

RELS 105.002 WORLD RELIGIONS
 Dr. June McDaniel
 Fall, 2007

Office: 4 Glebe St, Room 101
 Office hours: Weds 11-12:00, 2:00-4:00, Thursday 3:00-4:00
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Text: Huston Smith, *The Illustrated World's Religions*

This class will give you skills in analyzing major elements in religion, in library research, and in fieldwork. When you finish, you should have a good idea of the various ways that religions have understood God or gods, the basic beliefs and ritual actions which are an important part of religions, the ethics and values by which societies live, and the ways that scholars have sought to understand these issues.

Grading: Grades will be based upon 3 tests and 2 papers, each will be worth 1/5 of the total class grade. Test #3 will count as the final. Class participation and homework will be counted into your grade.

The passing grade is D-, or 60. Grades are not curved. They range as:

A	94 and over
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	below 60

Attendance: There will be THREE allowed absences. On the third absence, I shall note a warning on the attendance roster, that one more missed class will cause a student to be dropped. If you have any excused absences (illness, emergency), please let me know and I will cross them off. An additional point is given on the total grade for perfect attendance.

Papers: Papers should be based on ideas and approaches covered in class, and should be at least 5 full pages in length, typed (longer papers are fine, but shorter papers will have points deducted). Papers should have a title page with the paper title, your name, the class and section, and the date.

Your Visit Paper should include descriptions of three religious sites that you visit: churches, temples, mosques, Buddhist meditation groups, etc. It should include the sacred text, doctrines, rituals, ethics, religious experiences, and social institutions of your three religions.

Your Term Paper should focus upon a particular religion, and have a bibliography of at least 3 books (internet and encyclopedia sources do not count for these, though they may be added as extra sources). I shall hand out a writing guide to help in the organization of the papers. You should discuss your topic with me in advance, and I will give you helpful suggestions. If the paper is late, 10 points will be deducted per class late.

The Term Paper may be done in one of the following ways:

1. Library research on a world religion
2. Interview of members of the religion, combined with background library research.

You should include in the paper the religion's history, sacred text(s), doctrine, ritual, ethics, religious experience, and institutional organization.

The Visit Paper will be due on September 25.
The Term Paper will be due on November 13.

For discussion days, you should bring in a thoughtful, written question or reflection based on the reading for that period, a question that is challenging and interesting. Questions will be collected and graded.

Academic Integrity and the Honor Code: There is a zero-tolerance policy toward plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty in this course. This means that anyone caught taking credit for work that is not his or her own, or cheating in any other way, will receive a failing grade for the entire course, which will show up on the transcript as an XF grade. Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code of the College.

SYLLABUS

Date	Topic	Assignment
8/21	Introduction	
8/23	Some Issues in Religion How do we understand religion?	Chap 1
8/30	The Study of Religion, Ancient religions, Shamanism	Chap. 9
9/4	Indigenous religions	
9/6	Hinduism- Vedas and Upanishads, reincarnation	Chap 2
9/11	Hinduism- Bhakti, Tantra Film- 'India and the Infinite'	
9/13	Yoga, guest speaker	
9/18	Buddhism, Theravada	Chap 3
9/20	Library day- go to library, Learn about research (meet at Library room 227)	
9/25	Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism	VISIT PAPER DUE!
9/27	Film, 'Ossian'. Discussion day	Bring in a question
10/2	TEST #1	
10/4	Confucianism	Chap 4
10/9	Taoism, Film 'Taoism'	Chap. 5
10/11	Shinto	
10/16	FALL BREAK- No class	

10/18	Egyptian religion, Zoroastrianism	
10/23	Judaism	Chap 7
10/25	Judaism	
10/30	Discussion day	Bring in a question
11/1	TEST #2	
11/6	Christianity	Chap 8
11/8	Christianity- guest speaker	
11/13	Islam	TERM PAPER DUE
11/15	Islam- guest speaker	Chap 6
11/20	Study day- no class	
11/22	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
11/27	Atheism, guest speaker Discussion day	Bring in a question
11/29	TEST #3	