Oklahoma State University

REL 4223.29964 Death and the Afterlife

DELIVERY METHOD
• For the first 2 weeks this semester, the classes will be only online: Go to Canvas > BigBlueButton. You do not need to come to physical classrooms. Ensure to turn on your camera and microphone (I will be asking you to do so, since this is a small discussion-based course).
• For the rest of the semester, the classes will be fully in-person with masks strongly recommended.
• When we have active Covid-19 cases in our classrooms, the delivery method and mask policy will change accordingly according to the OSU policy. Thank you very much in advance for your understanding and flexibility.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The fear of death and the dread of what comes afterward is inescapable part of the human experience, both in the ancient and modern world. This class will explore the variety of ways in which death and afterlife were understood in different religious traditions of the world. In so doing, we will also consider the relationship between the understanding of death and particular religious faiths, doctrines, practices, and ethics. Topics to be considered in this course include: near-death experiences, burial, netherworld, immortality, reincarnation, resurrection, judgment, salvation, ancestor veneration, suicide, etc.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Acquire basic literacy in the scholarly approaches to death and the afterlife.
2. Provide a general overview of basic beliefs and practices for each religious tradition examined, understanding the culturally constructed nature of beliefs and practices concerning death and the afterlife.
3. Reflect your own ideas and values about death and dying, observing how the viewpoint is influencing your way of living.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Source: https://www.brainscape.com/blog/2015/07/afterlife-major-religions/
1. All readings will be available on Canvas > Modules. You will find the assignments, and if you click individual ones, you will see the files.

EVALUATION
1. Attendance/ Participation (Total 30 points; 30%)
2. Summary & Discussion Paper (Total 30 ea, each worth 1.5 points; Total 45 points; 45%)
3. One Presentation of Reading Summary and Questions (5 points; 5%)
4. Final Group Paper and Presentation