

FE99
PM

Religion 103:²⁰ Religions and the Human Community

Fall 1999
Mondays 5:30-9:30

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Course Objective

The primary goal of the course is to help students gain a basic understanding of the various beliefs and practices of the world's major religions. Looking at religions both in their early and contemporary forms will enable students to trace the genesis of, and hence place into their proper contexts, some of the important religious issues which confront us today. Religion continues to be a vibrant expression in modern society and an interesting sample of the world's religions can be found in the islands. Students are encouraged to visit temples, churches, and shrines; and experience first-hand some of the more popular religious practitioners on the island to gain a better appreciation of religion.

Course Requirements

- Examinations* : Three exams covering material presented in class and textbook. *There will be no make up exams.*
- Religious Group Profile* : A basic profile detailing the major characteristics of a particular religious group on Oahu is required. Fieldwork and secondary source materials must be utilized to help construct your profile. *Late work will not be accepted.*
- Textbook Reading* : Questions based on textbook readings will be assigned periodically.
- Class Presentation* : Discussion of progress and problems, themes and issues, surrounding construction of religious group profile.

Grading

Examinations	70%
Religion Profile	15%
Class Presentation	10%
Textbook Questions	5%
Total	100%

Scores of 90% and above will be marked "A", 80% and above "B", 70% and above "C"; and 60% and above "D." Students who fail to complete the assignments before the end of the term may receive an Incomplete grade with instructor permission. Credit/No Credit students will be expected to complete all assignments with a grade of "C" or better to receive credit for this course.

Textbook Required

Fisher, Mary Pat. *Living Religions*

Class Schedule

- Class 1* **Introduction**
Definitions, Methodology, Interpretive models
Discussion
- Class 2* **Judaism** (*read* Fisher Ch. 8)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
- Class 3* **Christianity** (*read* Fisher Ch. 9)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
- Class 4* **Examination One, Islam** (*read* Fisher Ch. 10)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
- Class 5* **Hinduism** (*read* Fisher Ch. 3)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
- Class 7* **Sikhism** (*read* Fisher Ch. 11)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
Video
- Class 6* **Examination Two, Buddhism** (*read* Fisher Ch. 5)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
- Class 8* **Chinese Religions** (*read* Fisher Ch. 6)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
Presentations
- Class 9* **Japanese Religions** (*read* Fisher Ch. 7)
Myth, scripture, ritual, dogma, institution
Textbook Questions due
Presentations
- Class 10* **Examination Three, New Religions** (*read* Fisher Ch. 12)
Religious Group Profiles due
Presentations, Summary

Syllabus is tentative and subject to change.

Religious Group Profile

Construct a religion profile based on a group you are *unfamiliar* with. Combine secondary sources (i.e. textbook material, library monographs & articles, etc.) with your own observations at a church/temple service to produce a reflective and analytical account of a religious group in Hawaii. Religious group profile should utilize the following format:

Name and address of church: What is the name of the church and how did it come up with the name? Any significance to the name of the church?

Church affiliation: What denomination is the church affiliated with or what denomination did it emerge from?

Organizational structure: How is the church organized i.e. who are its leaders and what positions do they hold?

Membership: How many members does the church claim to have? How many members did you observe at its services? What is the membership makeup (age, gender, ethnicity) and what accounts for this?

History: When was the church formed and under what circumstances? When did it come to Hawaii and why?

Social manifestations: What part does the church play in the community (is it involved in helping the homeless, park beautification projects, etc.)? In what way(s) does it see itself contributing to society? What adjustments has the church made to accommodate the local lifestyle?

Beliefs and practices: What are the church's main teachings? What social issue does the church consider most important? Is the church world-denying or world-affirming? What practices are considered vital for church members?

Finances: How is the church financed? Is it self-supporting (are members required to make specific donations on a regular basis) or does it receive financial help elsewhere (from its business or denominational affiliations)?

Proselytization strategy: How does the church attract and keep its members? Does it engage in door to door campaigns, media advertisements, publications, etc.? Is the strategy effective?

Church uniqueness: What distinguishes the church from other churches? Any peculiar qualities (beliefs, practices, leadership, etc.) that make the church unique? In other words, why would a person join this church and not any other?

Bibliography: At least three sources, including a primary source (church group's own publication), secondary source, and personal interview.

**Religion Profiles will not be returned unless an extra copy is submitted. Late work not accepted.*