

PHIL 200: Judeo-Christian Tradition

WNC, Carson-Douglas-Fallon-Fernley-Yerington – SPRING 2009
Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-10:45 pm

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: None

Transferability: Transfer to institutions within UCCSN as **PHIL 200**.

Fulfills: Humanities requirement for Transfer & General Education Degrees. This course is designed to allow students to demonstrate appropriate:

1. College-level writing skills;
2. College-level reading skills;
3. Critical-thinking skills; and
4. Appreciation for ethics and cultural traditions.

Instructor: Susan Priest

Office: Cedar 311

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:15-2:15 PM; Wednesday 4:00 – 5:00 PM, and Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

****NOTE – Office Hours may change during the semester, but I will announce them in class and update my website if this happens.**

MY Website: www.susanpriest.com Check it out and tell me what you think! Class syllabi and other helpful hints are located on the website.

THIS IS AN ENHANCED CLASS: Login to BLACKBOARD(Online learning platform) -- <http://webcampus.wnc.edu/webct/entryPageInsdowebct> . If you have never taken an online or an enhanced class, first read directions for logging in to BLACKBOARD at <http://www.wnc.edu/online/login.php> . If you need help, please check the frequently asked questions and then contact the Reference Librarians at (775-445-3227.) They will help you. Make sure to let me know if you have not been able to access Blackboard/WebCT by Week 2 of the semester.

Take advantage of your instructor's Office Hours ☺!

I) Course Description:

Studies the major religious philosophic beliefs found in the Old and New Testaments along with the way these concepts were modified in post-biblical cosmology.

II) Course Objectives – The Successful Student will:

- A) identify the major historical events and cultures that shaped the formation of Hebrew and Christian Scriptures;
- B) examine the moral, theological and philosophical themes of Judaism and Christianity;
- C) develop **critical thinking** skills, in oral and written communication; and
- D) research and critically evaluate one significant topic in Judeo-Christian history or scriptures.

III) Method of Instruction:

Class may involve a combination of activities including: lecture, class discussion, writing assignments and videos.

IV) Course Requirements – Student Responsibility:

A) Preparation, Attendance & Participation (50 Points)

Preparation: It is important to be at every class, and be prepared to participate in class discussion. Being prepared includes **completing 100% of reading assignments** and being ready to discuss them. Use the Calendar of Assignments and Study Guide to prepare for class discussions. For a study of philosophy and religion, being prepared also includes being open to new ideas.

Attendance & Participation:

- “90 % of success is showing up.” Woody Allen
- Without you class is not the same. Plan to attend every session.
- You will receive **two points** for every class you attend and in which you participate (except for Final Exam Day.)
- If you are late to class, leave early or do not participate you will receive a fraction of those **two points**.
- The instructor may drop any student when she feels the student has had an excessive number of unexcused absences. For this course, unexcused absences in excess of 3 classes may be considered excessive. If you have an emergency, please contact the instructor.

A Word on Class Discussions: This class will be exploring the historical roots and formation of The Bible. Some discussions may challenge deeply held beliefs. Our goal will be to create a civil forum for discussing these topics and engage our critical thinking skills.

B) Tests (150 Points)

Three tests (**worth 75 points each**) will be given throughout the term covering material from the required reading, lectures and discussions. Use the Study Guide and hints from the Calendar of Assignments (p. 6-9) to prepare for these Tests. **The Lowest Grade will be dropped. (No make-up tests will be given. If you miss a test day, you will receive a zero.)**

C) Homework, Discussions & Writing Assignments (150 Points)

Homework – Throughout of the semester there will be a few brief assignments for which you will receive points. Detailed information about the assignments are located on BLACKBOARD (CE6). All homework must be submitted electronically. See Calendar of Assignments (p. 6-9) for Due Dates:

- ❑ **LOGIN to BLACKBOARD/CE6** – To familiarize yourself with the enhanced portion of this course and to make sure you are familiar with the assignments before “crunch” time, please login to BLACKBOARD and complete the following “brief” assignments. Due: beginning of Week 2, 1/27/09. (20 points Total)
 - ❑ **Post an Introductory Bio about yourself for the class:** Tell the class something about yourself and what you are interested in learning about PHIL 200:Judeo-Christian Traditions. Write in complete sentences. **(10 points)**
 - ❑ **Complete “SAMPLE” Turnitin Assignment:** All writing assignments in this course will be submitted electronically via BLACKBOARD (CE6.) Your papers will be processed through the turnitin (anti-plagiarism) website and software. Submit this “sample” assignment to become familiar with the process. **(10 points)**
- ❑ **Discussion Post #1** – Write a thoughtful response to Discussion Post #1 about the reading assignments in BLACKBOARD/CE6. Due: end of Week 3 -- 2/6/09. (10 points)
- ❑ **Discussion Post #2** – Write a thoughtful response to Discussion Post #2 about the reading assignments in BLACKBOARD/CE6. Due: end of Week 8 – 3/13/09 (10 points)
- ❑ **Discussion Post #3** – Write a thoughtful response to Discussion Post #2 about the reading assignments in BLACKBOARD/CE6. Due: end of Week 13, 4/24/09. (10 points)

Writing Assignments – You will be assigned two short papers over the semester. These short papers (3-6 pages) are designed to give each student an opportunity to reflect critically on the religious and philosophical themes of the course. You will need to login to BLACKBOARD (CE6) in order to see the paper topics. (NOTE: if you want to suggest your own topic please consult with the instructor before the due date.) **50 points (max) are given for each writing assignment.** I will deduct 5 points each class that a paper is late. If you turn something in on time, you will be able to re-write your paper and improve your score.

- ❑ **Writing Assignment #1** – Due end of Week 4, 2/13/09.
- ❑ **Writing Assignment #2** – Due beginning of Week 10, 3/31/09.

ALL Writing Assignments will be evaluated on the following:

Composition (15 Points)

- The writing assignments should be typed (double-spaced) and 3-6 pages in length.
- Please include your name, PHIL 200 – Carson, Douglas, Fallon, Fernley, or Yerington, and the date in the upper left hand corner of the paper.
- **Citing References:** Every time you include a direct quote or refer to an idea mentioned in any book, you need to include a reference note. (e.g., If you are referring to ideas on the nature of God that you read about in Armstrong (on page 6) your note should look like this: (Armstrong 6))¹ For this class, as we are using several sources you should include a works cited page.
- Proper punctuation, grammar and spelling. (*Don't just rely on the computer spell checker, proof read your assignment before you turn it in.*)
- Clear writing style.²

A Word on Plagiarism: When you properly cite references you avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense in writing papers and all academic coursework.

“Plagiarism = taking any idea or writing that is not your own and including it in your paper without citing your source. For example, if you go to a website and take information or sentences from that website and do not cite that website in your paper, you are plagiarizing...”³ Plagiarizing = **F**.

Content (35 points) ask yourself these questions before you turn in the assignment:

- Have you clearly stated a **thesis** on a philosophical, theological, literary, artistic or historical aspect of the religion in question?
- Have you addressed the assigned essay topic?
- Have you fully explored the nuances of the sacred texts (if you used any)?
- Have you accurately represented the religious tradition and sources?
- Is your brief essay a collection of random thoughts or a coherent series of interrelated thoughts? (*You are striving for*

¹ You may need to outside research and I want you to get in the habit of properly documenting ideas, which is a part of all scholarly writing. For philosophy courses you should be using MLA format -- Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association, 2003. You may also consult:

<http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citmla.htm> and http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html#Works-Cited .

² If you need some concrete suggestions for how to improve your writing style I recommend looking at William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White's classic book The Elements of Style. 4th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

³ Introduction to Philosophy Syllabus. David Yount, Ph.D., Mesa Community College.

<<http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~yount/text/101sylbs.html>>

the second.)

HOW YOUR WRITING WILL BE EVALUATED: The following are some general guidelines that I will be following, when I grade your written work, submitted online in BLACKBOARD(CE6):

- All writing (including official discussion posts, writing assignments and final projects) will follow standard practices of English Grammar. For full credit you will write in complete sentences. Please, NO “text message” symbols or shortcuts will be accepted.
- When you consult references or cite material in your papers you must use MLA (Modern Language Association) format to cite your sources. **(Otherwise you will be plagiarizing.)**

I will use the **CARS** method of evaluating the form and content of your writing. Are you **C**lear, **A**ccurate, **R**elevant and have you used **S**ufficient support?

D) Term Project (75 Points)

Choose one of the following projects. All term projects are **due May 8, 2009**. You **may** do a presentation on May 5 or 7th, for extra-points. No term project will be accepted after 5 pm Monday May 11th. (Note: You may lose points for projects turned in after May 8th.) **Follow writing guidelines. All Term-Projects will be submitted through BLACKBOARD(CE6).**

1. Read a book on some of the new discoveries in Biblical Archeology and/ or hot topics in Judeo Christian Traditions (e.g., The Battle For God: A History of Fundamentalism by Karen Armstrong; Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas by Elaine Pagels). Write a book review **(6-8 pages)** exploring the significant themes and arguments of the book.
2. Write a historical-critical analysis of some passage of Hebrew or Christian scripture **(7-10 pages)**. *There will be more helpful hints coming if you choose this option.*
3. Design your own project **(7-10 pages)** (e.g., research paper of new religious movement or aspect of one of the religions that we have covered.) Please plan to consult the instructor before you hand in your term project if you desire to design your own.

E) Final Exam (75 Points)

A Final Exam will be given on **May 14th**. It will probably have 2 parts: 1) An objective section much like the Tests covering the significant history of Judeo-Christian traditions and 2) An essay section. Essay topics may be given out ahead of time. The form and content of the Final Exam may change. **No Make-up exams will be given. The final exam is a course requirement.** (Translation: you must take the Final Exam to pass the course.) **Mark your calendars now.**

VI) Assignments for Instructor – My commitment to you:

I will come to class on time.

- I will give this class 100% of my attention while we are meeting.
- I will prepare and deliver class lectures.
- I will facilitate class discussions and seek to create a respectful forum to discuss philosophy and religion.
- I will grade writing assignments and tests promptly.** Papers will include sufficient comments to assist students in re-writing. (*Exception: I may not grade late work promptly.*)
- I will make myself available for your class related questions and concerns by appointment, as needed.
- I will assign final grades to each student using the following criteria:

VII) Grades:

The final grade will be determined by the course requirements:

➤ Class attendance & participation (in class assignments)	50 points
➤ Tests (2 out of 3)	150 points
➤ Homework, Discussion & Writing Assignments (2)	150 points
➤ Term Project	75 points
➤ Final Exam	<u>75 points</u>
	500 points

Points Earned	Grade Received
465 - 500 points	A
450 – 464 points	A-
435 - 449 points	B+
415 – 434 points	B
400 – 414 points	B-
385 – 399 points	C+
365 – 384 points	C
350 – 364 points	C-
335 – 349 points	D+
315 – 334 points	D
300 – 314 points	D-
Below 300 points	F

NOTE: If you wish to withdraw from the course, rather than receive the grade that you have earned, it is your responsibility to withdraw. If you have earned below 300 points, you receive a grade of F not W for this class. If you run into problems, ask for help (445-3318). MAY 8TH is the last day to drop a full-term class with a "W."

VIII) Required Reading:

Armstrong, Karen. A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993. **(ARMSTRONG)**

Peterson, R. Dean. A Concise History of Christianity, 3rd Edition. Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007. **(PETERSON)**

The Bible (*I recommend the New Revised Standard Version or The New Jerusalem Bible because they are modern language editions that have incorporated*

the latest biblical archeological findings (like the Dead Sea Scrolls) into their translations. These translations also have consulted with many different Christian and Jewish scholars in the process of translation.)

HANDOUTS – Given out in class and/or found on electronic reserve on BLACKBOARD(CE6)

IX) Calendar of Assignments:

WK	Date	Topic	Reading (To be done before class session listed below)	Assignments Due
1	1/20/09	SYLLABUS. <i>Themes of Course</i> <i>Is this class relevant?</i> <i>Why use the Bible?</i>	SYLLABUS	
	1/22/09	Ancient Mesopotamian Origins – Hammurabi's Code 3500-1800 B.C.E.	Armstrong: Introduction (pages xvii-xxiii) and Begin to read Chapter 1 The Bible: Table of Contents	
2	1/27/09	<i>In the Beginning ...</i> Creation Stories: Enuma Elish & Genesis	Armstrong: Chapter 1 "In the Beginning" (pages 3-39) Handout: "The Ancient Near East: The Environment That Produced the Bible"	DUE: BLACKBOARD (CE6) Assignments – <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Post <input type="checkbox"/> "Sample" Turnitin Assignment.
	1/29/09	Creation Stories Cont. and Hebrew Scriptures	The Bible: Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 Peterson: Chapter 1 "Introduction" (pages 1-9)	
3	2/3/09	Abraham – Covenant & Sacrifice circa 1800 B.C.E.	The Bible: Genesis 12:1-22:19	
	2/5/09	Moses & the Covenants circa 1250 B.C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 1 "Introduction" (pages 10-16) The Bible: Exodus 19:1-20:21; Deuteronomy 5	DUE: Discussion Post #1 (BLACKBOARD/CE6)
4	2/10/09	Moses to David – Covenant expanded 1250-950 B.C.E.	The Bible: 2 Samuel 7:11-16	
	2/12/09	The History of the Divided Kingdom & Hebrew Prophets 922-587 B.C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 2 "One God" (pages 40-78)	DUE: Writing Assignment #1 (BLACKBOARD/CE6)
5	2/17/09	Catch Up & Review Day		
	2/19/09			Test #1: On all reading assignments, lectures and discussions from 1/20/08 – 2/17/09.
6	2/24/08	Babylonian Exile &	Handouts (Electronic	

		Persian Influences 587 –539 B.C.E.	Reserve)	
	2/26/08	Zoroastrianism and Eschatology	Handouts (Electronic Reserve)	
7	3/3/09	Alexander the Great, Greek Influences and The Septuagint 330-64 B.C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 1 "Introduction" (pages 16-17)	
	3/5/09	Roman Rule – Factions within Judaism 63 B.C.E. – 70 C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 1 "Introduction" (pages 17-29) Handouts (Electronic Reserve)	
8	3/10/09	Search for the Historical Jesus 4 B.C.E. – 29 C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 2 "Beginnings" (pages 31-53)	
	3/12/09	The Question of the Other Gospels and other Early Christian Literature 50 – 100 C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 3 "A Light to the Gentiles" (pages 79-106)	DUE: Discussion Post #2 (BLACKBOARD/CE6)
	3/16/09-3/22/09	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASSES	
9	3/24/09	Catch Up and Review Day		
	3/26/09			Test #2: On all reading assignments, lectures and discussions from 2/24/09 – 3/24/09.
10	3/31/09	Rabbinic Judaism 70 – 1008 C.E.	Handouts (Electronic Reserve)	DUE: Writing Assignment #2 (BLACKBOARD/CE6)
	4/2/09	Constantine & The shift in the Christian movement 30 – 325 C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 3 "Faith of the Fathers" (pages 55-75)	
11	4/7/09	Controversies & Councils 100-500 C.E.	Peterson: Chapter 4 "Faith of the Fathers" (pages 77-99)	
	4/9/09	Controversies & Councils Cont. & Trinity 100-500 C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 4 "Trinity: The Christian God" (pages 107-131)	
12	4/14/09	Rise of Islam 600-800 C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 5 "The God of Islam" (pages 132-169) Peterson: (pages 101-110)	
	4/16/09	Early Philosophical	Peterson: Chapter 6 "The	

		Perspectives 1000-1500 C.E.	Church in the High Middle Ages" (pages 138-165)	
13	4/21/09	Early Philosophical Perspectives 1000-1500 C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 6 "The God of the Philosophers" (pages 170-209)	
	4/23/09	Mysticism 1000-1500 C.E.	Armstrong: Chapter 7 "The God of the Mystics" (pages 209-257)	DUE: Discussion Post #3 (BLACKBOARD/CE6)
14	4/28/09	Mysticism Cont. and Other Issues of the Middle Ages 1000-1500 C.E. Wrap-Up & Review	Peterson: Chapter 7 "The Church in the High Middle Ages" (pages 167-185)	
	4/30/09			Test #3: On all reading assignments, lectures and discussions from 3/31/09 – 4/28/09.
15	5/5/09	Reform Movements 1500-1600 C.E. Presentations	READING ASSIGNMENT -- TBA	
	5/7/09	Presentations - Review		DUE: Term Projects (BLACKBOARD/CE6) May 8 th last day to officially withdraw from courses.
16	5/12/09	To Be Announced		
	5/14/09	FINAL EXAM --		

X) Final Notes:

- A) **CAVEAT FROM INSTRUCTOR ON COURSE CONTENT:** As the course progresses there may be a need to modify topics, offer additional readings and handouts, assign additional assignments, and/or change the calendar of assignments to meet course objectives.
- B) **DISABILITY STATEMENT:** WNCN supports providing equal access for students with disabilities. Susan Trist (DSS Coordinator) is available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that students may require. Please either meet with me or contact Susan Trist (445-3275) at your earliest convenience.
- C) **REVIEW OF CLASSROOM POLICIES:**
- **RESPECT:** This says it all about my expectations of classroom behavior. See WNCN's "Principles of Community" (p.3, 2006-2007 Catalog) for more details. Also make sure to read WNCN's "Student Code of Conduct" to know your rights and responsibilities.
 - **ATTENDANCE:** Please contact instructor with questions or concerns related to attendance. If you must be absent due to illness or unforeseen emergency you may ask instructor what in-class writing assignments you missed to make up points. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed.

- **LATE WORK:** I accept late writing assignments, but you will lose 5 points per day. However, writing assignments turned in late may not be re-written for an improved grade. Late Final Essay Exams may not be accepted.
- **MAKE-UP TESTS:** There are no make-up Tests or Final Exam. I drop the lowest test grade. Please contact the instructor with questions or concerns related to this policy.
- **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Honesty is the best policy. Learn to avoid plagiarism in writing assignments (see page 4 of syllabus). Cheating on tests will be considered an automatic F for that test.
- **CELL PHONES:** Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices in class. NO TEXTING in class. .