

RELG 300-001: Introduction to World Religions

CRN 21740 (double section)

(Revised 1.1.13)

- This course is currently on the approved list to count for the Global Perspectives category of the Touchstone program. (It is no longer on the Humanities and Arts list.)
- This course participates in the Global Learning Initiative by its very nature.
- This course participates in the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department's critical thinking initiative especially with the final unit that explores and analyzes the implications of religious plurality.
- This course participates in the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department's effective communication initiative especially with the fieldvisit paper and exam essays.

Spring 2013. 3 credit hours

M/W 12:30 pm, Kinard 18

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Office Hours: M/W 9:30-11:30 in Kin 324; Th 3:30-4:30 in Owens G07, and by appointment.

Occasionally an obligation conflicts with office hours, so it's best to confirm in advance.

Competencies. This course helps students make progress toward the following competencies:

- 1) Course: have a beginning overview of selected world religions, with an emphasis on non-Christian traditions.
- 2) Departmental/major program goal 3: be prepared for life in an interconnected world of globalization.
- 3) University Level Competencies in the Touchstone Program:
 - Think critically and solve problems. (ULC #1)
 - Be personally and socially responsible. (ULC #2)
 - Understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which we live. (ULC #3)
 - Communicate effectively. (ULC #4)

Student Learning Outcomes. In pursuit of the above competencies, the successful student in RELG 300 will

- 1) Course-specific: acquire knowledge of the basic history, beliefs, and practices of selected world religions.
- 2) Related to departmental program:
 - recognize human diversity and the diversity of religious ideas, institutions, and moral codes.
 - engage seriously the perspectives of others and revisit their own worldviews and assumptions in light of the broader context of the wider world.
- 3) Related to Touchstone Program Courses:
 - Assess information from multiple viewpoints and consider the context of their decisions.
 - Take seriously the perspectives of others and reflect on experiences.
 - Comprehend the global context of their disciplines and lives; recognize how this area of study is linked to other fields; collaborate with members of diverse communities.
 - Create texts that convey content effectively and successfully express and exchange ideas.

Required Texts:

- 1) *Living Religions* by Mary Pat Fisher, eighth edition (seventh edition would also suffice), Prentice Hall, 2010; no access code for a website or cd-rom is necessary—just the textbook. This book is not to be confused with the one titled *An Anthology of Living Religions*.
- 2) Paul J. Griffiths's *Problems of Religious Diversity* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2001)
- 3) readings on course reserves through Dacus Library's website, online and free

Required Technology:

- 1) Blackboard, a tool for online components of the course. Instructions can be found below.
- 2) Winthrop e-mail. It is important that you use your Winthrop e-mail, and check it regularly.
- 3) Turnitin, a plagiarism detection service. Instructions for Turnitin are provided with the field visit assignment.

Blackboard (online component) instructions:

1. Go to <https://bb-winthrop.blackboard.com/>.
2. Log into Blackboard with the same user name and password as you use to login to Winthrop email.
3. **Need Blackboard Help?**

Log in issues: Please contact the help desk at 323-2400 or helpdesk@winthrop.edu.

Tutorials: http://www2.winthrop.edu/webct/Blackboard_Training_Tutorials.html.

Blackboard User's Guide: Log into Blackboard, and at the very top of the screen, click on the Help link, and then click on User Guide. You can search for a specific topic that you need help with.

For additional assistance: Please contact Kimarie Whetstone, Online Learning Coordinator at 323-2551 or whetstonek@winthrop.edu.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 323-3290. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from the Office of Disability Services, please inform me as early as possible in the semester. If your accommodations affect every test/assignment, please remind me prior to each test/assignment.

Also, the **Office of Victims Assistance** helps students access support services for academic problems resulting from victimization. The OVA is located in 204 Crawford and can be reached at (803) 323-2206.

Safe Zones statement and student conduct code: The instructor intends for this classroom to be a Safe Zone. Regardless of sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, age, or ability you will be treated and respected as a human being. The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the "Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy" online:

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/handbook/StudentHandbook.pdf>.

Requirements and Evaluation:

Participation (See criteria below.)	75	points
Tests (2) (1@225, 1@250 pts.)	475	
Individual field trip and report (1 cultural events credit)	175	
Reading quiz on <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i>	25	
Final exam	250	
	1000	total

Scale:	867-899 B+	767-799 C+	667-699 D+	
934-1000 A	834-866 B	734-766 C	634-666 D	0-599 F
900-933 A-	800-833 B-	700-733 C-	600-633 D-	

- All grades will be posted to Blackboard.
- No late work will be accepted after the last day of regular class. Late work will not be accepted on study day or during the exam period, because I would be unable to get grading done in order to meet my own deadlines for submitting grades.
- No extra credit opportunities will be provided. Students need to demonstrate mastery of the material through performance on the items listed above.
- No rewrites on papers. I have found that when students count on the chance to do a rewrite, they often do not put their full effort into the original paper. Also, allowing rewrites is not fair to other students who did well originally. The proper time for revising is with drafts *prior* to the due date.

Attendance and other policies to be read very carefully:

1.) I expect you to **contact me promptly**, if possible in advance (e-mail correspondence preferred), **every time you miss a class if you have a decent reason for missing**, just as you would contact a boss or co-worker if you had to miss work. I make a judgment about undocumented absences at the end of the term in light of your overall behavior and performance. *If you rarely miss class and have been keeping up well, you can be assured that I will excuse absences for good reasons that are communicated to me promptly.*

2.) **Attendance** will be taken regularly and will affect your participation grade. Only unexcused absences hurt your participation grade. Although also adjusted for variations in the *quality* of participation, the following gives you an *approximate* idea of the **correspondence between attendance and your participation grade:**

# of <u>unexcused</u> absences	participation grade of
0-1	A
2	B
3	C
4	C-
5-6	D
≥ 7	F

3.) Unless there has been a prior arrangement, in cases of a **missed test** you are entitled to a make up *only with documentation*.

4.) If a due date in my class falls at a bad time for you, talk to me about it well in advance (at least 2-3 weeks before the due date), and I may grant you an **extension** if you have a good reason for one. Unless there has been a documented emergency or a prior arrangement made, an assignment is considered late when turned in any time after the class in which it is due, even if it is turned in later that same day.

The **penalties for a late paper**:

in on the due date but after the class in which it is due	- .33 letter grade
1 day late	-1 letter grade
within 1 week of due date	-1.5 letter grades
within 2 weeks of due date	-2 letter grades
more than 2 weeks late but by the last day of regular class	depends on quality, but in the F range

Late (but by the last day of class) is better than never; some credit can be awarded even if you are in the F range.

5.) Turnitin, a **plagiarism** detection service, will be used for this class for the field visit report paper. *Students who do not submit their papers to Turnitin will not receive credit for the paper.* It is the students' responsibility to understand what counts as plagiarism and methods for properly crediting sources of information. See the English department's webpage on the correct use of borrowed information:

<http://www.winthrop.edu/english/plagiarism.htm>. Significant plagiarism (whether intentional or not) will result in an F on the paper and a report filed with the Dean of Students. If the case is a second offense (even if an earlier offense was from another class), it may result in an F in the course or other sanctions. Duplicate submissions (turning in the same or a very similar paper for two assignments in two different classes) is permissible only with the approval of both instructors in advance. Otherwise, a duplicate submission will be treated as a case of academic dishonesty.

Academic Support Services: Winthrop's **Academic Success Center** is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success. Also, the **Writing Center**, located in 242 Bancroft Hall, provides a free writing, consulting service. The Writing Center's purpose is to help writers at all levels learn more about their writing through tutoring sessions. See <http://www2.winthrop.edu/wcenter/> or call 803-323-2138 for an appointment.

Tentative Schedule

Unless noted otherwise, unit readings should be done at your own pace during the unit.

Mon., Jan. 7	introduction to the course, expectations, and policies; a survey for use with final unit
	JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY UNIT
	<p>unit readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Living Religions</i>: Judaism and Christianity chapters. You are responsible for the Christianity chapter reading, too, although class time will concentrate on Judaism. In the Judaism chapter, the following sections may be skipped: Kabbalah and Hasidism (pp. 262-4), Passover Innovations (p. 285), Jewish Feminism (pp. 291-3). In the Christianity chapter, the following sections may be skipped: Early Monasticism (pp. 325), Intellectual Revival and Monasticism (pp. 330-331), Medieval Monasticism (pp. 331-4), Russian Orthodox Kenoticism (p. 333), The Russian Orthodox Church (pp. 344-5), Distinctive Features of Orthodox Spirituality (pp. 345-346), Contemplative Prayer (pp. 355-7), Feminist Theology (pp. 373-5), Creation-Centered Christianity (p. 375). 2) Excerpts from primary texts of Judaism on course reserves through Dacus Library. (From Winthrop's main webpage, go to the library's site, click on "course reserves" and search by professor or class for the online readings.)
Wed., Jan. 9	first Judaism presentation
Mon., Jan. 14	second Judaism presentation
Wed., Jan. 16	<i>Promises</i> documentary about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict
Mon., Jan. 21	MLK, Jr. holiday—no class
Wed., Jan. 23	finish and discuss <i>Promises</i> documentary (Reminder: you are responsible for reading both the Judaism and Christianity chapters, although class time will concentrate on Judaism.)
Mon., Jan. 28	third Judaism presentation; test study guide posted to Blackboard
Wed., Jan. 30	review day
Mon., Feb. 4	****test on Judaism and Christianity****
	ISLAM UNIT
	<p>unit readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Living Religions</i>: Islam chapter. 2) Excerpts from primary texts of Islam on course reserves through Dacus Library. 3) Excerpts from Leila Ahmed's <i>Women and Gender in Islam</i> also on course reserves (read this one by the day we view the film <i>Me & the Mosque</i>).
Wed., Feb. 6	first Islam presentation
Mon., Feb. 11	No class in order to encourage attendance at the "Education Under Fire" global cultural event about the Baha'i faith and conditions in Iran. 7 pm, Owens G01
Wed., Feb. 13	second Islam presentation
Mon., Feb. 18	Film <i>Me & the Mosque</i> ; course reserve reading consisting of excerpts from Leila Ahmed's <i>Women and Gender in Islam</i> to be completed for this class
Wed., Feb. 20	third Islam presentation
Mon., Feb. 25	time permitting, <i>Inside Mecca</i> film on the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca
	HINDUISM UNIT
	<p>unit readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Living Religions</i>, Hinduism chapter. 2) Excerpts of primary texts of Hinduism on course reserves through Dacus Library.
Wed., Feb. 27	Hinduism presentation
Mon., March 4	yoga activity day —meet in Wofford basement community center room, dress appropriately, bring a yoga mat if you have one. Last names beginning A-Mi come today; others have free day.

Wed., March 6	Course withdrawal deadline. yoga activity day —meet in Wofford basement community center room, dress appropriately, bring a yoga mat if you have one. Last names beginning Mo-Z come today; others have free day.
Friday, March 8	test study guide posted to Blackboard
Mon., March 11-15	SPRING BREAK
Mon., March 18	Hinduism presentation
Wed., March 20	*****test on Islam and Hinduism*****

	BUDDHISM UNIT
	Buddhism unit readings (finish by April 5 in order to begin last unit's reading): 1) <i>Living Religions</i> : Buddhism chapter. 2) Excerpts of primary texts of Buddhism on course reserves through Dacus Library.
Mon., March 25	first Buddhism presentation (remember that the fieldvisit is due April 10 th)
Wed., March 27	second Buddhism presentation (remember to finish Buddhism unit readings by April 5)
Mon., April 1	meditation activity day -- meet in Wofford basement community center room, dress in something that allows you to sit cross-legged on the floor, bring a yoga mat if you have one. Last names A-Mi come today. Others free.
Wed., April 3	meditation activity day – meet in Wofford basement community center room, dress in something that allows you to sit cross-legged on the floor, bring a yoga mat if you have one. Last names Mo-Z come today. Others free.
Mon., April 8	Class: Third Buddhism presentation <u>Reading to be done by this date:</u> To save students' time, a summary of the first 16 pages will be provided on Blackboard. Students should then start <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> at section 1.4 on p.16 and continue reading through Chapter 2.4 (so, read summary + pp. 16-44).
Wed., April 10 Due date	Class: <i>Compassion in Exile</i> film about the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism's struggle <u>Reading to be done by this date:</u> <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> , sections 2.5-3.2 (pp. 45-75) Fieldvisit report due by class time. Hard copy to me or under my office door (Kinard 324) and identical electronic version to Turnitin.com by class time.
	IMPLICATIONS OF RELIGIOUS PLURALITY UNIT
Mon., April 15	Class: discussion of the implications of religious plurality, revisit survey from first week of class. Course evaluations. <u>Reading done by this date:</u> <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> , 3.3-end of Chapter 3 (pp. 75-98)
Wed., April 17	Reading quiz on <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> through Chapter 4 <u>Reading done by this date:</u> <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> , Chapter 4 (pp. 99-136) Class: continue discussion of the implications of religious plurality
Friday, April 19	exam study guide posted to Blackboard
Mon., April 22 Any late work must be in by class time.	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Problems of Religious Diversity</i> , Chapter 5 (pp. 138-169) Class: finish discussion of the implications of religious plurality Late work will not be accepted after 3:15 today (last day of class).
Mon., April 29 at 3 pm	final exam in regular classroom, 3:00 pm