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840:212  Religions of the Western World  
Summer 2002

 James Pavlin

840:212:SEC. H6

**Time and Place:** TTh 6:15–9:45 (7/9–8/13), FH-A5/CAC

**Instructor:** Dr. James Pavlin

**Office:** Loree Bldg. 130/DC, (732) 932–2107 (office phone and voice mail);  
**email:** jpavlin@hotmail.com

**Office Hours:** before and after class, or by appointment

**Course Description:** The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to the academic study of religion by focusing on the monotheistic religions of the Near Eastern and Western traditions. After acquiring the necessary terminology and concepts related to the study of religion, the course will focus on the scriptures, beliefs and practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each religion will be studied with particular attention paid readings of primary sources related to historical developments in terms of theology, philosophy and mysticism.

**Required Text:** Kessler, Gary E. *Western Ways of Being Religious*.

**Recommended Texts on Reserve at Alexander Library:**

Grant, Michael. *The History of Ancient Israel*.

Peters, F.E. *Jerusalem: the holy city in the eyes of chroniclers, visitors, pilgrims, and prophets from the days of Abraham to the beginnings of modern times*.

—. *Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: the classical texts and their interpretation*, 3 vols.

Sanders, E.P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*.

Waines, David. *An Introduction to Islam*.

## **Course Requirements:**

1. Class Attendance and Participation: 30% of final grade. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions. Material covered in class may be included on the final exam. Quizzes or other assignments may be given occasionally, without the possibility of make ups. In order to receive an excused absence,

students must present a written note (from doctor, etc.).

2. Three Topical Papers: 40% of final grade. Each paper must have a cover page and bibliography. There must be a minimum of 4 pages of text (about 250 words per page). Students will do one paper on each of the three religions covered in the course, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They may choose a topic related to the readings in Kessler's book. Spelling, grammar and writing style will be considered in grading. Papers should be in standard format: typed or printed on white paper (8 1/2 x 11) with 1 in. margins and double-spaced, a plain font at 10 or 12 point, black ink. All papers must be handed in on their due date, late papers will be accepted from students having an excused absence.
3. Final Exam: 30% of final grade. Both exams will be in class essay exams, the midterm covering the first half of the semester and the final covering the second half. Make up exams are permitted for those having an excused absence.

**General Policies:** Students are expected to be prepared for class by reading all required assignments. Students are responsible for all information presented in the lectures as well as what is contained in the required readings, all of which may appear on the exams. Recommended readings are optional and meant for use on the topical papers and exploring certain topics in depth. An incomplete ( T grade) for this course will ordinarily not be given.

**Grading System:** A=100-90, B+=89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64 and below

## **Course Outline and Reading Assignments:**

Introduction to the Study of Religion

7/9 Kessler, chs. 1, 2 & 3

Ancient Israel

7/11 Kessler, ch. 4 (Intro. through 4.3.3)

Medieval Judaism

7/16 Kessler, ch. 4 (4.4 through 4.4.3)

Modern Judaism:

7/18 Kessler, ch. 4 (4.5 through 4.7)

Early Christianity

7/23 Kessler, ch. 5 (Intro. through 5.2.6) **1 st paper due**

Medieval Christianity

7/25 Kessler, ch. 5 (5.3 through 5.4.2, and 5.6)

Modern Christianity

7/30 Kessler, ch. 5 (5.5 through 5.7)

Early Islam:

8/1 Kessler, ch. 6 (Intro. through 6.2.2) **2 nd paper due**

Medieval Islam

8/6 Kessler, ch. 6 (6.3 through 6.3.3)

Modern Islam

8/8 Kessler, ch. 6 (6.4 through 6.6)

8/13 Final Exam **3 rd paper due**

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