

WORLD RELIGIONS
REL 2020 IA-
Web CT- Vista

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Evidence for religion as a characteristic of human culture is apparent in anthropological and archaeological studies that investigate the earliest human communities. Throughout history, around the globe, religion has been and continues to be a social institution that influences not only the community of faith but also the laws, social policies, and the ethical codes that inform and influence other social institutions. It is also true that all religious traditions are shaped, affected, and often significantly influenced by the social, political and cultural realities of the times and the societies of which they are a part.

Life in contemporary culture is influenced by immense religious diversity and difference, and, simultaneously, by a need to increase our understanding of the world as community. It is, therefore, increasingly important that we pursue and develop an understanding of the religious traditions that shape the human community. In order to facilitate students in this June Term our focus for this course will:

Examine, briefly, basic concepts and defining characteristics of the earliest expressions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Three sets of Quizzes, and a Writing Assignment will be provided for each Chapter. Due date and times for submitting these assignments are given in the course schedule.

Note the major changes in each tradition's self understanding as it expands beyond its original community in the context of time, place, and social organizational structures including expressions of these traditions in the present day.

Prepare a term paper (5-7 pages; use 12 pt. font; use Times New Roman and is weighted at 30 points) that addresses a serious issue/conflict, in the present, between adherents of two different religious traditions. Students will identify effects of transitions within each tradition that may suggest a root cause, or precipitating factor in the unrest between the two factions. Suggestions for possible resolution may be suggested.

I will distribute a list of guidelines and of possible religious conflicts by week two of the course, this list may prompt you to think of a different conflict that you would like to address. If you choose a different conflict please let me know before the beginning of week III. As soon as you decide on your topic you may want to use Molloy's bibliographies to identify books in Odum Library or to order from Inter-library Loan.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

1. Students will derive a greater understanding of the world as community.
2. Students will become informed about the diversity and pluralism intrinsic to the major religious traditions of the world.
3. Students will become aware of the distinctive historical and cultural contexts from which the world religions emerged.
4. Students will become familiar with interpretive categories in religious studies that include concepts of the Holy, sacred time and space, symbol systems, sacred stories and rituals.
5. Students will be able to think critically and to rationally analyze a variety of sacred and secular data.
6. Students will demonstrate a responsible transcendence of ethnocentricity without abdicating the value of personal experience.
7. Students may establish links with practitioners of the world's religions through the world wide web.
8. Students will recognize the significance of religion as an element of cultural transformation.
9. Students will recognize similarities and differences among world religions.
10. Students' comprehension of the particularities of various religious traditions may become enhanced

- by experiential learning opportunities, and field experiences.
11. Students will acquire knowledge about the influence of religion as a dynamic in the shaping of social policies and systems throughout human cultures.
 12. Students will become aware of the impact of religious ethics in business, law, media, and criminal justice.

Required Text: Experiencing the World's Religions, Michael Molloy,
Mc Graw-Hill Publisher, 4th edition.

Course Requirements

You will take three quizzes (2 points for each quiz : 3 quizzes x 2 points each = 6 points x 5 chapters = 30 possible points) on each of the assigned chapters that should help you to determine how well you are assimilating the readings, point out discrepancies and assist you in addressing your writing assignments (8 points) (8 possible points per chapter x 5 chapters = 40 points total) and a Term Paper weighted at 30 points. Course Total = 100 points total). All such assignments must be completed and received by me no later than 11:45PM of the due date, unless otherwise stated.

Chapter Quizzes 30 Points.

Writing Assignments 40 points

Paper/project 30 Points

Office Hours by Apointment

Note: Because on Web-Ct Courses all activities are supposed to be addressed on-line,if you are having a serious problem please contact me on the mail tool. If we then agree that a personal appointment is in order, and unless I am out of town we will schedule an appointment in my office.