

David Coleman



RELIGIONS AND THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

Fall 2000

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.
- CD-ROM Study Tool

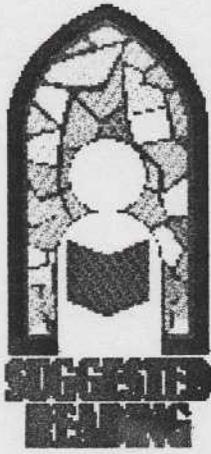
Recommended Texts:

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 experiences that we call the "sacred," the concept 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.



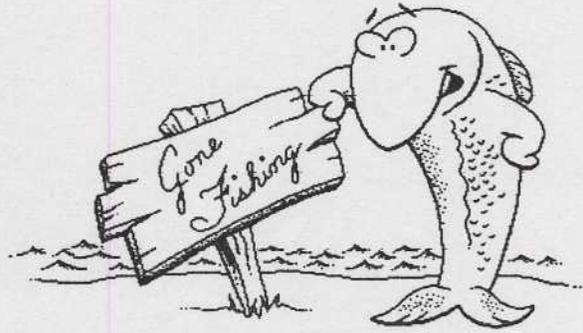
Evaluation:

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.

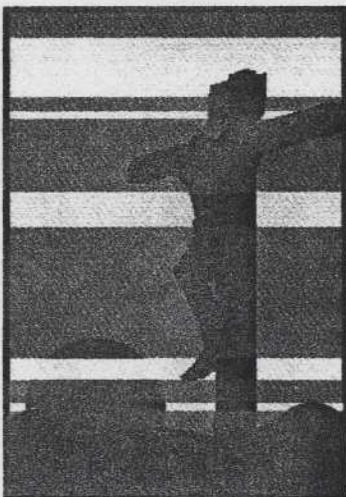
If you have more than three unexcused absences, your grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

3) **Tests:** There will be three tests based on the lectures and 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) **Class Project:** Students are required to complete a class project: (choose one below)

- 1) Contact Bro. Tom Spring and make arrangements for a service opportunity. You will need at least 12 hours of volunteer time during the semester. Arrangements should be made before September 12, 2000.
 - 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?.



OR

2) Visit one or more local churches and temples. Write a medium length (8-12 page; double-spaced) term paper, based on your visit and further research. It will have a minimum of 5 sources (other than the course texts), use and cite the sources with appropriate reference notes, and a bibliography. Use the Scott Foresman Handbook for Writing for appropriate styles of referencing: all footnotes/endnotes must have the page number where you found the quote or information.

Let me know which option you are committed to by September 5. Experience and reflection must be completed by November 7, 2000.

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5) **Creative Portfolio:** 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. You will prepare a portfolio of work to hand in by November 30, 2000. You will include a minimum of 30 entries. A POSSIBILITY OF TWO POINTS AWARDED FOR EACH ENTRY (Appearance and presentation qualities count.) You may do drawings, paintings, original poetry, songs, and other imaginative/creative works. You may also prepare video/multimedia presentations, but you must get permission and a portfolio must accompany the work. Up to 10 entries may be reflections on articles (you must include a copy of the article you use.) All entries will include

- the day the work was DONE;
- the item (or picture, if it is 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: 50%; 300 points total: 100 points per test

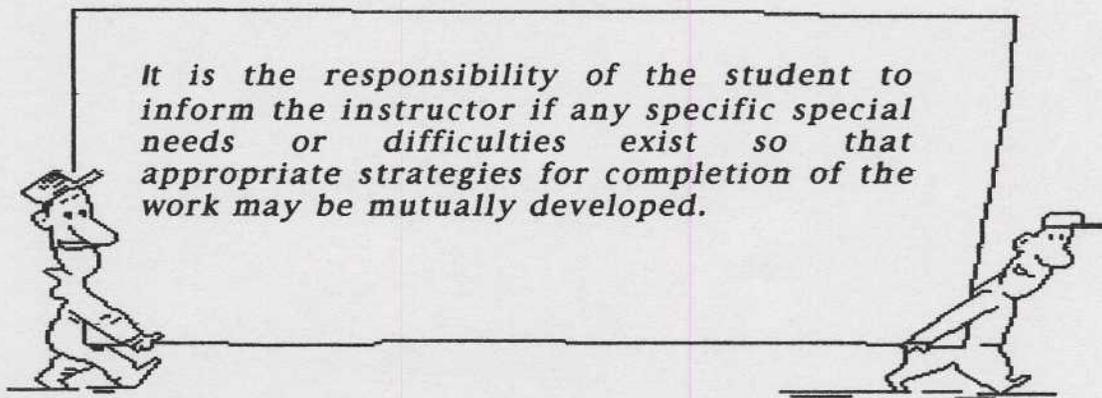
Creative Portfolio: 30%; 180 points

Class project: 10%; 60 points

Participation: 10%; 60 points; may include essays written in class

Your grade is calculated using the following scale:

A: 91 -100%; B: 81 - 90%; C: 71 - 80%; D: 61 - 70%; F: 0 - 60%.



Syllabus Fall 2000
RE 103 Religions and the Human Community
Dave Coleman

Office Hours: Henry 206a: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9:40-11:00; Fridays: 10:00-11:00 and by appointment

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Week One:

August 29: Introduction and Overview:?

What is transcendence and the sacred? What is religion? What is myth?

Required Readings: Molloy, 1-21

Recommended: Smith, 8-15

August 31: Oral Religions

Required reading: Molloy, 23-53



Week Two:



September 5 Hinduism: Vedic Religion

Required readings: Molloy, 55-79

Recommended reading: Smith, 17-56.

September 7: Indian Religions

Film: Huston Smith, "Hinduism and Buddhism"

Decision Sheets on Course Project are due.

Week Three:

September 12: 1 Hinduism

Required reading: Molloy, 79-99

September 14: Jainism

Required reading: 163-185. Film: Ahimsa



Week Four:

September 19: Early Buddhism

Required reading: Molloy, 101-123.

September 21: Theravada Buddhism

Film: Footprint of the Buddha

Week Five:

September 26: Review

September 28: Test One

Week Six:

October 3: Mahayana Buddhism

Required reading: Molloy, 123-161.

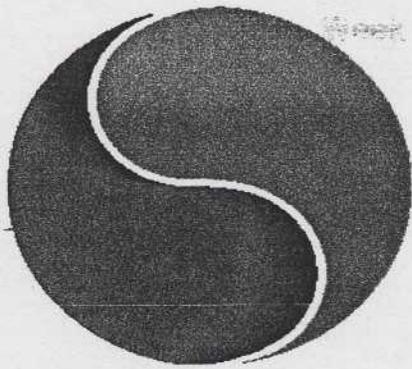
October 5: Mahayana Buddhism

Week Seven:

October 10: Tibetan Buddhism

Film: Requiem for a Faith





October 12: Tibetan Buddhism

Film: Dalai Lama

Recommended reading: Smith, 59-143.

Week Eight: October 17: Taoism

Film: Huston Smith, Chinese Religions

Required reading: Molloy, 187- 205

October 19: Confucianism

Required reading: Molloy, 206-233.

October 26: Review

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Week Ten: October 31 Test Two

November 2: Judaism

Required Reading: 263-292

Film: Chosen People

Week Eleven:

November 9: Judaism

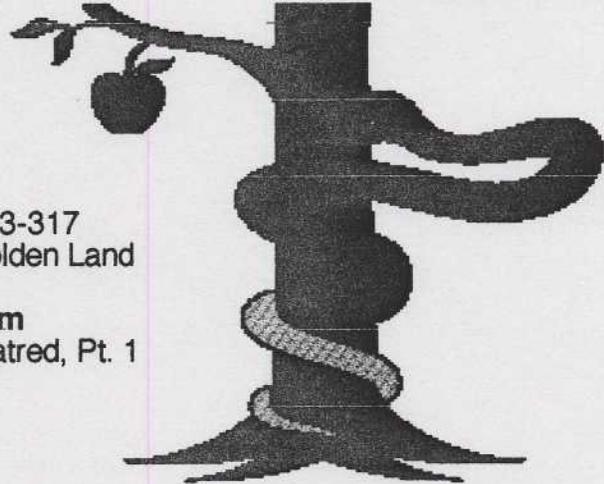
Required Reading: 293-317

Film: Heritage: The Golden Land

Class Project is due!

November 14: Antisemitism

Film: The Longest Hatred, Pt. 1



Week Twelve:

November 16: Holocaust

Film: Out of the Ashes

Week Thirteen

November 21: Reflections

Film: Huston Smith, "Judaism and Christianity"

Week Fourteen:

November 28: Christianity

Required reading: 319-355

Film: From Jesus to Christ



November 30: Christianity

Film: Bernardin

Required Reading: 355-399

Creative Portfolio is due!



Week Fifteen:

December 5: Islam

film: Huston Smith, "Islam"

Required reading: Molloy, 400-427

December 7: Islam

Required reading: Molloy, 427-453

Week Sixteen:

Final Exam: TBA

Required reading: Molloy 455-489

