

SYLLABUS:
REL 111 online: World Religions
March 12-April 29, 2018

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Course description:

This course will introduce you to the world's great religions. It will help you to discover:

- what all religions share in common (and how vastly different they are)
- how each religion seeks to provide guidance in solving fundamental human problems
- how religion is a wonderful window onto a culture's great art, science, medicine, cuisine, literature, architecture, and music
- how religion both shapes a culture and is shaped by it
- how religion helps a culture articulate its values, morals and aspirations
- how religion helps us to understand ourselves
- how religion provides people orientation to life and a map of reality
- how religion binds people together
- why human beings are "incurably religious"

Course Objectives and Outcomes:

1. Students will appreciate the role of religion in helping people construct a unified worldview and discover meaning and purpose in life.
2. Students will understand the history of the religions studied, with an emphasis on the role of those religions in American life.
3. Students will become acquainted with how the study of religion can be an aid in the development of dialogue and mutual understanding..
4. Students will be encouraged to reflect personally and critically about their own world view.

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- how religion helps a culture articulate its values, morals and aspirations
- how religion helps us to understand ourselves
- how religion provides people orientation to life and a map of reality
- how Eastern religions provide a powerful critique of Western culture--and vice versa

- how religion binds people together
- why human beings are “incurably religious”

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Textbook:

Jeffrey Brodd, Invitation to World Religions (Oxford, 2013)

In addition, students will be required to read some the classics of the world’s religions that are available online for free. Instructor will post these on the Moodle site.

Requirements:

1. Students are expected to complete the reading and/or written assignments for each week before contributing to the discussion forum.
2. Students are to read the lecture notes for each week
3. Students will watch the videos that are posted in this syllabus for each week.
4. Two essay tests are required. These are to be proctored. Test one must be completed by April 2 and test two by April 22. I am expecting well- researched and polished essays.

TEST #1:

Write a commentary on Vivekananda’s poem, “The Song of the Sannyasin,” describing the fundamental teachings of Hindu philosophy that are contained in it.

TEST #2:

What rites of passage, holidays, and significant rituals characterize Judaism, Christianity and Islam? Describe and explain the significance of each.

Your grade on each essay will be based on the following standards:

A Clearly outstanding; you demonstrate that you are on top of the subject; you’ve examined a variety of the best sources both books, journal articles, and online materials; you have zeroed in on the issues or debates; you combine independent, critical thinking with a thorough grasp of the material. Paper is clean of grammatical and spelling errors.

B Very good work; you demonstrate a solid understanding of the material and express it well. Central thesis is well-defended.

C Satisfactory work; you demonstrate that you have perused the appropriate readings but factual or grammatical mistakes mar your essay

D Below average; you really didn’t do the work but thought you could compensate for it by your brilliant literary or forensic skills

F Unsatisfactory work; the only person more disappointed than you is me.

Grading:

Each of the tests will count 50% of the final grade. Failure to contribute satisfactorily to the discussion forum will result in the lowering of the final grade average by 5 points for every forum missed.

Grading will be on a 10-point scale.

Course Outline:

March 12-18

Introduction to the Study of Religion
What is Religion? The Role of Ritual
Myth: Heroic and Cosmogonic
Read Brodd, chapter 1

Discussion Forum:

Using online resources, investigate the creation stories of indigenous (primal) religions around the world. You may want to focus, for example, on Native American creation stories, the Japanese creation story, Pacific Islands myths or creation stories of your choice from around the globe. Choose at least three creation stories. What do these stories share in common?

Choose three myths of heroes from the around the world. Did you find a pattern in the telling of these stories? What do you think the purpose of these stories were to the people-groups telling them?

Videos:

SEVEN CLASSIC THEORIES OF RELIGION

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ysmPmiCnls>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suYd6FSO86A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY9dpfo2eB4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3Vo-ekqXxc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TLK5-Pxyнк>

MYTHS OF ORIGIN

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_Luv0NZRyObcC6D_8nCXO6EkhnijW57y

The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Joseph Campbell

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8XUVqjX_IA

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mop6cgXchbw&list=PLDrHUybGFSqMgGqSp7fMeq92k_UaZUWVo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYg67hJu4Qg>

SHAMANS OF SIBERIA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JPKkV8cCf0>

The Shaman and the Jaguar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aydGvIk6OVw>

March 19-25

Religion: East vs. West

Introduction to Hinduism: The Fundamental Problem, the Fundamental Concepts

The Stages of Life, the Way of the Sannyasin

Read, Swami Vivekananda, "The Song of the Sannyasin" and Brodd, chapter 4;

The Bhagavad-Gita, chapter 2

Discussion Forum:

What key religious concepts did you discover while reading "The Song of the Sannyasin" and the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gita?

VIEW THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS:

The History of Hindu India

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBZRTzXARWM>

Ancient India From the Indus Valley Civilisation to Mughal Imperialism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywzVUEzmK6M>

The Indus Valley Civilisation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnsatmxY7Kc>

330 Million Gods

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7OLjwEq5pQ>

Religions of the World: Hinduism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82eDtwRlnBo>

GANGES or GANGA - A COMPLETE Documentary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM9aPy7H534>

BBC: Extreme Pilgrim - Hindu Mela

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZM_EqYgRuo

Documentary on Swami Vivekananda

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZgeb0OZPrY>

Complete Speech By Swami Vivekananda From Chicago USA in 1893

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQekcwOZ8FU>

HISTORY OF HINDUISM

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKE7enkhZyo>

WHAT IS HINDUISM?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpkIKbfjE8o&feature=related>

GANGES RIVER

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVgqcZl-c6g>

CREMATION AT GANGES

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hqhMQgEB1I&feature=related>

March 26-April 1

Jainism

Buddhism

Read Brodd, ch 6

Discussion Forum:

Brahmanism dominated the religious life of India in the sixth century BCE. In what ways may Jainism and Buddhism be understood as social and religious protest movements to the dominant religion?

VIEW THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS:

Jainism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPscKFV5yKU>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHMQRmRKh_U

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a96nz4DvRRE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=670KFhISeUk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbheKLJl8GI>

ESSENCE OF JAINISM

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjRqJudnPFY>

LIFE OF MAHAVIRA

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zn6HcFoaiIM&feature=related>

JAIN TEMPLE

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhZJh_a0DGs

BUDDHISM:

The Life of the Buddha Full BBC Documentary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEe8hI6G0GY>

The Long Search - Buddhism: Footprint of the Buddha

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3r202etWLE>

Buddhist Beliefs: The Four Noble Truths

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zerG3watL0k>

Buddhism documentary - Buddhism religion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWn6S34zXmU>

A Very Brief Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKGJEsCMuDw>

What is Zen Buddhism?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q72vBcymFdI>

THE GOSPEL OF THE BUDDHA

<http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/bud-gosp.txt>

BUDDHA: FIRST SERMON

<http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/bud-ser1.html>

BUDDHISM

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9udWyQZ1pMU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E22AjKHHkAY&feature=related>

BODHGAYA;

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5siCViVSo&feature=related>

SIKHISM:

Sikhs in America 1/3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFYQaY4dcOM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZU-zecK-XUw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT2d18pyvvw>

**PROCTORED TEST #1 MUST BE TAKEN BY SATURDAY,
March 31**

April 2-8

Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Jainism

(Brodd, chapter 8)

Read: "The Analects" by Confucius and the "Dao de Jing" by Lao-zi

Discussion Forum:

Describe the patterns of social life outlined by Confucius and Lao-tz. How did Confucianism and Daoism offer real solutions to the period of social, economic, political and moral disintegration in which both arose (6th century BCE)? How do both traditions differ?

VIEW THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS:

CONFUCIANISM

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fa_Z3aUaXbc
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWHt9FR0b_M
Buddhism Taoism and Confucianism in China
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gZY4i4Kg3s>

Daoism

Alan Watts - The Taoist Way
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iv9zocKASsM>
Tao Te Ching

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJne4c022yE&feature=related>

DAO DE JING

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPfh-isxqqU&feature=related>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIF60Rr720>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaKdP4x8VU>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIN6tRnS85I>

April 9-15

Ethical Monotheism; Religions of Revelation
Judaism (Brodd, chapter 10)

Discussion Forum:

Relate each of the primary Jewish holidays to the history of Judaism and what each tells us about how Jews celebrate life.

Videos:

Inside Judaism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OW9x-Z3u2Lo>
The Jewish Americans (1 & 2): They Came to Stay & A World of Their Own
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M52S1A6k4c0>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-jtAB8D26U>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Czqd6B7JghQ>

Jewish Holidays

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRp0vw8RBAw&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy&index=3

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axoPjHVJPgA&index=6&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRp0vw8RBAw&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy&index=3

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayF7xiyuZqc&index=4&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASkMkQFAblk&index=7&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpyitTzaDPs&list=PLi78mopnWP_5UjpsUyFq-Xpunj3XI5cNy

April 16-22

Christianity (Brodd, chapter 11)

Discussion Forum:

What do Christians share in common with Jews?

What distinctions mark Eastern Christianity from both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism?

Videos:

PBS - From Jesus To Christ. The First Christians - 1 of 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZ7ZqUmnSWQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCVpRnBS7nI>

Saint Paul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqGwNE2C-Q>

History of the Christianity's first 1000 years

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKOoPcHxPhU>

NT Wright The Resurrection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqc7--CaCpM>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ay_Db4RwZ_M

N.T. Wright - Kingdom and Cross: The Forgotten Message of the Gospels

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jF0oy7UTIWg>

Martin Luther - PBS Documentary -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyVrPIp4QsA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsDT1pYOW2c>

April 23-29

Islam (Brodd, chapter 12)

Discussion Forum:

Compare and contrast the life of Jesus to the life of Muhammad.

Videos:

Islam: Empire of Faith [PBS Documentary]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHhbSvOcz4g>

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Complete life story in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FvfFSIQZnI>

FINAL ESSAY MUST BE SUBMITTED BY SATURDAY, APRIL 29

NOTE: Please read these important additions to the syllabus

“Disability Services are available for students who require accommodations due to any cognitive, physical, or psychological disability. For more information, or to disclose a disability, contact the Disability Services Office at 508-2293.”

“Attendance and conduct related problems will be brought to the attention of the Dean of Academic Affairs who, in consultation with the instructor, will take disciplinary action that may result in involuntary withdrawal from a course and a grade of “W” or “F.” NOTE: The statement above was recently approved by CIC to mirror something already present in the Student Handbook related to **inappropriate** conduct in class.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU OBSERVE THE HONOR CODE. PLEASE PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE PLAGIARISM POLICY WHICH FOLLOWS.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Plagiarism is theft; it is the *deliberate or accidental* use of a source’s words, interpretation, or information *without properly quoting or paraphrasing and acknowledging that use*.

In both the professional world and the academic world, plagiarism is punished. In the professional world, charges of plagiarism, when proven, carry potentially enormous financial penalties. In the academic world, universities and colleges punish plagiarism with varying degrees of severity, with the penalties ranging all the way from expulsion from the school, to automatic ‘F’ in the course, down to automatic ‘F’ on the particular project or paper.

There are only two ways to avoid plagiarism:

1. **Quote and Citation**: Use the source’s *exact* words, place quotation marks at the beginning and end of them, and insert a citation immediately at the end of the quotation according to the standards of the discipline.

2. **Paraphrase and Citation**: Transform (paraphrase) the source's words and information *entirely* into your own style of writing, and insert a citation at the end of this paraphrase. If what you write still echoes the source's *words and style*, you have plagiarized. If you fail to insert a citation, you have plagiarized.