REL 1103: 42767 – Introduction to World Religions

Instructor
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Office Hours: Please send an email for a virtual meeting

Description
This is an intensive online course (June 7 - July 4, 2021) and self-discipline is the key for the successful completion of this course. All lectures, resources, assignments, and correspondence are accessed entirely online through Canvas at canvas.okstate.edu. You must use your campus email and password to access the course. Since this is a short-term course that covers lots of materials within a short period of time, plan ahead your schedule carefully so that you can keep up with your study. I set up due dates for each module. Keeping these due dates will help you to study for this course without procrastination at the end.

Introduction to major world religions such as Yoruba religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to understand the general nature of religion and its various dimensions.

Traditional Australian Aboriginal Fire Dance
Copyright http://www.whitewolfpack.com/2013/08/traditional-australian-aboriginal-dance.html
Prerequisites
No Prerequisites

Goals
One goal of this course is to develop a general understanding of diverse religious traditions in the world. For this, we will read primary sources, secondary sources, and watch short videos and documentary films. Another goal is to develop the skills needed for self-paced online study. This class helps students navigate and develop their own ways of utilizing online resources and planning out their time for learning.

Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Articulate the history of development, principle beliefs/doctrines, and practices (both in public and private) of the religious traditions presented in the course.
2. Develop skills for a close, careful reading of primary religious texts and observation of religious practices.
3. Understand the social-political contexts of religious traditions and the impacts of religion on human beings and societies.
4. Perform informed comparisons between different religions, identifying similarities and differences in their thoughts and practices.

Textbook

Additional Course Fees

Instructor Response Time
I will respond within 24-48 hours via email. Please specify the course title and number REL 1103: 42767 in your email. You can expect feedback for assignments and exams within 2 weeks.

Participation Expectations
This is an intensive 4-weeks course. You should be spending at least 6 hours per day for watching the lecture video, reading the text book, submitting answers for pop quizzes, and writing two reading journal assignments. Reading journals and pop quizzes for a week will be due every Sunday midnight. If you have not participated in at least one assignment of the first week, then I will contact you to discuss your situation. If I cannot get hold of you, I will submit an academic alert.

Grading Policy
Your grade in this course will be calculated according to the completion of the following assignments:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment:</th>
<th>Value in Points</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pop Quizzes</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Reading Journals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20 (online; no time limit; open-note)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 (online; no time limit; open-note)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Reflection Paper</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus Assignments</td>
<td>Approx. 5-10</td>
<td>5-10% (Random and varies depending on the class performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Final grades will be assigned according to the following standard scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 59.9%</td>
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**Assignment Descriptions**

**Pop Quizzes:** There will be multiple pop quizzes related to individual lecture videos. You can access all these quizzes via Modules. 20% deduction/day (5 days after the due date: no point earned)

**Seven Reading Journals** on *God Is Not One* (Introduction - 2 points; other six chapters Introduction, Yoruba Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam - 3 points): Total 20 points (20% of your final grade)

1. All journals should be in Times New Roman, 12 points, 1-inch margin, single-spaced. MS Word document or pdf.
2. Upload your files (MS Word or PDF) on “Reading Journal” section under the week’s Module.
3. For Due dates, see the Course Schedule below.
4. You will write total seven 2-page reading journals for eight chapters of God Is Not One: Introduction, Chapter 1 (Islam), 2 (Christianity), 4 (Hinduism), 5 (Buddhism), 6 (Yoruba Religion), 7 (Judaism).
5. Reading journals should have two parts:
   A. Part I. Reading Summary (about 1 page, single-spaced; longer is fine, but try to fill at least 1 page). Read the textbook carefully. Then write a summary in any format that works for you (bullet points, prose, question-answer type, summary by subheadings of the textbook, mindmap, etc.).
B. Part II. Terms and Concepts. Review the textbook and PowerPoint lecture slides. Write down 1-2 sentence descriptions or definitions for the terms provided (You can see these terms by clicking “Reading Journal” on the week’s Module. This will help you to review the materials and study for the exams. The terms that you need to answer will be announced for each reading journal.

C. You can submit your assignments late, but there will be automatic points deduction by the Canvas system. (Each day 20% deduction. About 5 days after the due date, you will earn no points, so please plan accordingly)

Midterm Exam
1. Will be opened for three days (June 12 8am – June 14 11:59pm)
2. Up to Buddhism
3. No time limit. You can log on to Canvas when you to take the exam, and take as much time as you need.

Final Exam
1. Will be opened for three days (July 5 8am – July 7 11:59pm)
2. Up to Islam
3. No time limit, exam will be opened from 8am-11:59pm on the exam day. You can log on to Canvas on the hour that best suits you to take the exam, and take as much time as you need.

Final Reflection Paper
1. Times New Roman, 12 points, 1-inch margin, single-spaced. MS Word document or pdf.
2. 1-2 pages.
3. Answer these questions in your essay. You can either answer one question by one, or address these issues in your essay.
   A. We began the course by discussing different approaches/attitudes to religious diversity (presence of multiple religions in the world). What was your initial position? Did it remain unchanged or changed/become nuanced?
   B. What religion did you find most interesting to learn in this course? Why? Was there any particularly tricky religion or concept to understand?
   C. Do you think that religion, in general, has had a positive or negative effect on the world and on individual human beings? How can we “practice” (or “use”) religion so that it can contribute to making a better world?
   D. If you decide to take another course on religion in the future, what would be the title or main topic of the course?
4. Upload your essay under the final week’s Module, “Final Reflection Paper.”
Technical Requirements
You will need a laptop, webcam, and Exemity installation for this course. There is $4 fee for midterm exam use of Examity.

Course Schedule (June 7 through July 4, 2021)
* Schedule is subject to change at instructor discretion.
* Because each lecture time has been shortened due to the pandemic, you might have to watch additional videos of each religion when we face delays in schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Assignments/Exams (Central Standard Time)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (June 7-13)</td>
<td>Module 1. Introduction to the Course, Definition of Religion, Approaches to Religious Diversity Module 2. Indigenous Religions, Yoruba Religion</td>
<td>Pop Quizzes on lecture videos DUE June 13, 11:59pm Reading Journals on Prothero, Introduction and Yoruba Religion(Chapter 6) DUE June 13, 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 (June 14-20)</td>
<td>Module 3. Hinduism Module 4. Buddhism</td>
<td>Pop Quizzes on lecture videos DUE June 20, 11:59pm Reading Journals on Prothero, Hinduism (Chapter 4), Buddhism (Chapter 5) DUE June 20, 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>Exam will be opened on Canvas from June 12 8am to June 14 11:59pm</td>
<td>Open-note, up to Buddhism, multiple-choice, T/F, short-terms, essay questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3 (June 21-27)</td>
<td>Module 5. Judaism Module 6. Christianity</td>
<td>Pop Quizzes on lecture videos DUE June 27, 11:59pm Reading Journals on Prothero, Judaism (Chapter 7), Christianity (Chapter 2) DUE June 27, 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 (June 28-July 4)</td>
<td>Module 7. Islam Module 8. Atheism, Conclusion</td>
<td>Pop Quizzes on lecture videos DUE July 4, 11:59pm Reading Journals on Prothero, Islam (Chapter 1) DUE July 4, 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>July 5 8am – July 7 11:59pm</td>
<td>Open-note, up to Buddhism, multiple-choice, T/F, short-terms, essay questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assignments</td>
<td>Final Reflection Paper DUE July 9, 11:59pm</td>
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<td>All Bonus Assignments DUE July 9, 11:59pm</td>
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