

WORLD RELIGIONS

Carl Albert State College

Course Number and Section: RLED 2113 2147

Semester: Fall 2012; TR 1:00-2:15

Contact Information

Instructor: Nathan Billy

Phone: 918/ 647-1453

E-mail: nbilly@carlalbert.edu

Note: All e-mail communications should be restricted to CASC e-mail accounts.

Campus Box: 480

Office: OC 1108

Office Hours: Posted on office window; or, by appointment

Course Description

What This Course IS:

Introduction to World Religions is a comparative survey of the world's diverse religious worldviews. As we study these religions in historical context, we investigate holy texts, ritual, practice, and various religious perspectives on contemporary issues. The course encompasses major religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—as well as indigenous, minor, and newer religions.

What This Course IS NOT:

“Comparative” refers to objective comparison only. This course does not compare religions in terms of value (i.e. *this* religion is *better* than *that* religion). Students are welcomed to voice personal opinions in an open, academic environment. However, please discern the difference between critical discussion, debate, and investigation and ridicule. Ridicule is not tolerated.

Required Text

The World's Religions: Worldviews and Contemporary Issues. Third Edition. William A. Young. Pearson. ISBN: 9780205675111.

Course Objectives

After completing World Religions, you will

- ❖ have been exposed to a historical overview of diverse, worldwide religious perspectives

- ❖ know relevant terminology, key figures, and movements in the discussion of religion
- ❖ understand various religious approaches to key contemporary issues
- ❖ have analyzed and evaluated select religious texts
- ❖ have observed a religious setting other than your own

Course Content

Though course content is always subject to change due to a number of factors, what follows is a planned outline for the course, including which chapters from the text will be studied within each unit. This course does use the text considerably; however, there will also be material not found in the text.

UNIT ONE : Introduction and Indigenous Religions; Chapters 1 and 2

UNIT TWO : Hinduism and Buddhism; Chapters 3, 4, and 8

UNIT THREE : Jainism and Sikhism; Chapters 5 and 13

UNIT FOUR : Daoism and Confucianism; Chapters 6 and 7

UNIT FIVE: Shinto; Chapter 9

UNIT SIX: Judaism; Chapter 10

UNIT SEVEN: Christianity; Chapter 11

UNIT EIGHT: Islam; Chapter 12

UNIT NINE: New Religious Movements (Christian Science, Wicca, Scientology, Rastafari, Baha'i); Chapter 14

Section III of the text consists of several chapters involving various religious perspectives on contemporary ethical issues. These will be covered at different times as the semester progresses.

Evaluation

There are no exams in this course. Rather, evaluation is based on a student-produced portfolio. As each unit of instruction begins, you will be provided with portfolio instructions for that particular unit. For the portfolio, you should secure a three-ring binder and tab dividers. Alternatively, the portfolio may be submitted electronically.

In addition to the portfolio, you will complete a project called the Encountering Religion Project, in which you observe a setting (or interview someone) from a religious perspective other than your own. Details will be provided a later date in the course.

You will complete a Final Exam that is mandatory. It will be held Tuesday, December 11 from 1:00-2:30. You are responsible for ensuring that you are available to take the exam during that time.

The grading scale for this course is standard.

Blackboard Component

While this course is held entirely on-campus, many assignments will be made available on the course's Blackboard site. Many of these same assignments can also be completed and turned in electronically through the site. It is also possible that one exam will be completed using Blackboard. In addition, you may access your grades and check your progress at any time by logging into the Blackboard section and selecting "My Grades." You may access Blackboard at <http://www.web.carlalbert.edu> or by visiting CASC's main website (www.carlalbert.edu) and following the listed links; use the same log-in credentials as you do for e-mail and enrollment. All students must be able to access this Blackboard component.

Late Work

All assignments are due at the beginning of a given class period. **No late work will be accepted for any reason.**

Any daily quizzes, group work, activities, etc. may not be made up.

Attendance

Your attendance is vital to successfully completing this course and will be factored into the total points possible. Each class period will begin with a brief audio or visual piece pertaining to a particular religion. You will write a brief response concerning what you believe is being communicated in that piece. The points received are not graded subjectively (you will receive all points or no points). There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences,

except in the case of school-sponsored activities, which require confirmation from an appropriate authority.

If you leave class before it is formally dismissed, you will not receive full credit for the day.

Understand that you are responsible for obtaining any notes, handouts or other information when you miss class. Do not expect the instructor to provide this information without asking.

Administrative Withdrawal

The student may be administratively withdrawn under special circumstances only. An AW will not be granted for purposes of non-attendance or excessive absences. If a student stops attending class, then a grade of “F” will be given at the end of the semester. Any student who wishes to withdraw from the class must do so on their own initiative by the appropriate deadline.

Classroom Behavior

All students are expected to exhibit professional behavior in the classroom. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to

- ❖ Any form of cheating or plagiarism. Cheating and/or plagiarism will—at minimum—result in failure on the assignment. It may also result in automatic failure of the course. Academic integrity is of utmost importance; all suspected instances of cheating will be investigated and dealt with appropriately.
- ❖ Talking to classmates while instruction is occurring. Courtesy toward other students and the instructor is expected from you. If you have information to share, share it with the entire class. Private, ongoing conversations should wait until after class is dismissed.
- ❖ Using profane, sexist, and/or discriminatory language. Your freedom of expression—both verbal and written—is highly valued by the instructor. In your quest to exercise that right, please act considerately toward those around you. Potentially offensive content is to be expected in an open, academic atmosphere; abusive language, however, is not tolerated.
- ❖ The use of cell phones in class. You may not—at any time—have your cell phone displayed during class. It is to be out of sight while class is in session. Please get into the habit of turning your cell phone off. You may think that setting it to silent is enough, but interference from incoming calls can be heard over the sound system. Please make sure to notify friends and family that you will be unavailable for contact while class is in session. Do not accept calls during class. If an emergency situation arises, you must contact the instructor for permission to be on call.
- ❖ Using any device to record visual or auditory media. Please be aware that much of what we study is protected by copyright law. Academic fair use allows us to view images and hear recordings during class time only. You are not allowed to capture, store, or

distribute any media that we encounter during class time. This includes media intended for private use only.

- ❖ Preparing to leave before class is dismissed. Please be aware that class is dismissed by the instructor, not by any student's clock or even a clock in the room. You are to remain seated with all appropriate classroom materials displayed until the instructor formally dismisses class. Do not begin putting away materials before the formal dismissal.

Students With Disabilities

Carl Albert State College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should make their request in the following way:

Talk with your instructor after class or during hours about your disability or special needs related to work in class.

AND

Complete the Request for Special Accommodations Form with the ADA Coordinator located in the Student Disability/Student Counseling Services office in the Ollie Center in office OC1203.

Please read the following statement; print your name in the blank, then sign and date below.
This signed form must be completed in order to remain enrolled in the World Religions course.

“I, _____, have read the course syllabus for World Religions
(RLED 2113 2147, Fall 2012). I understand all course policies and procedures and agree to abide
by them for the semester. “

Signature

Date