CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

**WORLD RELIGIONS (RS 150)**

 (Class Number: 14182)

**Spring 2015**

**Instructor:** Albert Tevanyan

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**Class hours & Classroom:** TR 11:00 am -12:15 am. & SH 390

**Office hours:** Tuesday 9:30 – 10:45.am. SN 418

**Course Description:**

This course will examine some of the major religious traditions of the world. It will first examine the importance of studying religion, methodology and the place of religion in our modern pluralistic and secular society. This course will introduce students to religious terminology and will also analyze common and distinctive features of most religions such as: Sacred Texts, The Absolute, Rituals&Symbol, Worldview, Historical Development and Relationship to other Religions. A special emphasis will be given to the historical, social and political context forming particular religious traditions.

Students will be able to demonstrate basic competence in the SLO’s and GE SLO’s described below.

**RS 150 SLO’s**

1. Be able to think logically and analytically about various religious traditions.

2. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the basic contents and major themes in various religious traditions.

3. Students will be able to distinguish between the religious/faith and Historical/Critical approaches to sacred texts and dogmas.

4. Be able to contextualize religious ethics in Post-Modern Society

5. Acquire knowledge of the influence that various religious traditions have had on modern human civilization.

6. Understand religious diversity in the United States.

**GE SLO’s**

Goal: Students will understand the rich history and diversity of human knowledge, discourse and achievements of their own and other cultures as they are expressed in the arts, literatures, religions, and philosophy.

Students will:

1. Explain and reflect critically upon the human search for meaning, values, discourse and

expression in one or more areas, periods or cultures;

1. Analyze, interpret, and reflect critically upon ideas of value, meaning, discourse and

expression from a variety of perspectives from the arts and/or humanities;

1. Produce work/works of art that communicate to a diverse audience through a demonstrated

understanding and fluency of expressive forms;

1. Demonstrate ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development

within the arts and humanities;

1. Use appropriate critical vocabulary to describe and analyze works of artistic expression,

literature, philosophy, or religion and a comprehension of the historical context within which

a body of work was created or a tradition emerged;

1. Describe and explain the historical and/or cultural context within which a body of work was

created or a tradition emerged.

**Required Texts:**



-- *World Religions* (7th Edition) by Warren Matthews (WADSWORTH CENGAGE

Learning). ISBN: 978-1-111-83472-2. Additional materials will be provided on the Moodle

Course Requirements:

 • **Tests and Exams:**

Midterm and Final.

There will be two main examinations: a midterm and a final exam. For the dates of the exams see Moodle. All exams are on the Moodle, however students need to be present in class during the test.

Midterm: 40 questions. 20 multiple choice (2 points each) and 20 true and false (1 point each). Total: 60 points.

Final: 40 questions. 20 multiple choice (2 points each) and 20 true and false (1 point each). Total: 60 points. The final grade for the course will be calculated based on the average of online quizzes, the midterm and the final.

Online quizzes:

Besides the Midterm and the Final there will also be online quizzes, which will constitute the 20% of your grade. All online quizzes will be based on the reading material from the textbook. We will have one online quiz before the midterm and one before the final. Students will take total of 2 online quizzes during the entire course.

Each online quiz will have 20 questions (1 point each question, multiple choice). All tests are online, however students need to be present in class during the test (you may use your reading notes during the test). A Study guide for the Midterm and the Final exams will be posted on the Moodle a week prior to the test.

Attendance will constitute 20% (40 points) of your total grade. Present – 2 points, Late – 1 point. Absent – 0 points.

**Grading**: your grades will be computed based on the following:

a. Your final grade will be based on the average of the online quizzes, the midterm and final tests.

b. An **extra credit** (optional) oral presentation in class will be available for the course. It will give you 20 extra points for the overall grade. Students need to submit/upload (see Moodle link for uploading) a 5 page minimum written paper on the Moodle and present the paper orally in class. You may choose a topic of your interest, (consult with the lecturer) or select one from the list of suggested topics (see Moodle: Topics).

Presentations are 15-20 minutes long, followed by a Q&A with the class. Failure to submit the written version of your presentation online will result in 0 extra credit. It is important to inform the instructor about your decision to do the presentation to get an assigned date. Those who sign up early will get the latest date possible.

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| --- | --- |
| Extra Credit papers + oral presentations | 20 extra points |
| Midterm Reading quiz | 20 points |
| Midterm Test  | 60 points |
| Final Reading Quiz  | 20 points |
| Final Exam  | 60 Points  |
| Attendance  | 40 points |
| **Course total**  | 200 +(20 extra credit. Optional)  |

Total maximum points for this course is 200. (20 extra points not included)

Grading scale: Plus/minus grading system will be implemented. There will be no A+ grade.

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| **Highest** | **Lowest** | **Letter** |
| 100.00 % | 93.00 % | A |
| 92.99 % | 90.00 % | A- |
| 89.99 % | 87.00 % | B+ |
| 86.99 % | 83.00 % | B |
| 82.99 % | 80.00 % | B- |
| 79.99 % | 77.00 % | C+ |
| 76.99 % | 73.00 % | C |
| 72.99 % | 70.00 % | C- |
| 69.99 % | 67.00 % | D+ |
| 66.99 % | 60.00 % | D |
| 59.99 % | 0.00 % | F |

 **Exam Policy:**

Make-ups are possible only in the case of unusual and extraordinary circumstances. Students, who have been granted a make-up opportunity, may take the test after the class time or in my office during office hours.

**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. Any form of plagiarism will result in a failing grade. The following violations of academic integrity will be addressed formally:

* Submitting the same work in whole or in part in more than one course
* Submitting as one’s own work material (s) obtained from another source;
* Unattributed quotations or ideas from published, unpublished or electronic sources;
* Unauthorized collaboration in preparing assignments;
* Cheating on exams by any means: using search engines, lecture notes etc. during the test
* During the tests, logging in and taking the test not being present in class.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**January 20 to 22**

# Introduction

# Defining Religion, Religious Terms, Common Features of most Religions

Reading Textbook “Introduction”

**January 27 to 29**

Tribal Religions

Religions of the Americas

African Religions: Egypt

Reading Chapter 1 and chapter 2 pp. 45 to 53

**February 3 to 5**

## Religions of India

Hinduism

Reading Chapter 3 pp. 71 to 81

**February 10 to 12**

Religions of India Continued

Hinduism

Reading Chapter 3 pp. 81 to 105

**February 17 to 19**

### Religions of India continued

Buddhism

Reading chapter 4 pp. 109 to 138

**February 24 to 26**

### Religions of India continued

Buddhism

Confucianism and Jainism

Reading Chapter 4 pp. 138 to 145

**March 3 to 5**

March 3: Preparation for the Midterm Reading Quiz

Reading Chapter 5

March 5: Midterm Reading Quiz

**March 10 to 12**

### March 10: preparation for the Midterm Exam

### March 12: The Midterm Exam

**March 17 to 19**

### Abrahamic Religions

Judaism

Christianity

Reading Chapter 8

Chapter 9 pp. 289 to 305

**March 24 to 26**

### Abrahamic Religions continued

Christianity

Chapter 9 pp. 305 to 321

**March 31st Campus Closed**

**April 2.**

Abrahamic Religions Continued

Christianity and various traditions

Religious diversity in North America

New Forms of Protestant Christianity

Reading Chapter 9 pp. 321 to 331

**April 7 to 9. Spring Recess. Campus closed**

**April 14 to 16**

Abrahamic Religions Continued

### Islam

Reading Chapter 10 - 11

**April 21 to 23**

### Religion and Modern Society

### Religion and politics

Reading Chapter 12

**April 28 to 30**

Religion and Globalization,

#### Preparation for the final Reading Quiz

**May 5 to 7**

May 5: Final Reading Quiz

Preparation for the Final exam

**FINAL EXAMINATION: May. 12th 2015. SH 390 (10:15 am-12:15pm)**