



RELIGIONS AND THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

Fall 1999

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:

Molloy, Michael. *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999.

Trussell, Richard Curran. *Study Guide to Accompany Molloy's Experiencing the World's Religions*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999.

Recommended Texts:

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

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 world's major religions;
- * discuss and write about some of the stories, rituals, art and architecture, beliefs, and ethics of six religious traditions;
- * 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.

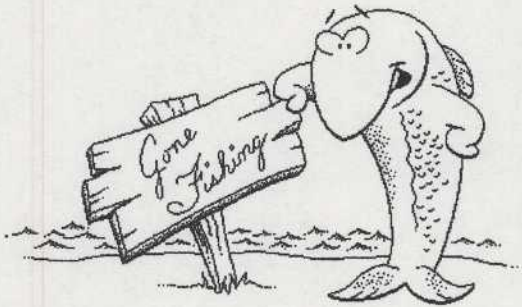


Evaluation:

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.

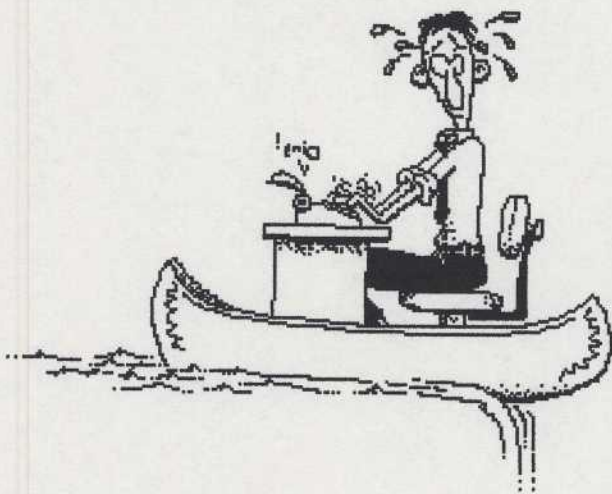
2) **Class Attendance:** Attendance will be taken. Class lectures, small group discussions, video materials and various activities will occur during class time, so your presence is required. You are responsible for insuring that your presence at a class is noted.

If you have more than three unexcused absences, your grade may be lowered by one letter grade.



3) **Tests:** There will be three tests based on the reading materials. The tests are not cumulative, and they will be based on the three areas of study for the course: Primal (Oral) Religions, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism; Buddhism and the Religions of China and Japan; and Abrahamic Religions..

4) **Study Journal:** Each student will prepare a typed journal of their study journey. The structure of the journal will be: Using the *Study Guide*, answer the "Short-Answer Study Questions, by Chapter Sections", followed by your choice of the reflection exercises that occur at the end of each chapter in the *Study Guide*.



5) **Class Project:** Students are required to complete a class project: (choose one below)

- 1) Contact and make arrangement for a service opportunity (Write up the contact and turn in a copy to me and to Bro. Tom Spring's office before you do the experience; perform the service; and write a reflection on it in light of the class discussions/reflections (3-5 double-space, typewritten pages). For example: What is the relationship between religious experiences, religious communities and acts of service?).
- 2) write a medium length (8-12 page; double-spaced) term paper, based on a visit to one or more local churches and temples. It will have a minimum of 5 sources (other than the course texts), reference notes, and a bibliography.

Let me know which option you are committed to by **SEPTEMBER 21, 1999**. Experience and reflection must be completed by **NOVEMBER 30, 1999**.

6) **Creative Participation:** We will use writing in class, outside of class, drawing, short papers, and group discussions as ways to evaluate the material we see, hear, and read. Students may also share (max 2 min) articles from newspapers and magazines on religion and religious objects for the class. They will prepare a portfolio of work to hand in by **NOVEMBER 23, 1999**, **WITH ONE POINT AWARDED FOR EACH ENTRY** (Appearance and presentation qualities count.) An entry will include the day the work was shared, the item (or picture if it was a religious object), and a paragraph on the significance of the entry for your study of the world's religions.

Grade Calculation:

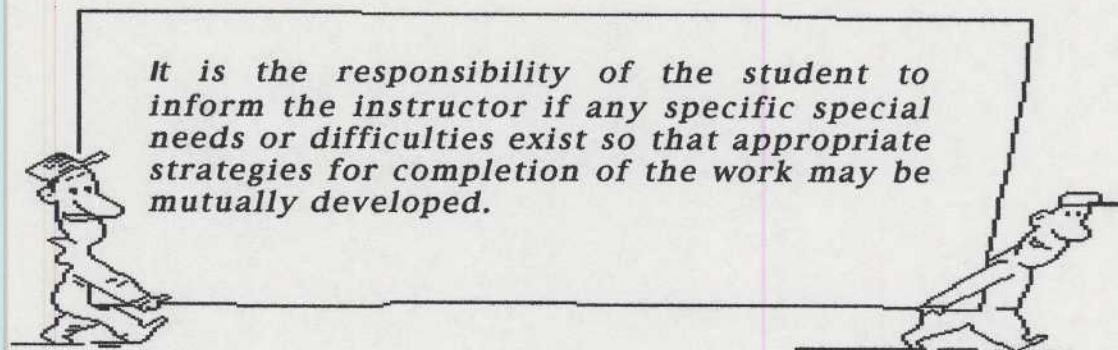
Attendance: more than three unexcused absences may result in one grade reduction;

Tests: 60%; 100 points per test

Study Journal: 20%; 100 points

Class project: 10%; 50 points

Participation: 10%; 50 points (creative points)



Syllabus Fall 1999

RE 103 Religions and the Human Community

Dave Coleman

Office Hours: Henry 206a: Tuesdays and Thursdays:

9:40-11:00; 1:15-1:45 and by appointment

Office Phone: 735-4866



Week One: August 31: Introduction and Overview?

What is religion? What is myth?

Required Readings: Molloy, 1-21

Recommended: Smith, 8-15



September 2: Oral Religions

Required reading: Molloy, 23-53

Week Two: September 7: Hinduism

Required readings: 55-79

Recommended reading: Smith, 17-56.

September 9: Discussion and reflection

Film: Legacy

Week Three: September 14-16: Choose one of the exercises from Chapters 3-5, "For Fuller Understanding" Be ready to share your exercise with the class on September 21.

Include this in your creative portfolio.

Week Four: September 21 - 23 Hinduism

Required Reading: Molloy, 79-99; 163-185.

Film: Ahimsa

Week Five: September 28: Indian Religions

Film: Huston Smith, "Hinduism and Buddhism"

September 30: Test One

Week Six: October 5: Buddhism

Required reading: Molloy, 101-123.

Film: Footprint of the Buddha

October 7: Buddhism

Required reading: Molloy, 123-161.



Week Seven: October 12: Buddhism

Film: Requiem for a Faith

October 14: Buddhism

Film: Dalai Lama

Recommended reading: Smith, 59-143.



Week Eight: October 19: Taoism

Film: Huston Smith, Chinese Religions

Required reading: Molloy, 187-205

October 21: Confucianism

Required reading: Molloy, 206-233.

Week Nine: October 26: Shinto
Required reading: 235-261.
October 28: Japanese Religions
Film: Land of the Disappearing Buddha

Week Ten: November 2 Test Two

November 4: Judaism
Required Reading: 263-292
Film: Chosen People



Week Eleven:
November 9: Judaism
Required Reading: 293-317
Film: Heritage: The Golden Land
November 11: Antisemitism
Film: The Longest Hatred, Pt. 1

Week Twelve:
November 16: Holocaust
Film: Out of the Ashes
November 18: Reflections
Film: Huston Smith, "Judaism and Christianity"



Week Thirteen:
November 23: Christianity
Required reading: 319-355
Creative Portfolio is due!

Week Fourteen:
November 30: Christianity
Film: From Jesus to Christ, part three
Class Project is due!

December 2: Christianity:
Required Reading: 355-399
film: Bernardin

Week Fifteen:
December 7: Islam
film: Huston Smith, "Islam"
Required reading: Molloy, 400-427

December 9: Islam
Required reading: Molloy, 427-453

Week Sixteen:
Final Exam: TBA
Required reading: Molloy 455-489

Study Journals are to be turned in with your final exam.

