

PHIL 210: World Religions Fall 2011

WNC, Wednesday 7:00-9:45 pm (Cedar 314)

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: None

Transferability: Transfer to institutions within UCCSN as PHIL 210.

Fulfills: Humanities requirement for Transfer & General Education Degrees. **This course links to the following "General Education Student Learning Outcomes"** in the 2011-2012 WNC catalog http://www.wnc.edu/academics/general_education/ :

Students who complete a degree at WNC are expected to demonstrate they:

- have college-level skills in reading, writing, and oral communication.
- have problem solving, creative, and critical thinking skills.
- understand the importance of cultural traditions, diversity, and ethics in the modern world.

Instructor: Susan Priest

Email: spriest@wncc.edu

Office: Cedar 311

Phone: 775-445-3318

Office Hours (8/29/11-12/16/11): Mondays and Wednesdays 4:00-5:15 PM; Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:15 PM. *I am also available at other times, by appointment.*

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

Enhanced CLASS: Login to WNC Online: E Learning: If you have never done this before read first time directions here: <http://www.wnc.edu/wnconline/login.php> . IF you have problems with your log in, contact the Reference Librarians at (775-445-3227.) They will help you. Please, also let me know if you are experiencing difficulty.

Take advantage of your instructor's Office Hours ☺!

I) Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce you to the major religions of the world – Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Using a variety of methodological approaches (historical, anthropological and experiential) we will attempt to flesh out what defines **The Sacred** in the world's religions.

At the end of the course, you will have increased your awareness of the major religions – their myth, symbol, ritual, doctrine, moral codes, architecture and artistic expression. You will recognize the differences among the religious traditions. You will better understand the religious issues and conflicts in the modern world.

II) Course Objectives:

- A) To **increase awareness** and **appreciation** of the world's religions by seeking to understand how they name **The Sacred**.
- B) To learn the **basic moral tenants, doctrines** and **religious practices** of the world's major religions.
- C) To identify differences in **myth, ritual, symbol, architecture and artistic expression** among the world's religions.
- D) To improve **critical thinking skills** in oral and written communication.

III) **Methods of Instruction:**

Class may involve a combination of activities including: lecture, class discussion, music appreciation, viewing films and video/ritual analysis.

IV) **Course Requirements ~ Student Responsibilities:**

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 world religions, 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 **four 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 **four 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 2 classes may be considered excessive. If you have an emergency, please contact the instructor.

A word on participation and discussion in World Religion: It is important to remember that this course is not designed to "convert" anyone. As we enter into conversations about deeply held beliefs and issues of faith it will be helpful to locate our conversation within the academic field of philosophy. All world religions are philosophies. (Note: Philosophy comes from two Greek words which roughly translate = to love wisdom.) Our goal will be to create a respectful forum for discussing and exploring the wisdom of the world's religions.

B) **Tests (150 Points)**

There will be 3 Tests throughout the semester on religious terminology (*use World Religions Study Guide - Terminology List handout*) and reading assignments (*refer to page 6-7 of this syllabus – IX Calendar of Assignments.*) These Tests are worth 75 points each and may include short answer definitions, multiple choice questions and/or brief essays. **No make-up Tests will be given.** I will drop the lowest Test grade.

C) Homework, Activities & Writing Assignments (200 Points)

Activities & Homework – Throughout of the semester there will be a few brief assignments for which you will receive points. **All assignments will be graded with a modified CARS-L rubric** (see page 4.) See Calendar of Assignments (p.6-7) for Due Dates:

- ❑ **Pre- & Post-Test “Assessment” in World Religions** – This 2-part assessment will be given in class Week 1 and Week 15. You will earn 15 points for completing these assessments thoughtfully and completely. **(30 points)**
- ❑ **Introductory Writing Assignment – Submitted to “TURN-IT-IN” within WNC Online.** All writing assignments will be submitted electronically, to turnitin, within WNC Online. There is a writing prompt ready for you right now! Writing assignment is Due: by the end of Week 2, 9/9/11. This assignment will help you familiarize yourself with the paper submission process, and give you practice writing philosophically. **(35 points)**
- ❑ **Prepare Discussion Questions for Class.** The first week of class you will sign up for a particular week, when you will prepare ahead of time to bring discussion questions to class. For the religion being covered that week you will search for recent news articles and relevant topics to bring to class and prepare 3 – 5 thoughtful discussion questions for class to discuss. There will be more than one person signed up for that week. Bring the questions typed to class that evening. **(35 points)**

Writing Assignments – Two short papers (4-6 pages) are designed to give each student an opportunity to reflect critically on religious texts and themes from different faith traditions. Through your encounters with these sacred stories and poems you will gain a deeper understanding of the religions of the world. Use **primary source material**¹ to explore the essay topics. You will find suggested topics on WNC Online. (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 week that a paper is late. After two weeks, you will not be able to submit late writing assignments. **There are no re-writes.**

- ❑ **Writing Assignment 1 – Due Week 6 – By October 7, 2011.**
- ❑ **Writing Assignment 2 – Due Week 11 – By November 11, 2011.**

**ALL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS WE BE EVALUATED ON THE FOLLOWING:
CARS-L (50 Points) RUBRIC**

¹ By primary source material, I mean actual sacred texts or collections of prayers, poems, rituals and stories from different religious traditions. The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions, Ed. By Philip Novak is a compilation of source material.

CLARITY (10 points)	<u>Writing should be clear</u> ² . Remember to use proper punctuation, spelling and grammar. (Don't just rely on the computer spell checker, proof read your assignment before you turn it in.)
ACCURACY (10 points)	<u>Writing should be accurate</u> . This includes both proper citation format, avoiding plagiarism, and accurately representing the religious tradition. Have you accurately represented the religious tradition? (While you may believe your comments are simply a matter of opinion, it is possible to misread and misrepresent a sacred text.)
RELEVANCY (10 points)	<u>Writing should be relevant</u> . Have you addressed the assigned topics or wandered off topic? Have you focused on important philosophical, theological, literary, artistic or historical aspect of the religion in question or focused on trivial topics?
SUFFICIENCY (10 points)	<u>Writing should be sufficient</u> . Your writing will be deemed insufficient if you have written less than 3 or more than 6 double-spaced pages. Have you explored the nuances of the sacred texts identified in the writing prompt?
LOGIC (10 points)	<u>Writing should be logical</u> and flow in composition and content. Is your brief essay a collection of random thoughts or a coherent series of interrelated thoughts? (You are striving for the second.)

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...This also includes using the textbook, quoting it, or describing a philosopher's view not your own without citing the page from which you took the information.”³ **Plagiarizing = F (0). ANY Paper that has been plagiarized will receive an automatic 0. Repeated instances of plagiarism may result in an automatic failure of PHIL 210 for the semester. Further disciplinary actions may follow as listed in the WNC Policy on Academic Integrity. (SEE WNC POLICY 3-4-5: <http://www.wnc.edu/policymanual/3-4-5.php>)**

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/101syllbs.html>>

D) Term Project (75 points)

Choose one of the following projects. All term projects are **due by Friday December 9, 2011**. You may receive extra points for presenting your project to class on December 7. No term project will be accepted after Wednesday December 14th. (Note: You may lose points for projects turned in after December 9th.)

1. Attend a church/temple service of a religion different from the one in which you were raised. Write a response paper (**6-7 pages**) that includes details of the service that you attended (a funeral is not generally representative), a copy of the bulletin, description of the architecture, artistic expression that you experienced, and some analysis of the service you attended. The more detail you include the better.
2. Create on paper (**8-10 pages**) a new religion. Include details such as – Doctrines, Moral Tenants, Beliefs, Ritual, Sacred Places, Drawings of Art & Architecture, Sacred Literature, etc. The more details you include the better.
3. Design your own project (**8-10 pages**) (e.g., either a book review of current religious findings or a research paper on a new religious movement or an 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 **December 14th in-class**. It will have 2 parts: 1) An objective section much like the tests and it will cover material from all readings, lectures, discussions, and films and 2) An essay section. Essay topics may be given out ahead of time *and may be prepared ahead of time*. NOTE: I may change the form of the Final Exam. I also, usually give students the opportunity to take Part I of the Final Exam as a "oral" exam. **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 with this date.**

V)

Assignments for Instructor ~ Susan Priest:

- 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, bringing in relevant additional sources.
- I will facilitate class discussions and seek to create a respectful forum at all times.
- **I will grade writing assignments and tests promptly.** (Exception: I may not turn late papers back 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:

VI)

GRADES:

The final grade will be determined by the course requirements:

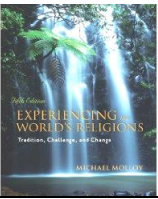
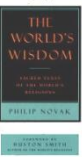
- **Class attendance & participation** **50 points**
- **Tests (2 out of 3)** **150 points**

➤ Homework & Writing Assignments	200 points
➤ Term Project --	75 points
➤ Final Exam –	<u>75 points</u>
	550 points

Points Earned	Grade Received
512 - 550 points	A
495 – 511 points	A-
479 - 494 points	B+
457 – 478 points	B
440 – 456 points	B-
424 – 439 points	C+
400 – 423 points	C
385– 399 points	C-
369 – 384 points	D+
330 – 368 points	D
Below 330 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. I do not give “W”’s as a final grade. If you run into problems, ask for help (445-3318). December 9th is the last day to drop a full-term class with a “W.”

VII) Reading:

	Required TEXT (TX): <i>Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge & Change, 5th Edition.</i> Michael Molloy. Boston: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2010. (NOTE: You may choose to buy an earlier edition of this text, but the page numbers listed on this syllabus may be different.)
	Recommended READER (RD): <i>The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions.</i> Michael Novak. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1994. [NOTE: This reader is used for writing assignments]

VIII) Calendar of Assignments:

All reading assignments (except for the first day of class) are to be completed before class.

WK	Date	Topic	Reading (To be completed BEFORE class.)	Graded Assignments, Tests & Due Dates.
1	8/31/11	SYLLABUS – Introduction to World Religion and the Study of Religion	SYLLABUS The Study of Religion	In-Class Pre-Test (15 points)
2	9/7/11	The Study of Religion – Hinduism	TX: Chapter 1 (p. 2-33) & Chapter 3 “Hinduism” (p. 74-123)	<input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Writing Assignment Due end of

			RD: Selections from <i>The Bhagavad-Gita</i> (p. 24-40)	Week 2 (35 points)
3	9/14/11	Hinduism – Buddhism	TX: Chapter 4 “Buddhism” (p. 124-187)	
4	9/21/11	Buddhism Wrap-Up	RD: Selections from the life of Buddha and from the <i>Dhammapada</i> (p.49-65; 103-109)	Test #1 (end of class) 75 points
5	9/28/11	Jainism & Sikhism	TX: Chapter 5 “Jainism & Sikhism” (p. 188-211)	
6	10/5/11	Chinese Religions	TX: Chapter 6 “Chinese Religions” (p. 212-258) RD: Selections from <i>The Great Learning</i> and from <i>The Tao Te Ching</i> (p.133-161)	Writing Assignment #1 DUE end of Week 6 – 10/7/11 (50 points)
7	10/12/11	Chinese Religions Continued - Shinto	TX: Chapter 7 “Shinto” (p. 262-287)	
8	10/19/11	Shinto – Eastern Religions Wrap-UP— Transition to Western Religions		Test #2 (end of class) 75 points
9	10/26/11	Judaism	TX: Chapter 8 “Judaism” (p. 288-341) RD: Chapter 5 (p.175-224)	
10	11/2/11	Christianity	TX: Chapter 9 “Christianity” (p. 342-421) RD: Selections from creeds & other Christian writings outside the canonical Bible (p.262-279)	
11	11/9/11	Islam	TX: Chapter 10 “Islam” (p. 422-487) RD: Selections from the Qur’an (p.282-310)	Writing Assignment #2 DUE by end of Week 11 – 11/11/11 (50 points)
12	11/16/11	New Religious Movements	TX: Chapter 11 “Alternative Paths” (p. 488-525)	
13	11/23/11	No Class – Instructional Holiday: Thanksgiving		
14	11/30/11	Catch-up on Western Traditions		Test #3 (end of class) 75 points
15	12/7/11	Post-Test Assessment Wrap Up, Review & Presentations		In-class Post-Test (15 points) Term Projects Due Week 15. (75 points) Friday December 9, 2011 is the last day to withdraw from class with a “W.”
16	12/14/11	FINAL EXAM 7:00 PM		FINAL EXAM is a course requirement. (75 points)

IX 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:** WNC 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:**
- **ATTENDANCE:** Please contact instructor with questions or concerns related to attendance. If you must be absent due to illness or unforeseen emergency you may login to WNC Online to see lecture notes. You will still miss participation points for missing class. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed.
 - **LATE WORK:** I accept late writing assignments, but you will lose 5 points per week. In addition, you will not be able to submit a paper more than 2 weeks late. (Exception: Final Project Must be received at the latest by December 14th.) **There are no re-writes.** Late Final Essay - Part II of 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 (=0) for that test. **Repeated instances of cheating on tests/or in writing assignments may result in failure of class. ALL RULES of WNC POLICY on ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (3-4-5) APPLY IN THIS CLASS.**
 - **CELL PHONES & Other Electronic Devices:** Must be OFF and put away during class. **NO TEXTING!** We will have a break mid-way through class...your people can wait.
 - **YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK FOR HELP:** Don't forget that IF you have any questions on any aspect of the course, please do not hesitate to contact me. You may always send me an email spriest@wnc.edu OR call me at 445-3318.