

Course Syllabus

Overview

If we understand religion using theologian Paul Tillich's definition, as that which is of "ultimate concern," then there is no more profound study than religion (Wainwright, 2012). When we make the scope of our study the world itself, then we have a course about the deepest meanings made by all the people of the world and throughout history. Welcome to Introduction to World Religions. It is going to be a fascinating, challenging, and rewarding journey.



Fascination will turn quickly to challenge as we explore worlds vastly different from our own. To succeed in our quest, we must use our imagination to visit these new worlds and bracket our familiar one. We will accomplish this feat by using five concepts drawn from the discipline of religious studies: the sacred, myth, ritual, community, and the individual. These concepts will be used as lenses to frame and focus our study of beliefs and practices from around the world.

Discussion forums will provide ways for you to explore the religions through the five lenses. A research project will bring your learning to bear on a unique aspect of world religions.

Reference

Wainwright, W. (2012). Concepts of God. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/concepts-god/> [\(http://plato.stanford.edu/entries%20/concepts-god/\)](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries%20/concepts-god/)



Outcomes

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

1. Describe essential features of world religions.
2. Compare and contrast religious traditions.
3. Analyze the relationship between culture and religion.
4. Apply objective methodologies to the study of world religions.
5. Communicate effectively.

Grading

1. Discussion Participation 40%

2. Final Course Project Components 60%

- Topic Selection 10%
- Annotated Bibliography and Abstract 10%
- Rough Draft 20%
- Final Essay 20%

Final Course Grade

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% and below

Late Policy

Discussions: Since these are the lifeblood of an online course, a strict policy is in place. Think of the discussion forums as the class meetings of a campus course—if you miss them, they're gone and cannot be made up. Primary posts are due before Friday end-of-day. At least two significant and relevant response to your peers are due by the end of the unit, which is Monday, end-of-day. **Late primary posts will receive a late penalty per day according to the grading rubric.** No posts of any kind are accepted after the end of the module.

Assignments: These are between you and me only, so there is a bit more leeway. Assignments are due Monday, end-of-day. If you have issues during the week and need an extension, you must ask **before the deadline**. If you do so, I will consider an extension on a case-by-case basis. **If you do**  **contact me before the deadline and your assignment is late, your assignment will not be accepted and will receive a zero.**

Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities and projects in this course. All resources are available for free online.

Books

- [Ondich, Jody. World Religions: The Spirit Searching., 2021. Internet resource. \(https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/world-religions-the-spirit-searching\)](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/world-religions-the-spirit-searching)

Suggested Internet Resources

- BBC. (2014). Religions <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/> [\(https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/\)](https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/) [\(http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/0/\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/0/)
- Harvard University. (2014). The Pluralism Project at Harvard University. Retrieved from <http://pluralism.org> [_ \(http://pluralism.org\)_](http://pluralism.org)
- Pew Research. (2014). Religion & Public Life Project. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org> [_ \(http://www.pewforum.org\)](http://www.pewforum.org)
- USC Annenberg. (2014). Religion dispatches. Retrieved from <http://www.religiondispatches.org> [_ \(http://www.religiondispatches.org\)](http://www.religiondispatches.org)
- Voice of the Shuttle. (2014). Religious studies. Retrieved from <http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2730> [_ \(http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2730\)](http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2730)

Final Course Project Description

Academic Paper

Using an issue drawn from recent events or cultural changes, write an academic paper using at least six scholarly sources that analyzes how the issue is treated in one or more religions. Do not choose your own religion. Example titles include the following:

- Recent Technological Developments and their Meaning in Hinduism, Shinto, and Islam
- Women's Rights in Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism
- Change and What It Means in Judaism, Buddhism, and Shinto
- Economic Issues in Catholicism, Indigenous Religions, and Taoism
- Violence in Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam

Project Objectives



- To successfully complete this project, you will be expected to:
1. Examine essential information about the world religions being studied.
 2. Analyze the relationship between culture and religion.
 3. Distinguish between objective academic discourse and the expression of subjective opinions.
 4. Communicate effectively in a manner that demonstrates objectivity in the study of religion.

Project Components

Project Component	Course Grade Weight	Module Due
Course Project: Select a Topic	10%	6
Course Project: Annotated Bibliography and Abstract	10%	8

Project Rough Draft	20%	12
Final Course Project	20%	14
Total:	60%	

Project Requirements

To achieve a successful project experience and outcome, you are expected to meet the following requirements.

- Communication: Ensure communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- MLA formatting: Format resources and citations according to MLA (8th edition) style and formatting.
- Page requirements: Submit a minimum of ten pages for the academic paper.
- File type: Submit document in .doc or .pdf or or a presentation format that can be uploaded.

Disability Services

The [Office of Disability Services](https://ods.rutgers.edu/) [\(https://ods.rutgers.edu/\)](https://ods.rutgers.edu/) provides reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Our team strives to provide the necessary tools, resources and support for individuals with disabilities to become responsible decision-makers and self-advocates in charge of their own future. We are dedicated to providing information and resources necessary for students to pursue their academic, personal and professional goals while at Rutgers. In addition, we are committed to working with administrators, faculty, staff and students to cultivate an awareness of creating an inclusive environment for all individuals.



Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Mon Sep 12, 2022	 1. Introductions	to do: 11:59pm
Mon Sep 19, 2022	 2. The Sacred and Indigenous Religions https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990388	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Mon Sep 26, 2022	 3. Myth and Hinduism (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990390)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Oct 3, 2022	 4. Ritual in Buddhism (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990392)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Oct 10, 2022	 5. Community and Chinese Religions (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990394)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Oct 17, 2022	 6. The Individual and Zoroastrianism (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990396)	due by 11:59pm
	 Final Project: Select a Topic (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990413)	due by 11:59pm
 Oct 24, 2022	 7. The Sacred and Judaism (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990398)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Oct 31, 2022	 8. Myth and Christianity (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990400)	due by 11:59pm
	 Final Project: Annotated Bibliography and Abstract (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990411)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Mon Nov 7, 2022	 9. Ritual and Islam (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990402)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Nov 14, 2022	 10. Community in Sikhism and Baha'i (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990404)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Nov 21, 2022	 11. Paganism, Nordic, Wicca (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1993374)	due by 11:59pm
Tue Nov 22, 2022	 Thanksgiving Break Begins (https://rutgers.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=788506&include_contexts=course_202816)	12am
Mon Nov 28, 2022	 Thanksgiving Break Ends (https://rutgers.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=788507&include_contexts=course_202816)	11pm
 Mon Dec 5, 2022	 12. Discussion of The Razor's Edge (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/2061601)	due by 11:59pm
	 Final Project: Rough Draft (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/1990412)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Dec 12, 2022	 13. Discussion of Baraka (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/202816/assignments/2061602)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 16, 2022	 Final Project: Submission (https://rutgers.instructure.com)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	/courses/202816/assignments/1990414	

