

Christopher Newport University
RSTD 212
Introduction to World Religions II
Stephen Strehle, Instructor
Fall 2016

I. Introduction

This course is designed to introduce the student to a number of religious traditions. The emphasis will fall upon the major western religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—which speak of a personal God and his revelation to humankind. The course will include an examination of each religion’s background and history, salient points, and cultic expressions, and so provide a solid foundation for an intellectual discussion of their similarities and differences. Toward the end of the class, the course will include other religious traditions—some minor and a few eastern—in order to expand the discussion. This material will help provide a more complete and balanced perspective upon the religious community as a whole.

II. Course Procedures and Requirements

- A. Much of the classroom will be devoted to lectures by the instructor. Discussion, comments, and questions are encouraged.
- B. Two exams are scheduled for this semester, a mid-term and a final. Exams are based upon material presented in class, as well as the three textbooks. The student will receive study questions a couple of weeks in advance of each exam. One week before the exam the student will take a quiz over the study questions, using the notes that were assembled during the past week when answering the questions, and then the class will review the material together during the class period, as well as the next. The instructor will select a few of these questions for the purpose of examination. A blue book is required for each exam.
- C. The textbooks for this course are D. S. Noss’s *A History of the World’s Religions*, thirteenth edition (New York: Macmillan, 2012); R. E. Van Voorst’s *Anthology of the World Scriptures: Western Religions* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2007); and S. Strehle’s *The Separation of Church and State* (Lafayette: Huntington House, 2001). These works will be discussed during the class in accordance with the following schedule:

Section	Date
1. Van Vorst, chap. 3	_____
2. Noss, chap. 14	_____
3. Noss, chap. 17	_____
4. Van Voorst, chap. 5	_____
5. Strehle, intro., chaps. 1 and 2	_____
6. Strehle, chap. 3	_____

- 7. Noss, chap. 15 _____
- 8. Van Voorst, chap. 4 _____
- 9. Noss, chap. 16 _____

Quizzes covering the reading material will be given at the discretion of the professor. The student should take notes while reading the material and may consult the notes while taking the quiz. There are no makeup quizzes, but the professor will drop the lowest grade.

D. The student is expected to write a paper. It is around the tenth week of class (TBA). He or she should select from the following options:

1) The student may select a religion or sect of a religion, which is not covered in class but of interest to him or her. The following religions represent some examples of what the professor has in mind: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Zen Buddhism, Bahai, and Christian Science. After selecting one of these religions or another of one's own choosing, the student is then to read at least 300 pages of material on the subject and write a four page, typewritten paper, which summarizes the essence of the faith. Each page should include no more than 350 words and use a standard style of writing (Turabian, Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.). The paper should include a bibliography of the material used and the pages of that material consulted.

2) The student may select a religion or sect of a religion that is of interest and yet foreign to one's own experience. The student is then to read at least 150 pages of material upon the subject (in addition to whatever reading was completed for the class) and attend one of its services or meetings. After completing this assignment the student is to write a four page paper on his or her observations and experience at the meeting in accordance with the same standards previously mentioned.

Note: When writing a paper, it is always helpful to have others read it and offer criticisms. The instructor encourages the student to write the paper as soon as possible and come back to it later with his or her own fresh perspective, as well as the criticisms of others. To facilitate the process the student should take advantage of the Center for Academic Success/Alice F. Randall Writing Center, which is located in Newport Hall 123.

E. A student must produce his or her own work. All work in the course is subject to the CNU honor code (see *College Handbook*).

F. Except for reasonable cause, students are expected to be present at all regularly scheduled class meetings. Judgments regarding what constitutes reasonable cause are the prerogative of the instructor. Students who warrant an excused absence must present oral or written to him. The instructor reserves the right to consider class attendance and participation as a factor when considering a student's mark.

- G. If a student needs to contact the instructor outside of class, he/she may meet with him during office hours or set up an appointment. His office is found in McMurran Hall (Room 263), and his office hours are as follows: Tues. 1100-1330, Wed. 1300-1400, and Thurs. 1500-1600. The phone number of the department secretary, Tara Dixon, is 594-8827, and her office is found in the same building and complex. If you need the instructor immediately, it is best to call his home phone number (599-4208).

III. Special Help

Disabilities:

In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Dean of Students' Office, 3rd Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Dr. Kevin Hughes, Dean of Students (594-7160) to discuss your needs. Dean Hughes will provide you with the necessary documentation to give to your professors.

Students with documented disabilities are required to notify the instructor no later than the first day on which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended), in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with all reasonable accommodations, but students are not exempted from fulfilling the normal requirements of the course. Work completed before the student notifies the instructor of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Success:

I want you to succeed in this course and at CNU. I encourage you to come see me during office hours or to schedule an appointment to discuss course content or to answer questions you have. If I become concerned about your course performance, attendance, engagement, or well-being, I will speak with you first. I also may submit a referral through our Captains Care Program. The referral will be received by the Center for Academic Success as well as other departments when appropriate (Counseling Services, Office of Student Engagement). If you are an athlete, the Athletic Academic Support Coordinator will be notified. Someone will contact you to help determine what will help you succeed. Please remember that this is a means for me to support you and help foster your success at CNU.

Academic Support:

The Center for Academic Success offers free tutoring assistance for CNU students in several academic areas. Staff in the center offer individual assistance and/or workshops on various study strategies to help you perform your best in your courses. The center also houses the Alice F. Randall Writing Center. Writing consultants can help you at any stage of the writing process, from invention, to development of ideas, to polishing a final draft. The Center is not a proofreading service, but consultants can help you to recognize and find grammar and punctuation errors in your work as well as provide assistance with global tasks. Go as early in the writing process as you can, and go often!

You may drop by the Center for Academic Success to request a tutor, meet with a writing consultant, pick up a schedule of workshops, or make an appointment to talk one-on-one with a University

Fellow for Student Success. The Center is located in Newport Hall 123.

IV. Class Schedule (Assignments in Bold Print)

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
First Week	Syllabus, Judaism	Judaism	Judaism
Second Week	Quiz on OT Outline, Judaism	Van Voorst (Chap. 3), Judaism	Judaism
Third Week	Anti-Semitism	Noss (Chap. 14), Islam	Islam
Fourth Week	Islam	Noss (Chap. 17), Islam	Islam
Fifth Week	Islam	Study Questions, Van Voorst (Chap. 5), Islam	Islam
Sixth Week	Jihad	Review	Black Muslim
Seventh Week	Exam	Zoroastrianism, Mithraism	Christianity
Eighth Week	No Class	Strehle (Intro. and Chaps.1 and 2)	Christianity
Ninth Week	Christianity	Strehle (Chap. 3), Christianity	Christianity
Tenth Week	Christianity	Paper, Christianity	Christianity
Eleventh Week	Christianity	Noss (Chap. 15), Christianity	Christianity
Twelfth Week	Hinduism	Van Voorst (Chap. 4)	Buddhism Confucianism
Thirteenth Week	Shintoism, Taoism	Noss, Chapt. 16, Study Questions	Noss, Chapt. 16 (cont.)
Fourteenth Week	Noss (Chapt. 16)	No Class	No Class

Fifteenth Week	Native American Religion	Review	Review
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Sixteenth Week	Exam
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VII. Grade Calculus

Quizzes	25%
Mid-term Exam	25%
Paper	25%
Final Exam	25%

Note: Grades are typically measured on a ten-point scale.