Tompkins Cortland Community College

Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: HUMN 232 **Year: 2023-2024**

Course Title: Introduction to World Religions **Credit Hours: 3**

Attendance Policy: *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

Services for Students with Disabilities: *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

Course Description

An introduction to several of the world religious traditions including Buddhism, Hinduism, Chinese religions, African tribal religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students will learn about the key doctrines, beliefs, and practices of seven major religious world views. Although the course provides only a foundation for understanding different world religions, students will be given the opportunity to study one religious tradition in more depth. HUMN 232 fulfills the SUNY General Education Other World Civilizations or Humanities requirement. Prerequisites: Prior completion or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 101; RDNG 116 if required by placement testing. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall semester.

Course Context/Audience

This course is designed to serve as an introductory survey course for students interested in learning about the diversity of religious beliefs and practices throughout the world. Students will explore the definition and meaning of religion as well as its numerous components and significance to human culture and its development. The course examines the beginnings of religious consciousness, its evolution throughout the ages, and its present day perspectives and role in contemporary societies. From a variety of contexts the course will demonstrate and reveal the dynamic creativity and insight that the world's religions have produced in their quest to comprehend and interpret the human and divine relationship. It may be used to satisfy a liberal arts, humanities or unrestricted elective requirement. It is also appropriate for non-matriculated students interested in learning about the different religions of the world.
Students will acquire college level competence in critical reasoning and analysis through comparative and contrasting evaluations of similar and divergent religious concepts and philosophies. Students will develop a deeper comprehension of the historical and cultural relationship and role of religion throughout history, as well as in the events of the present time. Students will gain an understanding of the evolution of religious thought and its belief systems and practices, and relevance to the nature and composition of human society. Students will develop greater academic expertise in researching and articulating their ideas and information through research and reflection papers that will be critically evaluated by the instructor and other classmates. Personal reflection will be encouraged as students consider their experiences, ideas and beliefs in light of other religious worldviews.

Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations

Writing: WC College level writing skills are required. See course co-requisites or pre-requisites.
Math: M0 Course requires very little or no math.
Reading: R4 Before taking this course, students must satisfactorily complete RDNG 116 or have assessment indicating that no reading course was required

Course Goals

The course is designed a) to introduce students to a variety of world religions and their distinctive as well as common elements, b) to guide students in developing an informed and insightful appreciation and knowledge of world religions, c) to encourage students to express their perspectives on various topics in religion, d) to participate in meaningful class discussion, e) to develop research and writing skills through research papers, f) to promote understanding and tolerance of the diversity of religious beliefs and practices throughout the world.

Course Objectives/Topics

Objective/Topic	% Course
Critical Reasoning: Students acquire a deeper knowledge of the world religions by understanding their principles and concepts, founding leaders, sacred scripture, rituals, ethics, and religious experiences and practices. Also, students will become aware of the need for inter-religious dialogue and its importance for our contemporary world. Finally, students will be encouraged to appreciate the rich diversity of religious traditions, ascertain their similarities and differences, and identify their path for discovering the meaning of life.	60%
Personal Reflection: Students identify and interpret their personal beliefs, practices, experiences in relation to those members and participants of other religious faiths. Also, students participate in field education experiences by visiting religious worship sites and museums with the class. Finally, students write a "personal reflection" paper.	40%
Academic Expertise: Students develop oral, written, and interpretive skills in light of research papers/presentations, critically evaluating other students' research papers, and classroom discussions.	50%
Note: The sum of the percentages of course time allocated to each object exceeds 100% because student mastery of the three objectives overlap.	

General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness

CRITICAL THINKING OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
Students will be able to ➢ develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues. ➢ gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information.. ➢ reach informed conclusions and solutions. ➢ consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others.	Students will accomplish this objective/emphasis by taking four exams and writing a personal reflection paper. In this paper students will consider their own personal beliefs, practices, and experiences in relation to different religious truth claims, practices, and experiences. Students will accomplish this objective/emphasis by writing/presenting two research papers, evaluating other students' papers, participating in field education assignments, and completing the assigned readings.

SOCIAL/GLOBAL AWARENESS OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
➢ Students will begin to understand how their lives are shaped by the complex world in which they live. ➢ Students will understand that their actions have social, economic and environmental consequences.	Students will accomplish this objective/emphasis in the overall participation and process of learning about the world religions. In contrast to the social and natural sciences the humanities interpret human stories, traditions, expressions, values, and concerns. In brief, a course on world religions will enrich the human experience because it will identify these characteristics within the context of different worldviews and its pursuit of finding meaning in our world today.

Instructional Methods

Because students have a variety of learning styles many different approaches should be employed in this course including lecture supplemented with religious texts, digital images, news articles, web sites , and videos, research/reflection papers, oral presentation, field trip experiences, and small group discussions. Review sheets for topics list important terms, concepts, and resources, providing focus for comprehension, reading assignments, research papers, and exam preparation, while other handouts supplement text and lectures. Additional help is available for students who have difficulty with lecture and/or textbook material, essays and exam preparation.

Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Exam 1 – General Religion Terms and Tribal and Ancient Religions	15%
Exam 2 – Hinduism and Buddhism	15%
Research paper on Hinduism or Buddhism	15%
Exam 3 – Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto and Zen	15%
Final Exam - Judaism, Christianity and Islam	15%
Reflection Paper	5%
Research paper on either Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Zen, Judaism, Christianity or Islam	20%

Textbook(s)

Ways to the Center: An Introduction to World Religions (7th Edition) 2014 Denise L. Carmody Wadsworth Cengage

Bibliography

Sacred Religious Texts

Ancient Greece *Homeric Hymns Theogony*

Buddhism

Theravada Buddhism - *Tipitaka* or *Pāli Canon*
Mahayana Buddhism - *Chinese Diamond Sutra* (868 CE) *Chinese Buddhist Tripiṭaka*, including *Diamond Sutra* and the *Heart Sutra* *Shurangama Sutra* and its *Shurangama Mantra*
Tibetan Buddhism - *Tibetan Kangyur and Tengyur* *Tibetan Book of the Dead*

Christianity
The Bible. For all branches of Christianity - Catholicism, Protestantism and Orthodox -
66 canonical books of the *Bible* is the main scripture.
In addition, Catholicism includes the *Deuterocanonical books*, the Orthodox Church includes the *Anagignoskomena and Antilegomena* (the Ethiopian Orthodox Church adds *The Book of Enoch*).

Confucianism *The Five Classics* *The Four Books* *The Thirteen Classics*

Ancient Egyptian religion *Pyramid texts from Teti I's pyramid*. Old Kingdom *Pyramid Texts*
First Intermediate Period & Middle Kingdom *Coffin Texts* Second Intermediate Period *The Book of the Dead*

Hinduism
Śruti - *Vedas* **-** *Rig Veda* *Sama Veda* *Yajur Veda* *Atharva Veda* *Brahmanas* *Aranyakas* *Upanishads*
Smriti **-** *Itihāsas* *Mahābhārata (including the Bhagavad Gita)* *Bhagavad Gita* *Ramayana*
Puranas - Bhagavata Purana *Tantras* *Sutras*

Islam
Qur'an (also referred to as Kuran, Koran, Qur'ān, Coran or al-Qur'ān)
Hadith (oral traditions of the words and deeds of Muhammad) *Sunnah* (the things that the Muhammad did)

Judaism
The Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) *Torah* (teachings) *Nevi'im* (prophets) *Ketuvim* (writings)
The Talmud *Mishnah* *Gemara*

Shinto *The Kojiki* *The Nihon Shoki or Nihongi*

Sikhism *The Guru Granth Sahib* *The Dasven Padshah Da Granth*

Taoism *Tao Te Ching* *Zhuangzi (book)* *Daozang*

General World Religions
Living Religions: A Brief Introduction (Second Edition) Pearson/Prentice Hall
Religions of the World (Eleventh Edition) Pearson / Prentice Hall
Many Peoples, Many Faiths: Women and Men in the World Religions (Ninth Edition) Pearson / Prentice Hall
Introduction to World Religions (Second Edition) Fortress Press
Patterns in Comparative Religion Mircea Eliade
Three Ways of Asian Wisdom Nancy Wilson Ross
The World's Religions Huston Smith
The World's Wisdom : Sacred Texts of the World's Religions Philip Novak
Forgotten Truth : The Common Vision of the World's Religions Huston Smith
A History of God: The 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam Karen Armstrong
World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts Andrew Wilson
Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion Ingrid Fischer-Schreiber, Franz-Karl Ehrhard and Kurt Friedrichs
Oneness: Great Principles Shared by All Religions Jeffery Moses
Experiencing the World's Religions Michael Molloy
A New Vision of Reality Bede Griffiths

Joseph Campbell Books

The Masks of God - Volume 1, Primitive Mythology (1959) • *Volume 2, Oriental Mythology* (1962) • *Volume 3,Occidental Mythology* (1964) • *Volume 4, Creative Mythology* (1968)) •*The Mythic Image* (1974) • *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor As Myth and As Religion* (1986) • *Historical Atlas of World Mythology - Volume I: The Way of the Animal Powers* (1983) (reprint in two parts: *Part 1: Mythologies of the Primitive Hunters and Gatherers* (1988); *Part 2: Mythologies of the Great Hunt* (1988)) • *Volume II: The Way of the Seeded Earth* (*Part 1: The Sacrifice* (1988); *Part 2: Mythologies of the Primitive Planters: The North Americas* (1989); *Part 3: Mythologies of the Primitive Planters: The Middle and Southern Americas* (1989)) • *The Power of Myth* (1988); *Thou Art That: Transforming Religious Metaphor* (2001). *Myths of Light: Eastern Metaphors of the Eternal* (2003).

Mircea Eliade Books

A History of Religious Ideas, Vol. 1 University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1978.
Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1991.
Myths, Rites, Symbols: A Mircea Eliade Reader, Vol. 2, Ed. Wendell C. Beane and William G. Doty, Harper Colophon, New York, 1976 . *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1958.
Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2004.
"The Quest for the 'Origins' of Religion", in *History of Religions* 4.1 (1964), p. 154–169.
The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1961