



RELIGIONS OF THE
WORLD
CORNELL COLLEGE
BLOCK 4, 2018



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Department of Religion, 101 Prall House
Class Meetings: Law 109, M 1-3, T 12:30-3, WRF 12-3 p.m.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OUTCOMES

Religions of the World examines the history, teachings, and ways of life of both global and local religious traditions. In particular, this class will introduce students to Native American religious traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and a variety of new religious movements. Students will not only go off-campus to visit religious sites of worship and to dialogue with cultural insiders, but will also have opportunities to engage with ritual practices and ceremonies as led by religious experts.

This course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College as follows:

- 1) **Knowledge:** Students will integrate and apply knowledge from an interdisciplinary perspective in order to understand historical development, teachings, and ways of life pertaining to religions of the world.
- 2) **Inquiry:** Students will consider the complexity of modern issues concerning religious communities, such as the legal battles surrounding the preservation of space deemed sacred by Native American cultures, the relationship between religion and nationalism, and the problem of religious violence. Furthermore, students will compare and contrast the ritual practices, discourses, and worldviews of religions of the world.
- 3) **Communication:** Students will be asked to develop skills in oral presentation and argumentation in class presentations and discussions.
- 4) **Intercultural Literacy:** Students will be asked to identify with, argue on behalf of, and critique a wide variety of religious perspectives. Furthermore, through site-visits and guest speakers, students will be invited to directly engage with the practices and practitioners of different religions.
- 5) **Ethical Behavior and Well-Being:** The study of religious practices and sacred texts, along with the moral and spiritual challenges and visions therein, is an ethical endeavor that invites existential contemplation, dialogue, and growth.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXTS

Required texts are available at the campus bookstore; all other articles, chapters, and videos are available online on Moodle.

Molloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions*, 6th edition. E-Book

Michael Puett and Christine Gross-Loh, *The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016.

ASSIGNMENTS, PARTICIPATION, AND GRADING

- Mini-Quizzes
- Midterm Exam
- Final Exam
- Short Research Paper/Project
- Attendance and Participation

While reading each chapter from the textbook, students will take a series of short, low-stakes online quizzes. Important studies (*Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*) have shown that such quizzes demonstrate significant results in students' long-term retention and mastery of material and improved test scores. These quizzes can be taken as many times as you wish to test your comprehension. Students will be graded on the basis of their completion of the online quizzes, not on the basis of their performance.

Every day students will have *short writing prompts* that will form the basis of class discussions and some will show up on the midterm and final exams.

The *midterm exam* will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions. The multiple choice questions will be pulled from the mini-quizzes. Short essays will be adapted from short essay prompts, and answers will come from class readings, videos, and discussions outside of the textbook.

The *final exam* will also consist of multiple choice and short essay questions and will primarily focus on themes discussed in the latter half of the course and in the same format as the *midterm exam*.

The *short research paper/project* is meant to provide students with an opportunity to dig deeper into a topic pertinent to the study of religion or to discuss and analyze an independent visit of a religious event. Options include:

- **Research Paper:** Students can write a 5-page research paper on a topic of their choice in consultation with the Professor. The student must incorporate at least 4-5 peer reviewed journal articles, essays, or books.
- **Visit to a Religious Center/Event:** Students can write a 5-page paper describing their experience of a religious tradition different from what they identify with or experienced before. This is not merely a "reflection paper," but an informed and detailed analysis in conversation with the textbook that details similarities and differences distinct to this particular instantiation of a given religious tradition in



comparison with how it is described in the textbook. It would be good to reach out to the religious leader or community before attending to make sure that they can accommodate you and perhaps have someone available to discuss their particular history, practices, and way of life.

Class attendance and participation are mandatory for this course, as is the originality of your work. *Students who consistently do not participate or are demonstrably ill-prepared for class in class will be deducted points.* The degree of preparation will largely determine your ability to intelligently participate in our discussions, and to be an asset to your classmates in group work.

Three absences without *verifiable* medical cause/family emergency or plagiarism will be cause for failing grades. Late papers will be subject to a minimum of a 10% deduction.

Grading:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Final Paper	30%
Mini-Quizzes	10%

A: 94%–100%	B: 84–86%	C: 73%–76%
A-: 90%–93%	B-: 80%–83%	C-: 70%–72%
B+: 87%–89%	C+: 77%–79%	Fail: < 70%

All readings are listed below, due on the day that they appear, and may be downloaded from Moodle. *The present schedule and/or readings are liable to be amended as is necessary.*

Students are expected to complete a significant amount of work outside of the course which supplements scheduled hours within the classroom, and exceeds the government's regulations on course credit equivalency (2–3 hours out-of-class work for every 1 hour of classroom work, thus *at least 6 hours of out-of-class work for every day of class*).

I will hold regular office hours, but please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions or concerns about the course.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work



and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading “Academic Honesty.”

Accommodations

Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Academic Support and Advising and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see

<http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-and-advising/disabilities/index.shtml>.

Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

Week 1

Monday, Nov 26

Introduction

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 1
 - **Take Practice Quiz**

Tuesday, Nov 27

Indigenous Religions of North America

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 2
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Read:** [Rosalyn R. LaPier, “Will global warming change Native American religious practices?” *The Conversation* \(July 6, 2017\)](#)
- **Read:** [Rosalyn R. LaPier, “Native American religion and Standing Rock: What you need to know.” *Grist* \(Nov. 7, 2016\)](#)
- **Recommended:** Vine Deloria, Jr., “Sacred Places and Moral Responsibilities,” from *God is Red*, 267–82
- **Recommended:** Philip Jenkins, “Returning the Land,” from *Dream Catchers*, 223–44 (esp. 234–36)

Wednesday, Nov 28

Hinduism

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 3
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Read:** Selections from *Bhagavad-Gita*, 1:20–47, 2:1–48, 4:1–15, 11:1–20, 50–55, 16:1–11, 21–24; 18:1–9, 41–49, 60–73
- **Afternoon Yoga with Special Guest:** [Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel](#) (Meet at Durham Hall from 1-2:30 p.m.)

Thursday, Nov 29

Hinduism

Debate: Is Rama an Ideal Man?

- **Read:** Linda Hess, “Rejecting Sita: Indian Responses to the Ideal Man’s Cruel Treatment of His Ideal Wife,” 1–28



- **Watch:** Rama and the Ramayana (13 min.)
- **Recommended:** Linda Hess, “An Open Air Ramayana: Ramlila, the Audience Experience,” 115–36

Debate: Is Yoga Hindu?

- **Read:** [HAF: “Hindu Origins of Yoga”](#)
- **Read:** [NPR: “Modern Yoga Has Lost Its Way”](#)

Friday, Nov 30

Buddhism

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World’s Religions*, Chapter 4
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** *The Buddha* (5:40)

Week 2

Monday, Dec 3

Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Daoism

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World’s Religions*, Chapter 6
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** Crash Course World History: China
- **Watch:** The Tao of Pooh

Tuesday, Dec 4

Buddhism

- **Read:** [Dhamapada](#) (read as much as you can for 45 min., be sure to read: The Pairs, The Mind, The Fool, The Wise, Thousands, Violence, Affection)
- **Read:** [Thich Nhat Hanh, Happiness](#) (spend 1 hour reading what you like, including “The Five Mindfulness Trainings)
- **Listen:** [On Being with Krista Tippett: Ricard Davidson, Investigating Healthy Minds](#)
- **Recommended:** [Free the Mind](#) (documentary)

Special Guest: [Rev. Zuiko Redding](#), Resident Teacher of the Cedar Rapids Zen Center

Wednesday, Dec 5

Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Daoism

- **Read:** Michael Puett and Christine Gross-Loh, *The Path*
 - Students are encouraged to read as much of this book as they can, while being responsible to teach and discuss at least 2 chapters in conversation with primary sources. The class will be split up in different groups earlier in the week.

Thursday, Dec 6

Sikhism and Review for Midterm

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World’s Religions*, Chapter 5
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** National Geographic: Sikhism



- **Watch:** Sikhism 101

Friday, Dec 7

Midterm Exam
9–12 p.m.

Week 3

Monday, Dec 10

Judaism

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 8
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** Modern Conflict in Palestine
- **Class Visit to Agudas Achim in Coralville (12:45 p.m.–3 p.m.).**

Tuesday, Dec 11

Christianity

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 9
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** *Gospel of Luke Storyboard*
- **Class Visit to St. Raphael of Brooklyn Orthodox Church (12:20 p.m.)**

Wednesday, Dec 12

Judaism & Christianity

Jewish Christianity and Christian Anti-Jewishness

- **Read:** [Antisemitism and the New Testament](#)
- **Watch:** [Constantine's Sword \(90 min.\)](#)

The Problem of Evil and the Cross

- **Read:** Johnson, "The Crucified God of Compassion," 49–69
- **Read:** James Cone, "Legacies of the Cross and the Lynching Tree," 152–66

Thursday, Dec 13

Islam

- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 10
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- **Watch:** Islam

Friday, Dec 14

Islam

- **Read:** *Study Quran: "Conquest and Conversion, War and Peace in the Quran"*
- **Read:** [Rolling Stone: "Will America's Oldest Muslim Community Survive Trump?"](#)
- **Read:** [Imam Hassam Selim](#)
- **Class Visit to Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids (1:15 p.m.–4:30).**

Week 4



- Monday, Dec 17 **Research Paper Day**
- Short Research Paper/Project due by 11:59 p.m. tonight.
- Tuesday, Dec 18 **New Religions and Review**
- **Read:** *Experiencing the World's Religions*, Chapter 11
 - **Take Practice Quiz**
- Wednesday, Dec 19 **Final Examination**
- Exam from 9–12 p.m.

Rel 222 Final Paper Rubric

The *short research paper/project* is meant to provide students with an opportunity to dig deeper into a topic pertinent to the study of religion or to discuss and analyze an independent visit of a religious event. Options include:

- **Research Paper:** Students can write a 5-page research paper on a topic of their choice in consultation with the Professor. The student must incorporate at least 4-5 peer reviewed journal articles, essays, or books.
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No more than 12 font, double spaced, normal margins. It will be evident if your paper is stretched out and lacks sufficient content comparable to other students.

A grade will be assigned on the basis of:

- **Content (40%):** Does this research paper reference at least 4-5 peer reviewed sources? What is the quality of these sources (are they simply internet pages)? If the paper is about a site visit, does this paper sufficiently describe the service and critically engage and ground the student’s experience with the textbook (and even other resources)? Is the content summarized concisely? Is the content relevant and effective in advancing the student’s argument? How much does the reader *learn* from this paper?
- **Argument (40%):** Does the paper have a clear argument and point of view? Is the argument comprehensive, concise, and persuasive? Does the argument flow well or is it jumpy? Is the argument repetitive or does it have complexity and nuance? If relevant, does this paper present multiple perspectives (or shows awareness of such perspectives)?
- **Grammar (20%):** Is this paper clean or does it suffer from numerous errors that are distracting?