – Result of finishing a program.
- ✓ Institutional Learning Outcome – Result of finishing a degree at an institution, reflecting the core learning values and experiences of all graduates.

A Signature Assignment is an assignment used to measure a student's mastery of a program or institutional learning outcome. If a course you are taking includes a Signature Assignment, it will be clearly marked (\*\*SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT\*\*).

Access the following link(s) for information on the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Curriculum Map related to this course:

[Click Here for Learning Outcomes](#)

Access the following link(s) for information on the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and Curriculum Map related to this course:

[Click Here for Learning Outcomes](#)

**Prerequisites:** None

**Restrictions:** None

**Essential Equipment and Facilities:** By the end of the first week of class, students must have the ability to access MyBrandman, the Blackboard portal to their class site, and other key locations necessary to meet course requirements. Individual browser preferences vary, and, at times, some work with Blackboard better than others. Therefore, if you try one browser, such as Firefox, and you have difficulty, try another browser, such as Internet Explorer. Since versions of Microsoft Office vary, students who do not use the most recent version may need the free conversion software available via the Microsoft.com website. Java is also required for courses. Students who do not have Java may download it for free at java.com.

Last Revision Date: 7/15/2016

**Academic Integrity:** As a learning community of scholars, Brandman University emphasizes the ethical responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation of information in oral or written form. Plagiarism means presenting someone else's idea or writing as if it were your own. If you use someone else's idea or writing, be sure the source is clearly documented. Further information may be found in the *Brandman University Catalog* available under Academic Resources in MyBrandman.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, an individual with disability is defined as having functional limitations resulting from a diagnosed disability and applies to an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the individual's major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that may impair or impact their ability to successfully complete assignments, tasks or satisfy course criteria are requested to notify their Advisor or Campus Director in order to understand how to apply for Student Disability Services. If and when the student is granted formal approval by the Director of ADA Services, both the student and professor will be notified. It is highly suggested that the student contact their professor to discuss the accommodations during the first week of the session. The granting of accommodations will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

**University Policies:** Students are responsible for complying with university policies including, but not limited to: incompletes, course drops, and student conduct. Information may be found in the *Brandman University Catalog* available under Academic Resources in MyBrandman.

**Online Brandman Library Resources:** Click on red "Library" button in Blackboard.

**Texts are available at the Brandman Online Bookstore:** See "Bookstore" under Academic Resources in MyBrandman.

**Required Text:** William A. Young, *The World's Religions: Worldviews and Contemporary Issues*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2013).

### **Course Learning Objectives:**

**By the end of the course, students should be able to:**

1. Define "religion" as an academic discipline and describe various scholarly approaches to the study of religion.
2. Describe the relationship between science and religion.
3. Illustrate the history of the development of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from each religion's origin to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
4. Demonstrate basic familiarity with the nature and variety of the sources of "authority" in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
5. Compare/Contrast the basic religious worldviews of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
6. Analyze the positions adopted by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on key contemporary ethical issues—the ecological crisis, economic justice, war, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, and gender and sexual orientation—to determine the source(s) of authority and soundness of the argumentation behind each position.

### **Major Study Units:**

1. An Introduction to Religion and the Study of Religion
2. An Introduction to Judaism: The Way of Torah

3. An Introduction to Christianity: The Way of Jesus Christ
4. An Introduction to Islam: The Way of Submission to Allah
5. The Ecological and Economic Crisis: Humans and Resources
6. War and Capital Punishment: Society and Violence
7. Abortion and Euthanasia: Life and Death
8. Gender and Sexual Orientation: Roles and Identity

**Instructional Strategies:** This class includes readings, textual and video instruction, discussions, essays, and a research paper. Instructional Strategies may be further explained in the course Blackboard site.

**Attendance Policy:**

Requirements for students' attendance and participation will be defined by each instructor based on the following policy:

- Monday of the first week is considered the first day of class for online and blended instruction. This includes instruction for fully online classes and online instruction supporting blended classes.
- Regular onsite attendance is expected for student success. If a student misses more than one onsite class or one week of engagement in an online class, the student may, at the discretion of the instructor, fail the course. Students are expected to attend all classes, particularly the first night of class.
- Students should consider withdrawing from a course if they will be absent more than once. Instructors may, but are not obligated to, accommodate students under extraordinary circumstances, but the student must request accommodation and provide requested supporting documentation. Students enrolled in blended courses must attend at least one class during the first two weeks of classes.
- If a student misses a portion (e.g., arriving late or leaving early) of an onsite course, the student's grade may be adversely affected. Students who are not in attendance for at least 75 percent of any scheduled class may be considered absent for that class. Students should discuss missing portions of a class with their instructor to determine how their grade may be affected.
- Regular online attendance/participation and engagement is expected for student success in both fully online and blended courses. Online participation is evident through posting to a discussion board, blog, completing assignments including journal entries, or taking quizzes and exams.
- Schools and programs may have different attendance policies. Refer to school and program specific information for additional attendance policies.

**Letter Grade/Percentage Equivalents:**

<b>Grade Point System</b> (Rounded up at .5 and up)			
A = 93%-100%	B = 83%-86%	C = 73%-76%	D = 63%-66%
A- = 90%-92%	B- = 80%-82%	C- = 70%-72%	D- = 60%-62%
B+ = 87%-89%	C+ = 77%-79%	D+ = 67%-69%	F=59% and below

**Methods of Evaluation for Determining Grades:**

**Assignment Detail for Blended course:**

<b>Assignment Detail – refer to rubric (s) in Course Information on Blackboard</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
Discussion Boards (2 each week at 20 points each)	320
Quizzes (5 at 40 points each)	200

Essay	240
Research/Position Paper	240
	<b>Total: 1000</b>

**Class by Class Outline for Blended course:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings/Viewings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Is Religion?</li> <li>• Why Are People Religious?</li> <li>• Why So Many Religions?</li> <li>• Why Is the Study of Religion So Important in the Twenty-First Century?</li> <li>• What Is the Relationship between Science and Religion?</li> <li>• How Might Religion Be Studied?</li> <li>• How Will We Study the Abrahamic Religions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, xv-24 (Note: Throughout the course, the student should consult the Glossary in Young, 419-426)</li> <li>• “The God Delusion” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Dawkins on Creation, Evolution, and Religion” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and Chris Tyler” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and Richard Dawkins, part 1” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and Richard Dawkins, part 2” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “In the Beginning: Explanations from Science and Religion” (one hour video)</li> <li>• “Does Scientific Knowledge Contradict Religious Belief” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin on Behalf of God” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin and the Problem of Neo-Darwinism” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin: Evolution and ID” (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> <li>• Quiz</li> </ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to the Abrahamic Religions</li> <li>• An Orientation to the Middle East</li> <li>• An Introduction to Judaism</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Judaism</li> <li>• The Jewish Worldview</li> <li>• Judaism in the Twenty-First Century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 179-206</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, “The Problem of Evil” (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> <li>• Quiz</li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to Christianity</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Christianity</li> <li>• The Christian Worldview</li> <li>• Christianity in the Twenty-First Century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 207-234</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, “Revelation and Scriptural Authority” (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> <li>• Quiz</li> </ul>

Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to Islam</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Islam</li> <li>• The Islamic Worldview</li> <li>• Islam in the Twenty-First Century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 235-262</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, "Interfaith Relations" (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion board</li> <li>• Quiz</li> <li>• Formal essay</li> </ul>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Abrahamic Religions and Contemporary Ethical Issues</li> <li>• The Ecological Crisis: Is the Balance of Life on Planet Earth in Jeopardy?</li> <li>• The Economic Crisis: Why Hunger and Abject Poverty in a World of Plenty?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 307-310, 316-321, 322-323, 327-333</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, "Ethical Issues and the Process of Decision-Making" (document)</li> <li>• "A Sacred Duty: Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal the World" (one-hour video)</li> <li>• "The Financial and Ecological Crisis" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Spiritual Crisis behind the Ecological Crisis" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Economic Justice: Islamic and Christian Perspectives" (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> <li>• Quiz</li> </ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War: When, If Ever, Is War Justified?</li> <li>• Capital Punishment: When, If Ever, May the State Take a Criminal's Life?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 338, 341-344, 345-346, 347-349</li> <li>• "The Gods of War: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on War and Peace" (one-hour video)</li> <li>• "Capital Punishment death Penalty from a Jewish Viewpoint" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Violence of Capital Punishment" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Death Penalty: What the Bible Has to Say about It" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "A Muslim Call for a Moratorium on Capital Punishment" (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> </ul>
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abortion: Right to Life or Right to Choose?</li> <li>• Euthanasia: A "Good Death" or "Playing God"?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 353-354, 357-361, 362-363, 365-367</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Jewish Perspective" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Catholic Perspective" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Progressive Protestant Perspective" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Muslim Perspective" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Euthanasia from a Jewish Perspective" (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Euthanasia from a Catholic Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Euthanasia from a Muslim Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “CBS’s Eye to Eye on Dr. Jack Kevorkian” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “CNN’s Larry King Live with Dr. Jack Kevorkian” (short video clip)</li> </ul>	
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Changing Roles of Women: Liberation or Confusion?</li> <li>• Homosexuality: Orientation, Preference, or Perversion?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 371, 381-387, 388-389, 393-399</li> <li>• “Today’s Young Muslim Women” (one-hour video)</li> <li>• “A Christian Debate on Homosexuality” (one-hour video)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board</li> <li>• Research/Position paper</li> </ul>

**Assignment detail for Fully Online course:**

Assignment Detail - refer to rubric(s) in Course Information on Blackboard	Possible Points
<b>Online Discussions</b> —Discussion Boards (2 each week at 20 points each)	320
<b>Five reading quizzes</b> —worth 40 points each	200
<b>Essay</b>	240
<b>Formal Research Paper</b>	240
	<b>Total: 1000</b>

**Class by Class Outline for Fully Online course:**

Week	Topics	Readings/Viewings	Assignments
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Is Religion?</li> <li>• Why Are People Religious?</li> <li>• Why So Many Religions?</li> <li>• Why Is the Study of Religion So Important in the Twenty-First Century?</li> <li>• What Is the Relationship between Science and Religion?</li> <li>• How Might Religion Be Studied?</li> <li>• How Will We Study the Abrahamic Religions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, xv-24 (Note: Throughout the course, the student should consult the Glossary in Young, 419-426)</li> <li>• “The God Delusion” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Dawkins on Creation, Evolution, and Religion” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and Chris Tyler” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and Richard Dawkins, part 1” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Debate between John Mackay and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues’ discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: timed reading quiz</li> </ul>

		<p>Richard Dawkins, part 2” (short video clip)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In the Beginning: Explanations from Science and Religion” (one hour video)</li> <li>• “Does Scientific Knowledge Contradict Religious Belief” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin on Behalf of God” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin and the Problem of Neo-Darwinism” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Back to Darwin: Evolution and ID” (short video clip)</li> </ul>	
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to the Abrahamic Religions</li> <li>• An Orientation to the Middle East</li> <li>• An Introduction to Judaism</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Judaism</li> <li>• The Jewish Worldview</li> <li>• Judaism in the Twenty-First Century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 179-206</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, “The Problem of Evil” (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues’ discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: timed reading quiz</li> <li>• Begin work on formal essay (due Sunday night of Week 4)</li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to Christianity</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Christianity</li> <li>• The Christian Worldview</li> <li>• Christianity in the Twenty-First Century</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 207-234</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, “Revelation and Scriptural Authority” (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues’ discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: timed reading quiz</li> <li>• Continue work on formal essay (due Sunday night of Week 4)</li> </ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Introduction to Islam</li> <li>• Stages of Development and Sacred Texts of Islam</li> <li>• The Islamic Worldview</li> <li>• Islam in the Twenty-First</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 235-262</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, “Interfaith Relations” (document)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to</li> </ul>

	Century		<p>colleagues' discussion posts on the discussion board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Sunday night: timed reading quiz</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: formal essay</li> </ul>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Abrahamic Religions and Contemporary Ethical Issues</li> <li>• The Ecological Crisis: Is the Balance of Life on Planet Earth in Jeopardy?</li> <li>• The Economic Crisis: Why Hunger and Abject Poverty in a World of Plenty?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 307-310, 316-321, 322-323, 327-333</li> <li>• Farmer, mini-lecture, "Ethical Issues and the Process of Decision-Making" (document)</li> <li>• "A Sacred Duty: Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal the World" (one-hour video)</li> <li>• "The Financial and Ecological Crisis" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Spiritual Crisis behind the Ecological Crisis" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Economic Justice: Islamic and Christian Perspectives" (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues' discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: timed reading quiz</li> <li>• Begin work on formal research paper (due Sunday night of Week 8)</li> </ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War: When, If Ever, Is War Justified?</li> <li>• Capital Punishment: When, If Ever, May the State Take a Criminal's Life?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 338, 341-344, 345-346, 347-349</li> <li>• "The Gods of War: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on War and Peace" (one-hour video)</li> <li>• "Capital Punishment death Penalty from a Jewish Viewpoint" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Violence of Capital Punishment" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "The Death Penalty: What the Bible Has to Say about It" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "A Muslim Call for a Moratorium on Capital Punishment" (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues' discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Continue work on formal research paper (due Sunday night of Week 8)</li> </ul>
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abortion: Right to Life or Right to Choose?</li> <li>• Euthanasia: A "Good Death" or "Playing God"?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 353-354, 357-361, 362-363, 365-367</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Jewish Perspective" (short video clip)</li> <li>• "Abortion from a Catholic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to</li> </ul>

		<p>Perspective” (short video clip)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Abortion from a Progressive Protestant Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Abortion from a Muslim Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Euthanasia from a Jewish Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Euthanasia from a Catholic Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “Euthanasia from a Muslim Perspective” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “CBS’s Eye to Eye on Dr. Jack Kevorkian” (short video clip)</li> <li>• “CNN’s Larry King Live with Dr. Jack Kevorkian” (short video clip)</li> </ul>	<p>colleagues’ discussion posts on the discussion board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue work on formal research paper (due Sunday night of Week 8)</li> </ul>
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Changing Roles of Women: Liberation or Confusion?</li> <li>• Homosexuality: Orientation, Preference, or Perversion?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young, 371, 381-387, 388-389, 393-399</li> <li>• “Today’s Young Muslim Women” (one-hour video)</li> <li>• “A Christian Debate on Homosexuality” (one-hour video)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due Thursday night: two discussion posts to prompts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: four short responses to colleagues’ discussion posts on the discussion board</li> <li>• Due Sunday night: formal research paper</li> </ul>