

RELS 105: Introduction to World Religions

Summer II, M-F 9:45-11:30
ECTR 103

Instructor: Andrew Aghapour
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Course Description: This course is designed to provide a brief introduction to major religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will also begin with a brief survey of critical and theoretical approaches to the study of religion. Topics of study will include each tradition's historical origins, conceptions of the sacred, rituals and practices, and contemporary trends.

Required Textbook: Fisher, Mary Pat. *Living Religions*. Seventh Edition.

Course Requirements: You will be graded on the following: five quizzes (5% each, with the lowest dropped = 20%), three response papers (2-3 pages, 5% each = 15%), participation (see below, 15%), a Mid-Term (25%), and a Final (non-cumulative, 25%). Assignments and tests are due on the day assigned. If you have a conflicting obligation or excuse, please talk to me *before* the assignment is due. Missed assignments will result in a zero.

Attendance: Attendance on every class day is required. Since this is a summer class, missing just one or two class days might mean missing an entire section of the course. Absences are excused only if negotiated in advance or if there is a medical emergency. Unexcused absences and excessive tardiness will result in the subtraction of points from your participation grade

Participation: You will be graded on your overall participation. This includes being active and alert in class, being present and on time, and being respectful towards your fellow students. Of course I do not *require* verbal participation: if you are shy, mute, agoraphobic, or otherwise deeply unable to discuss publicly your opinions on religion, it might be best to think of *mental* vs. oral participation. If you are clearly paying attention, making various 'what?' or 'yes!' faces in response to the material, and/or talking to me after class about the readings, speaking in class is by no means mandatory.

On the other hand, it's a big no-no to be mentally somewhere else. If I catch you texting, doodling, chatting, or otherwise interfacing with some human/animal/technological device in an inappropriate manner, you'll lose some participation points and I'll be forced to publicly embarrass you as a means of deterrence.

Honor Code: Lying, cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the Honor Code and are not permitted at the College. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Dean of Students. A student responsible for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure based on dishonesty. Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating.

Disabilities: If you have a disability that qualifies you for academic accommodation, please present a letter to me from the Center for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. For more information regarding accommodation and the SNAP program, see: <http://www.cofc.edu/~cgs/index.htm>.

Grading: Numerical and letter grades will be used as follows: A+ = 100-97; A = 96-93; A- = 92-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D+ = 69-67; D = 66-63; D- = 62-60; F = 59-0.

Communication: If you have any questions or concerns during the course, please feel free to email me or schedule a time to meet outside of class. Although I do not keep office hours, I am happy to meet with you to answer questions, look over your work in advance, or provide advice about studying and writing for the class. I look forward to working with you this semester!

Tentative Schedule of Assignments:

July 7 T Introduction, begin Religious Responses
8 W Religious Responses, pp. 1-28
9 Th Hinduism, pp. 72-96
10 F **No Class- Video Assignment**

13 M **RP 1 Due**, Hinduism, pp. 97-117
14 T Buddhism, pp. 134-154
15 W Buddhism, pp. 154-178
16 Th Daoism, pp. 182-199
17 F Confucianism, pp. 199-211 and Test Review
Last Day to Withdraw with a 'W'

20 M **Midterm**
21 T Judaism, pp. 235-256
22 W Judaism, pp. 256-275
23 Th Judaism, pp. 275-291
24 F Christianity, pp. 295-313

27 M **RP 2 Due**, Christianity, pp. 314-335
28 T Christianity, pp. 336-358
29 W Christianity, pp. 358-372
30 Th Islam, pp. 376-392
31 F Islam, pp. 392-412

Aug 3 M **RP3 Due**, Islam, pp. 412-430
4 T Test Review

The Final Exam will be held on Thursday, August 6 from 9:45 to 12:45.