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RE103 RELIGIONS AND THE HUMAN COMMUNITY  
Spring Day 1998

Description: This is a survey course designed to introduce the student to the major religious traditions and their various ways of creating community, and articulating history, spirituality and philosophy. We will discuss the phenomena of religion and religious expressions and institutions as we explore the meaning and relevance of religion in the modern world. Students will explore in a comparative manner the wisdom traditions in the human community and their articulations of the mystical and transcendence.

Required texts:

Smith, Huston. *The Illustrated World's Religions: A Guide to our Wisdom Traditions*. New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

Carmody, Denise Lardner and John Tully Carmody. *Mysticism: Holiness East and West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Other readings may be assigned and will be on reserve in the library.

On completion of this course the student will be able to:

- \* discuss the idea of religion and some of the theories for the origin of religion;
- \* discuss the use of myth in religion and religious language;
- \* discuss the many paths people follow in their response to the experience of transcendence;
- \* recognize the basic features of the primal religions;
- \* discuss the cultural and philosophical contexts of Jainism, Hinduism, Confucianism and Taoism;
- \* discuss in detail the origins and development of ideas and institutions within Buddhism, Christianity, and Judaism;
- \* discuss the historical development of Islam; and
- \* explore the ethical dimensions of the religious traditions in the world today.

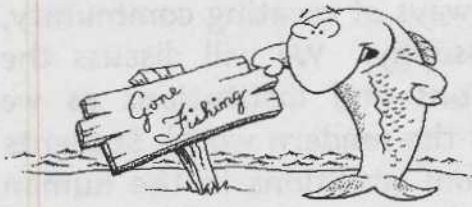


Evaluation:

1) Reading Assignments: The reading assignments are noted on the course syllabus and they should be completed prior to the scheduled class. Unannounced quizzes may be given on the assigned readings.



2) Class Attendance: Attendance will be taken. Class lectures, small group discussions, video materials and various activities will occur during class time, so your presence is required. You are responsible for insuring that your presence at a class is noted.

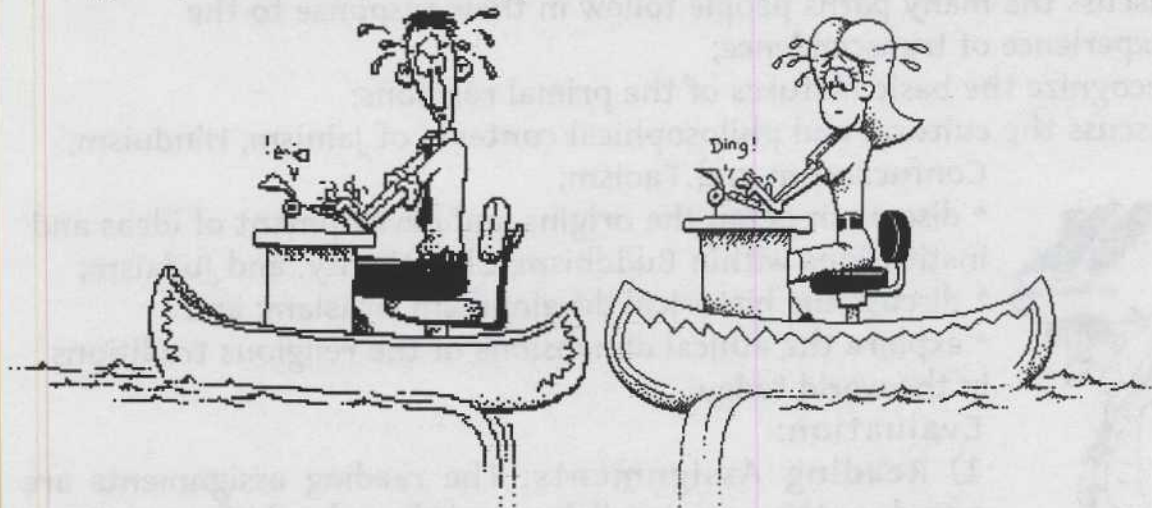


*If you have more than three unexcused absences, your grade may be lowered by one letter grade. Failure to attend on an assigned presentation day may result in the loss of points for the assignment. Make-ups for presentations and papers may not be possible due to class time restraints.*

3) Tests: Tests based on the reading materials will occur as scheduled on the syllabus. In-class reflections will be conducted at the completion of each week. There may be additional announced (or unannounced) quizzes on materials from the readings, lectures, discussions, or videos.

4) Research Paper: Students are required to write a short (4-6 page; double-spaced) research paper. It will have a minimum of 5 sources, which may include the course texts, reference notes, and a bibliography. Time will be provided for research and production of the paper.

5) Final Exam: The Final Exam is concerned with Judaism, Christianity, Islam and a comprehensive reflection on the content derived from the study of religions, the sacred, the holy, the humorous, and each other.



Grade Calculation: Attendance: more than three unexcused absences may result in one grade reduction; Participation: 20%; Tests: 40%; Research Paper: 20%; Final Exam: 20%. May be adjusted as the semester progresses.



*It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor if any specific special needs or difficulties exist so that appropriate strategies for completion of the work may be mutually developed.*



**Syllabus Spring Day 1998**

**RE 103 Religions and the Human Community**

**Dave Coleman**

**Office Hours: Henry 206a: TTh 9:40-10:30 and by appointment**

**Office Phone: 735-4866**

**January 13: Introduction and Overview:** What is religion? What is myth?

**January 15:** Film: *Masks of the Eternal*

Required Readings: Smith, 8-15; Carmody, 3-27

Recommended reading: Cunningham, Lawrence S., et.al., "Toward a Definition of Religion,"

chapter in *The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995): 11-26. On Reserve in the Library.

**January 20: Discussion and reflection**

**January 22: Hinduism**

Required readings: Smith, 17-56.

**January 27: Hinduism**

Required readings: Carmody, 28-59.

**January 29: Hinduism**

Film: *Ahimsa*

**February 3: Hinduism**

Required reading: Smith, 59-97.

**February 5: Buddhism**

Film: Huston Smith, "Hinduism and Buddhism"

**February 10: Buddhism**

Required reading: Carmody, 60-100.





**February 12: Buddhism**  
Film: Footprint of the Buddha  
**February 17: Buddhism**  
Film: Requiem for a Faith



**February 19: Chinese/Japanese Traditions** Film: Huston Smith, Chinese Religions

**February 24: Chinese Traditions: Taoism**  
Required reading: Smith, 99-143.

**February 26: Chinese Traditions: Carmody**



**March 3: Judaism**  
Film: Heritage: A People is Born

**March 5: Judaism**  
Required reading Smith, 179-203.

**March 10: Judaism**  
Film: Huston Smith, "Judaism and Christianity"

**March 12: Judaism**  
Required reading: Carmody, 137-185.

**March 17: Anti-Semitism**

Film: The Longest Hatred, Pt. 1

**March 19: Holocaust**

Required reading: Botwinick, "The Nature of Prejudice and the Historic Roots of Anti-Semitism"

**March 31: Holocaust**

Film: Out of the Ashes

**April 2: Christianity**

Required reading: Smith,

205-229.

**April 7: Christianity**

Discussion

**April 9: Christianity**

Required reading: Carmody, 186- 225.

**April 14: Christianity**

**April 16: Islam**

Huston Smith, "Islam"

**April 21: Islam**

Required reading: Smith, 145-177.

**April 23**

Required reading: Carmody, 226-271.

**April 28: Concluding Reflections**

Film: Smith, "Wisdom and Personal Journeys"

**April 30: Review**

