

Religion 102 Course Syllabus
Religions of the Western World
Winter 2013 / 3 Credits

Instructor Information

Chelsea Newton

Office Hours: Before or after class, or by appointment.

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Course Description

Investigates religion in the Western World. Includes discussion of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Focuses on how the outward forms of religion integrate with other cultural traditions.

Overview and Introduction

This course covers three religions which have often seemed to be in conflict in the western world. Ironically, these religions share a familial heritage as well as certain ideas about the nature of the universe. Many of you may be coming from a Christian heritage and will likely be inclined to view the Christian Bible as a source of ultimate authority. It is indeed one of the many sources from which we'll be drawing, but not the only document we'll be referencing. We will be relying on our critical thinking skills to approach each subject and source from an academic standpoint. Please keep this in mind throughout our discussions and in your research papers.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate awareness and insight of other world religions.
- Recognize and articulate the diverse issues related to western religions.
- Draw relationships from various western cultures and beliefs in a process of self exploration for greater personal understanding.
- Use analytical and critical thinking to draw reasonable conclusions.

Learning Activities

Interactive Lecture/ Discussion

Watching and Commenting on Film, DVD, and PowerPoint Presentations

Group-learning activities

Self-directed Reading (Text and Moodle), Writing, and Research

Prerequisite Course(s):

Reading 90 and Writing 115 or above are *strongly* recommended.

Required Text:

Molloy, Michael. *Experiencing the World's Religions, 5th edition*. New York, NY. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Course Requirements

The final grade in this class will be determined by performances on assignments and activities shown below.

- **Attendance/ Reading/ In-Class Participation:**
Quiz Questions & Moodle Writing Assignments will equal ~ 60 points of your final grade. Read below for details. Do come to class prepared to participate! (You must be in attendance in order to receive these points – You may miss one three-point homework assignment without penalty.)
 - Quiz Questions: For each reading assignment, please bring 5 possible quiz questions and their answers (both full sentences) for discussion in groups (3 points each).
 - Moodle Homework: UNLESS SPECIFIED IN THE SYLLABUS OR IN CLASS: Because this class only meets once a week, you will also be assigned a supplemental reading and short writing assignment for each week. (3 points each)
 - In Class Writing: At the beginning of each class I will also ask you to write briefly about the assigned reading. These may be group responses or personal writings. (1 points each).
- **Exams:** There will be 2 exams, a midterm and a final. These will be given over the course of the term using a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay-type questions.
- **Research Paper:** Toward the end of the course, a 4-5 page research paper will be due. The research paper constitutes 60 points. An in depth explanation of the research paper will be given out the third week of the term.

Grading

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the total number of points earned divided by the total possible points (see chart below). It is possible that the total number of points will change during the term (to include extra assignments, snow days etc.). I reserve the right to curve the grading scale positively if deemed necessary.

Percent	Grade
90% or above	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% or below	F

Work	Points available	Your points
Questions / in class writings	~60 (20%)	
Quiz 1	~ 10 (3%)	
Midterm	~ 100 (30%)	
Research Paper	~ 60 (20%)	
Final Exam	~ 80 (25%)	
Extra credit	(+8)	
Total:	~310	

Extra Credit

If you are struggling in the class, and are worried about your final grade, there will be up to 8 points available for extra credit. If you have questions about your choice of activity / program you will use (or, if you have an idea of your own), please do not hesitate to ask me. *I hope you take advantage of the extra credit opportunities offered for this course. This is your chance to experience religion and the ongoing dialogue about religion happening presently in our community -- which can be easily accessed by the curious-minded! (1 each, 8 points available)*

Attend a lecture / event (5 points): If you would prefer to attend a lecture or event *about* religion (for example, a debate on Jesus hosted by the Socratic Society at OSU would be a great option), I will accept a 2-page, double-spaced paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject. Please get approval for your choice of event before turning in an extra credit report.

Listen to a Podcast (3 points): You may enjoy streaming a radio program or watching a documentary while earning extra credit. I will accept a full 1-page, double-spaced, paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject.

On Being, hosted by Krista Tippett

<http://being.publicradio.org/>

(Click on *Archive*, pick a program that interests you personally. This is one of my favorite radio programs.) Please choose a program that coincides with the course material (i.e. topics that discuss forms of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism).

Philosophy Talk, hosted by Ken Taylor and John Perry of Stanford University

<http://www.philosophytalk.org/>

Subscribe free to podcast in itunes, or, click on *past programs*. These are not all specifically related to western religions *per se*, so here are a few that will meet the religion requirement: St. Augustine; Faith, Reason and Science; Islamic Philosophy; Worship; Challenges to Free Will; Believing in God; The Problem of Evil; Jewish Philosophy; The Existence of God.

Frontline – The Mormons (video)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/>

(Click on *watch online*, scroll down to April 30, 2007, *The Mormons*)

This is a very interesting documentary on the historical and modern Mormon traditions. I wish I could show this in class, but it is quite long. So, if you have an interest in learning about this rapidly growing religion, have at it!

Tentative Course Schedule

Week/Class	Preparatory Reading	In Class	Exams / Homework due dates/ Documentaries
<u>Week 1</u> Thurs. 1/10		Introduction/syllabus Studying Religion... Judaism: Biblical History 1 Ch. 8, pp. 289-306	
<u>Week 2</u> Thurs. 1/17	Ch. 8, pp. 306-314 Ch. 8, pp. 314-319,	Judaism: Biblical History 2, 2 nd Temple Judaism: Dev. of Rabbinic	Research Project Handout
<u>Week 3</u> Thurs. 1/24	Ch. 8, 322-330 Ch. 8, pp. 319-322, 330-338	Judaism, Practice & “Belief” Judaism: Modern Forms and divisions, Holocaust & Zionism	Study Guide Handout: Exam 1
<u>Week 4</u> Thurs. 1/31	Review for Exam	<i>Judaism Documentary: Anti- Semitism in the 21st century</i> Exam 1: Judaism	Exam 1: Judaism Research Project: turn in topics
<u>Week 5</u> Thurs. 2/7	Ch. 9, pp. 343-352, 352-363, Ch. 9, pp. 363-383	Christianity: Jesus, <i>Paul and the early years (Documentary)</i> New Testament Exercise Christianity: Spread of x-ianity and the Catholic Church	
<u>Week 6</u> Thurs. 2/14	Ch. 9. pp. 383-390 Ch. 9. pp. 390-398 Ch. 9 pp. 398-419	Christianity: The Reformation Christianity: Modern Forms and Divisions, Ethics and Practice	Study Guide Handout: Exam 2
<u>Week 7</u> Thurs. 2/21	Review for Exam	Then...Exam 2 <i>Muhammad and the Quran</i>	Exam 2: Christianity
<u>Week 8</u> Thurs. 2/28	Ch. 10. pp. 423-443 Ch. 10. pp. 443-452	Islam: the five pillars Islam: Rise of Islam, Sunni and Shiite	Research Project Due, Extra Credit Due
<u>Week 9</u> Thurs. 3/7	Ch. 10. pp. 452-465	Islam: Sufism, Law, Philosophy and Theology <i>Islam documentary – The moors</i>	Study Guide Handout: Exam 3
<u>Week 10</u> Thurs. 3/14	Ch. 10. pp. 465-484 Review for Exam	Islam: Modern Islam Then...Exam 3	Exam 3: Islam, cumulative

***No finals week – Thursday classes must hold final exam during week 10.**

Class Policies:

Plagiarism: I reserve the right to issue an “F” grade for an assignment or the entire course if a student is found to have willingly cheated or plagiarized. I do not allow students to re-write research papers for a higher grade. All direct quotes *and* information from outside sources must be cited within the text *and* in a bibliography or reference page. Please see the writing lab if you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism.

Cell phones, laptops, and other electronics: Turn them off and put them away.

Inclusive community / constructive discussion: This material is inherently interesting, but it can also be a sensitive subject to discuss. As a class we must welcome participation, open discussion, and insight from all. Please remember to keep an open mind, and be respectful to me as your instructor and to your peers. *If someone is being consistently disruptive, negative, or intolerant of others' personal views, I will kindly ask them to leave the classroom for the remainder of the discussion.* The field of religious studies is incredibly vast, and although all comments and questions will be duly noted, we may not have time to delve deeply into each topic.

Late work: I do not accept late work (research papers, exams, in-class assignments etc). I do not allow students to re-take exams, or to re-write research papers (this is why the calendar is so specific). However, I will accept *early* work. Please talk to me in the case of severe medical emergencies.

E-mail: I ask your patience where e-mail is concerned. Although this is the best way to get in touch with me, please keep a few things in mind when e-mailing:

- I will respond to your e-mails within **2 business days**. Please plan accordingly. In other words, read assignments well in advance so you have time to ask questions and receive a response.
- If you are going to miss class, you will simply miss an in-class assignment, and this will affect your grade accordingly. It will be your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student.

College Policies:

Disability Services: Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency, should speak with the instructor during the first week of class. If you have not accessed services and think you may need them, please contact Disability Services, 917-4789.

Waitlist Policy: Students not in attendance for the first class meeting may be dropped to allow for those wishing to add at that time.

Drop Policy: Students are responsible for knowing the last day to drop the course for a full refund. Also, be aware of the last day to officially withdraw from this course for transcripts to show a ‘W.’

Incomplete Grades: You may be eligible for an ‘Incomplete’ grade if you have finished 90% of the class work. Should you receive an ‘Incomplete,’ all course work must be finished by the end of the next term. Please contact the instructor prior to term’s end with appropriate documentation for requesting an ‘Incomplete.’