

**RELS 105 Introduction to World Religions
Fall 2018**

Louise M. Doire, M.Div.
4C Glebe Street, Room 104 **Mailbox: 4 Glebe Street Main Office**
Office Hours: MW 12:00-2:00 and by appointment
Email: doirel@cofc.edu
Phone: 843-953-5939

Course Description: This course is designed to be an introduction to the study of religion and of the world's major religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Our study will include the historical development, sacred text, ritual, concepts of the divine, and soteriology. The methodology will include analysis through historical, literary, comparative and feminist criticisms. Objectives of the course are these: Students will, 1) learn a critical approach to the study of religion, 2) gain a general knowledge of each of the world's major religions, 3) 'cross over' to the cultural worldview of others and, 4) develop greater empathy and appreciation for these.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies the General Education requirements for a course in the Humanities, which address these two additional Student Learning Outcomes: 1) Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted or valued in various expressions of human culture; 2) Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments.

Students will demonstrate successful mastery of the General Education Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 2 by writing Response Paper/Signature Assignment #2.

Required Text:

Understanding the Religions of the World, Will Deming, ed.
Selected readings on OAKS

Course Requirements:

Three Exams (300 points)

Three 2-3 Page Papers (100)

Note: Reflection papers are designated on the syllabus by ** subject and due date.

The signature assignment that will assess the General Education Student Learning Outcomes listed above is included as one of the three 2-3 Page Papers and will be worth 33 points.

Grading:

Each set of 100 points will be worth 25% of the final grade.

Numerical and letter grades will be based upon the following scale:

	A	100-92	A-	91-89	
B+	88-86	B	85-82	B-	81-79
C+	78-76	C	75-72	C-	71-69
D+	68-66	D	65-62	D-	61-59
F	-58				

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:

“What you see depends upon where you stand.” Elisabeth Schussler-Fiorenza

8/22 Introduction and course requirements

08/24-27 Methodology in the study of religion

No, It's Not Your Opinion, You're Just Wrong by Jeff Rouner (OAKS)

Why Study Religion in the Twenty-First Century? William A. Graham (OAKS)

Video in class: *The Worldwide Web of Belief and Ritual*, Wade Davis

8/29 Methodology continued

Last day Drop/Add

8/31, 9/03 What is Religion?

Definitions of Religion- In class worksheet and discussion

The Seven Dimensions of Religion PPT

**** 9/05—Paper #1 Self-description and Goals Statement (hard copy due in class)**

For this paper, respond to these questions: 1) Who are you? 2) Do you participate in organized religion?

Why or why not? How has your life been affected by religion? (e.g., any advantages, disadvantages or

limitations?) 3) How do you understand religion to operate in the world? (e.g., Do you see it as a force for

good or ill? What social issues are greatly influenced by people's religious beliefs?) 4) Why is it

important to study religion? (See William Graham essay cited above) 5) What are your goals for the

course? Your paper should be 2-3 pages long, typed, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font and

1 inch margins. Grammar, spelling and following directions will be considered in your grade.

Hinduism:

“Any conduct that is contrary to truth and ahimsa is to be eschewed and any book that violates these principles is not a shastra [sacred scripture].” Mohandas K. Gandhi

9/07-10 *History and Development* pp. 9-17

9/12-14 *Karma, Samsara, Moksha* pp.18-29

9/17 *Salvation* pp. 34-43, 54-56

Buddhism:

“Please call me by my true names, so I can wake up and open the door of my heart, the door of compassion.” Thich Nhat Hanh, *Call Me by My True Names*

9/19 *Life of the Buddha* pp. 61-66

9/21-24 *The Four Noble Truths* 67-70

9/26-28 Film: *Wheel of Time*

****10/01 First Exam**

Confucianism

10/03 *Life of Confucius* 116-125

10/05-08 *Ethical Principles* 149 (bottom of page) -153

**** 10/10 Critical Response Paper #2 (Signature assignment) on *The Analects of Confucius***

Daoism

10/12 *History and Beliefs* pp. 125-130 and 135-top of 141

Judaism

“Well, the Book of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the law of the jungle and the sea are your only teachers. In the smoke of the twilight on a milk-white steed, Michelangelo indeed could've carved out your features.” Bob Dylan, *Jokerman*, 1983

10/15 Video and *Historical development* pp. 269-280

10/17-19 *History, continued* 281-291

10/22 *Texts and Rituals* bottom of 298-310

****10/24 Second Exam**

Christianity

“Always hoped that I'd be an apostle. Knew that I would make it if I tried. Then when we retire, we can write the Gospels, So they'll still talk about us when we've died.”

The apostles, in the rock opera, Jesus Christ Superstar

10/26 Film: *From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians, Part I*

Last day to withdraw with a W

10/29 *Historical development* pp. 325- 343

10/31 *History continued* pp. 343-354

11/2 *Rituals* pp. 361-382

11/05- No Class/Fall Break

11/07-09 *Constantine's Sword*

11/12 Discussion Day *Constantine's Sword*

**** 11/14 Paper #3 due on Religious Site Visit**

Islam

“I could see from this, that perhaps if white Americans could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept in reality the Oneness of Man-and cease to measure, and hinder, and harm others in terms of their 'differences' in color.” Malcolm X

11/16-19 *Life of Muhammad* pp. 389-402

****11/21-23 No Classes- Thanksgiving Break**

11/26-28 *The Five Pillars* pp. 417-426

11/30 *Jihad and Just War Theory*

12/3 Last Day of Class

Third Exam:

10:00 class: Monday 12/10 @ 8:00

11:00 class: Wednesday 12/12 @ 8:00

Please Note: From the Faculty Administration Manual, Section VIII. A. 11

11. Final Examinations and Final Course Grades: Prior to each final examination period, an examination schedule is published by the Registrar's Office. Final examinations must be administered only at the time and place stated on the Examinations Schedule, except by written permission of the relevant campus authority.

** This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Additional Course Notes

Attendance Policy: Class attendance and participation in group discussions are mandatory. Six absences will be allowed. More than six absences may result in a lower final grade but MAY be excused with proper medical documentation. Eight absences will result in your being dropped from the class, which will earn you an F for the course. Please note that a memo from CofC Health Services does NOT *automatically* qualify as an 'excused absence.' Final determination of an excused absence always rests with the Instructor.

SNAP: If you have a disability that qualifies you for academic accommodation, please present a letter from the Center for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. For more information regarding accommodation and the SNAP program, see: <http://www.cofc.edu/~cgs/index.htm>.

Honor Code: The Code of Honor found in the Student Handbook will be strictly enforced. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and WILL be reported to the Honor Board. According to the Student Handbook plagiarism *includes but is not limited to:*

- * The verbatim repetition, without acknowledgement, of the writings of another author. All significant phrases, clauses, or passages, taken directly from source material must be enclosed in quotation marks and acknowledged either in the text itself or in footnotes/endnotes.
- * Borrowing without acknowledging the source.
- * Paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgement.
- * Allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his/her own.

Writing Lab

I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>.

Classroom Code of Conduct

—Selections taken from the Student Handbook, published by the President's Advisory Committee in cooperation with the Office of the President.

Your professor expects that you as a student:

1. Will be attentive and courteous during class.
2. Will complete the assigned work according to the course schedule.
3. Do not cut classes, come in late, or leave early. If you are late for class, enter in complete silence and do not walk between the class and the professor. Never leave during class unless you absolutely must. Leaving for a short break and then returning is not acceptable.

4. Turn off cell phones, pagers, and all other electronic devices.

5. Do not begin packing your book bag or otherwise indicate that you think it is time for class to come to an end; wait for the professor to dismiss class.

6. Come to class prepared to work. Your professor expects you to prepare for class by completing reading and homework assignments. If you are unprepared for class, this may prevent you from participating in a class activity. Do not present your lack of preparation as a problem for the professor to solve or excuse.