



Chaminade
University
OF HONOLULU

Course Syllabus

[Chaminade University
Honolulu Links to an
external site.](#)

3140 Waiālae Avenue -
Honolulu, HI 96816

Course Overview

Course Number: REL 103

Course Title: World Religions

Department Name: Religious Studies

Term: Please refer to Self-Service to confirm your academic schedule.

Course Credits: Three (3) credits

Class Meeting Days: Asynchronous, at your own pace, but read everything and plan serious time management with the date guides as assistance.

Class Meeting Hours: Asynchronous, at your own pace, but read everything and plan serious time management with the date guides as assistance.

Course Website Address (Canvas): <https://chaminade.instructure.com/>

Instructor Name: Dr. Achilles S.C. Gacis, MA, M.Div., Ph.D.

Email: achilles.gacis@chaminade.edu

Office Location: Online

Regular & Substantive Interaction (RSI): (see the following three items)

Office hours: Online office hours made by appointment per each student's time zone needs

Grading and providing content-specific feedback (via Canvas SpeedGrader): Students can expect grades and feedback within three to five business days but usually sooner)

Weekly discussions: As I log in consistently (which means usually daily), I will be responding to online discussions accordingly. I like to respond to all students in the CANVAS discussion forums so think of these as being like a land class. When I speak/respond to one student, I am speaking to the entire class, so be sure to read my responses and feel free to respond accordingly as well as that is what makes the course fun and interesting!

University Course Catalog Description

The Council of Vatican II issued a document, *Nostra Aetate*, that invited Catholic Christians to study how religious traditions answer the questions of meaning that leads to actions of compassion and justice. Within the context of the dialogue between Christianity and the other world religions, the student will explore the diverse historical, philosophical, and spiritual foundations from which the major religious traditions in the world have arisen. Offered every semester. This course fulfills the General Education requirement for Catholic Intellectual Tradition.

Course Overview

The purpose of this class is to assist students in their exploration and understanding of different approaches to the answers of the human quest in existence, morality, and ethical behaviors. This study is presented in a way where students will examine the major religious traditions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam while engaging in a review and comparison of their diverse spiritual, historical, and philosophical foundations. This class will critically analyze their application to current sociopolitical problems and their effect on the harmony of the global community.

Marianist Values

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

Native Hawaiian Values

Education is an integral value in both Marianist and Native Hawaiian culture. Both recognize the transformative effect of a well-rounded, value-centered education on society, particularly in seeking justice for the marginalized, the forgotten, and the oppressed, always with an eye toward God (Ke Akua). This is reflected in the 'Olelo No'eau (Hawaiian proverbs) and Marianist core beliefs:

1. Educate for Formation in Faith (Mana) E ola au i ke akua ('Olelo No'eau 364) May I live by God
2. Provide an Integral, Quality Education (Na'auao) Lawe i ka ma'alea a kū'ono'ono ('Olelo No'eau 1957) Acquire skill and make it deep
3. Educate in Family Spirit ('Ohana) 'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kōkua aku kōkua mai; pela iho la ka nohana 'ohana ('Olelo No'eau 1200) Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped; such is a family relationship
4. Educate for Service, Justice and Peace (Aloha) Ka lama kū o ka no'eau ('Olelo No'eau 1430) Education is the standing torch of wisdom
5. Educate for Adaptation and Change (Aina) 'A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi ('Olelo No'eau 203) All knowledge is not taught in the same school

Statement on Educator Ethics

As an educator, I am committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive learning environment, upholding academic integrity, and promoting the intellectual and personal growth of all students.

General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO's)

The General Education Learning Outcome for this course under the values section for Catholic Intellectual Tradition is as follows: The student will explain faith and reason as integral to developing a Catholic sacramental perspective of the cosmos that leads to responsible action supporting social justice.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's)

Students successfully completing the Religious Studies program will be able to:

1. Utilize the key concepts of Catholic theology in a critical reflection on integral human experience.
2. Engage in respectful dialogue on religious meaning in our globalized, multicultural society.
3. Employ understanding of interfaith traditions and behavior to Christian moral reasoning and decision making that affirms and/or challenges secular and cultural values.
4. Generate a substantive project that is animated by the Marianist Charism.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO’s)

1. Explain one’s own beliefs, feelings and attitudes towards different religious perspectives in correlation and contrast with those learned through the course in approaching the human quest for meaning.
2. Reference primary sources in terms of scriptural texts as well as research in defining, identifying, locating, evaluating, synthesizing and presenting or demonstrating relevant information.
3. Identify the important elements of the major religions –describing their myths, symbols, rituals, doctrine and moral codes in relationship to issues of justice
4. Assess religious responses to current issues

Alignment of Learning Outcomes

	CLO 1	CLO 2	CLO 3	CLO 4
Marianist Values	1	2	3.	4
Program Learning Outcomes	1	1, 2	3	2, 3, 4

Course Prerequisites

Please note that this course has special requirements (as explained here), so please review them carefully.

- This course is conducted entirely online, and there are no exams, or face-to-face meetings.
- This course strongly recommends that you have access to a desktop or laptop computer. Though tablets and smart phones do work, you’ll see how much better it is to use a desktop or laptop computer for this course.

- All of your religion assignments will be done in PowerPoint, no key or zip files.
- You should also be familiar with Word for writing documents.

This course satisfies the General Education Core requirement in Catholic Intellectual Tradition for students admitted Fall 2020 and later.

Required Learning Materials

- **Vatican II, Nostra Aetate**, Oct. 28, 1965
https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vatii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html Links to an external site.
- **Molloy, Michael. Experiencing the World Religions** 8th edition. New York, N. Y: McGraw Hill, 2021. ISBN: 9781260253511.
- Here's the latest on the textbook direct from the bookseller:

The book is in digital format and the students will need to purchase the e-book.

They can go to the bookstore's website, or come down to the bookstore to purchase it directly.

- <https://chaminade.bncollege.com/course-material-listing-page?bypassCustomerAdoptions=true> Links to an external site.
- Go ahead and take care of this right away.

Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:

- Search for help on specific topics at [com](#)
- [Chat live with Canvas Support 24/7/365](#) Links to an external site. Links to an external site.
- Watch this [video to get you started](#) Links to an external site. Links to an external site. with online guides and tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: helpdesk@chaminade.edu, or call (808) 735-4855

Grading Scale

Letter grades are given in all courses except those conducted on a credit/no credit basis. Grades are calculated from the student's daily work, class participation, quizzes, tests, term papers, reports and the final examination. They are interpreted as follows:

A Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative

B Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner

C Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter

D Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite course work

F Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given

Course Assignments Grading Procedure & Scale:

Nine, eight (8) to ten (10) slide PowerPoint Presentations together with Forum Discussions = 45 pts.

(Ppt + Discussion Forum= 5pts)

Final Paper from Discussion Forums: 50 pts.

TOTAL100

CUH Grading Scale:

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

59 & below = F

Course Operation Description

- PLEASE READ CAREFULLY! -

Taking an online course is self-paced in terms of the discipline you are required of yourself if you wish to have the flexibility that our computer technology provides us. If this is your first online course, don't be alarmed. I think you'll find its creative structure rather straightforward. It may not, however, be what you expect.

An online course is not a glorified correspondence course, nor is it a course in directed reading. You are not isolated and out on your own. To the contrary, you're likely to become more involved with your classmates than you ordinarily would be in a regular class. One of the nice things about an online course is that your classroom is open 24/7. Time of day (or night) and physical location is irrelevant—we're living in a global village.

Pace yourself and your personal time management obligations and mark each one of the assignments you must complete in your personal planners, even though there is flexibility in completing and submitting your work, use the due dates as your guideline so you complete all

the work. You should always work ahead of schedule as well to assure successful completion of all assignments.

You will, post your work in the Discussion Forum (check Unit) after clicking on the Modules link on the left of our class site in the user menu.

After that is done, you will respond to at least two (2) other students on their work.

Then, you will upload your PowerPoint in the “Assignments” venue per module.

Your responses to these topics should be thoughtful and concise. Don't ramble--try to make your points succinctly. I'm looking for a lot more than just “Great idea! Wish I had thought of that!” Your postings should each be around 100 words--but that's just a rough guideline, since I value quality of insight much more than quantity of words. I especially value postings that reflect something about the religion that you may have learned thus far; uninformed personal opinion, frankly, is dime-a-dozen, while an opinion that is at least somewhat informed by research and learning will rank very highly in my esteem.

We should be keen to follow the dictum of the ancient Greek Philosopher Plato who states in his *Republic* “an opinion is neither knowledge nor ignorance but lies somewhere between the two.” Please do your best to post knowledge and the truth and then tell us why you agree or disagree. Be sure to post your respectable responses in the Discussion Forum—do not email them to me. For English as a second language students: write your post in Word, use spell and grammar check, then copy and paste it into the forum. Avoid AI as the writing are very obvious due to its sterile use of words. Write in your own written voice as that's how education evolves.

Discussion is what makes an online course work; otherwise, an online course is just a glorified correspondence course. Be sure to respond to your classmates! If your classmate posts a response to a topic that interests you, look it over and consider posting a different point of view if, in your opinion, it merits one. We're trying to get an actual exchange of views going here, and we all will surely smile upon whatever you can think to do to help that process along. Again, I do not accept late submissions of your Discussion Forum postings. Reason being, *the discussion is an active class assignment, and if you miss the deadline, the class will have moved on and you'll have nobody to discuss anything with.* I think you'll be amazed at how much you'll learn from each other in these forums! What you have to say is very important to the course.

There's one last thing I need to say about these discussions: they're meant to be provocative and, in many cases, relevant to the issues of today. One of the paramount points of why we study world religions is to apply those ancient lessons, insights, and revelatory implications in consideration of things that are happening in the here and now. To that end, I encourage my students to think mystically, logically, creatively, and philosophically about these things, and not just to soak up the religious verbiage for the sake of spewing it out on their assignments and then forgetting the whole business.

If I can teach my students to *wonder* about the lessons of the world's religions and how they may shed light on the things that are happening in their lives, then hopefully it will become a habit that will flourish (and serve them well) throughout life.

Course Schedule: Assignments/Projects

UNIT 1: Understanding Religion-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 2: Judaism-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 3: Christianity-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 4: Islam-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 5: Hinduism & Jainism-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 6: Buddhism & Sikhism-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 7: Chinese Traditions-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 8: Japanese Shinto-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

UNIT 9: Alternative Paths and Modern Religious Movements-Discussion Forum and PowerPoint

Unit 10: Final Paper

Each Unit PowerPoint assignment will have:

- Eight to ten slides of writing and images are required for each PowerPoint assignment.
- The following numbered elements and be integrated in your PowerPoint for the various religion(s) we are addressing for that specific unit:

1-Identify the essential characteristics that distinguish the religious tradition.

2- Describe the basic components of each major religious tradition, such as its myths, rituals, doctrines, ethics, and artistic expressions.

3- Describe any religious conflicts and trends in the modern world.

4- Explain the relationship between your own religious background (if any) and that of your current surrounding community.

Final Paper:

Write **three** (minimum) to **four** pages (maximum), typed, double-spaced, spelling and grammar checked but informal journal style writing comparing some common themes among the religions you studied in this course. Then elaborate on one or two items that were most impactful and impressive to you.

The following two charts are the grading rubrics used for the PowerPoint presentations and the Discussion Forum postings. Read it thoroughly.

PowerPoint Posting

Criteria:	0 pts.	.5 pts.	1.0 pts.	1.5 pts.	2.5 pts.
(8-10 slides)					
Well organized, well written, composed, and structured. Appropriate use of images, links, sounds, and source references.	Posts are absent.	Posts contain poor structure, spelling, grammar consistently. Vocabulary and terms are basic and naïve; images, links, sounds, references comments are poorly composed.	Posts contain few, minor spelling and grammar errors. Vocabulary and terms are appropriate; images, links, sounds, references adequately composed and structured.	Posts use more sophisticated vocabulary; contain no spelling and grammar errors, well written, images, links, sounds, references are accurate, coherent, and relevant to the topic.	Posts use very sophisticated vocabulary. No errors in spelling or grammar. Extremely well written, coherent and structured. Images, links, sounds, and references are always accurate relevant, and demonstrating advanced insight and overall a pleasure to view and read.

Discussion Responses to two (2) minimum other students criteria. (Approx. 100 words for each response.)

	0 pts.	.5 pts.	1.0 pts.	1.5 pts.	2.5 pts.
Supports the discussion, demonstrates critical analysis	Response(s) to others are absent.	Response(s) to others fail to adequately	Response(s) to others are adequate in quality and	Response(s) to others move the discussion forward and	Response(s) to others are insightful, expand the

of ideas
presented by
others,
constructive,
respectful,
engaging,
insightful.

support the
discussion.

quantity to
support the
discussion,
show some
critical
supportive
insight.

show
significant,
constructive,
critical analysis
of ideas and
presentations.

discussion and
offer critical
supportive
analysis that
informs
others.

Online Classroom Conduct:

The Netiquette Guide

When meeting someone you know, or even someone you don't know, there are certain "rules" of decorum that are followed. For most of us, these rules are (hopefully) self-evident. In the traditional classroom, instructors and students meet face to face and communicate using words, inflection, posture and gestures. We can sort of figure out when someone is being honest or happy just as we can when someone is being dishonest or unhappy.

To assist all of you to adjust (or readjust) to the world of online education, here is a list of general guidelines that will make your interaction in this classroom more enjoyable and beneficial.

- Never say anything online that you do not want to appear on some newsfeed!
- Do not use threatening, insulting, or abusive language at any time.
- Be familiar with your classroom – read before you post / think before you post.
- Keep your posts to a manageable length. A 1500-word post is difficult to read. Such a post also makes responding difficult to. Use paragraph breaks since readers need to breath or consider breaking the post into smaller chunks.
- Using all-caps is the same thing as shouting. There is nothing wrong with using all-caps ONCE in a while for effect, but beyond that, keep all-caps to a minimum.
- If you have written a post that you think might be construed as sexist, racist or hateful in anyway, then it probably is. Think again.
- Never post anything or reply to someone else post if you are angry.

Much of what is suggested here seems common sense applied.

Do keep these guidelines in mind as our course moves forward. Remember, true education is a dialogue between instructor and instructed in which the final result is the education and betterment of all!

According to the student handbook, the instructor may require a student to leave the classroom if the conduct is such that it can be deemed as disruptive to the rest of the class.

~Final grades are not negotiable~

Course Policies

Late Work Policy

No late work will be accepted unless prior arrangements are made verifiable reasons for late work are given. Always communicate with your professor if there is an issue.

This course is utilizing a Flex model, meaning there are two Milestone assignments with firm deadlines. **Milestone 1 Assignment is due by 11:59 pm on the 7th day of the course.** If this assignment is late, you may be dropped from the class.

Milestone 2 Assignment is due by the halfway point of the course. All other assignments—with the exception of any assignments that your instructor notes as having a firm deadline—can be turned in at your convenience. Please refer to Self-Service to confirm when your course section ends, as all assignments are due before then.

DO NOT ASSUME YOU CAN SUBMIT ALL WORK AT ONCE ON THE LAST DAY.

POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR THAT AND THE AMOUNT IS SOLELY UP TO THE PROFESSOR'S DISCRETION.

DISCUSSION FORUMS ARE IMPERATIVE TO THE SUCCESS OF YOUR LEARNING SO ALLOW TIME FOR THAT. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS WILL BE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE SO PLEASE KEEP A STRICT SCHEDULE ON THIS.

Grades of "Incomplete"

No Incomplete grades will be given unless circumstances are determined as appropriate by University policies.

Writing Policy

Final journal type paper with appropriate referencing either MLA or APA.

Instructor and Student Communication

Questions for this course can be emailed to the instructor at achilles.gacis@chaminade.edu

Online conferences can be arranged. Response time will take place up to 24-48 hrs. (though I do check my email and log in daily).

Additional Services

Disability Access

If you need individual accommodations to meet course outcomes because of a documented disability, please speak with me to discuss your needs as soon as possible so that we can ensure your full participation in class and fair assessment of your work. Students with special needs who meet criteria for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions must provide written documentation of the need for accommodations from Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning by the end of week three of the class, in order for instructors to plan accordingly. If a student would like to determine if they meet the criteria for accommodations, they should contact the Kōkua 'Ike Coordinator at (808) 739-8305 for further information (ada@chaminade.edu).

Canvas Technical Assistance:

- Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students Links to an external site.](#)
- [Live chat with Canvas Support for students Links to an external site.](#)
- Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- Watch this [video to get you started Links to an external site.](#)
- [Online tutorials Links to an external site.](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: helpdesk@chaminade.edu or call (808) 735-4855

Tutoring and Writing Services

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to: biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check [Kōkua 'Ike's website Links to an external site.](#) for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click Account – Notifications – TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at tutoring@chaminade.edu or 808-739-8305.

Chaminade University Policies

Student Conduct Policy

Campus life is a unique situation requiring the full cooperation of each individual. For many, Chaminade is not only a school, but a home and a place of work as well. That makes it a community environment in which the actions of one student may directly affect other students. Therefore, each person must exercise a high degree of responsibility. Any community must have standards of conduct and rules by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students' rights and campus values.

Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the

Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University's jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on the Chaminade website under Student Life.

For further information, [please refer to the Chaminade Catalog Links to an external site.](#)

Title IX Compliance

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources by visiting Campus Ministry, the Dean of Students Office, the Counseling Center, or the Office for Compliance and Personnel Services.

Attendance Policy

Flex students are expected to asynchronously attend and submit coursework in classes they are registered in. Student should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevent them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor's Chaminade email address, calling the instructor's campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor's division office. It is the instructor's prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade University of Honolulu ADA Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor's discretion.

Credit Hour Policy

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.