

Class Syllabus – Fall Semester 2013

Course: PHIL 352

Title: Introduction to World Religions

Course Number: 17324

Units: 3.00

Prerequisite: None

Meeting Hours: Saturday 9 AM – 12 PM, RM 171 Rodda Hall South

Instructor: Professor Carboni

Contact Information

- E-mail: philosophy.carboni@gmail.com
- Mailboxes: Located in the Humanities and Fine Arts Division Office on the main campus (PAC 136)
- Office Hours: Saturday 12:15 – 12:45 PM (Room TBA)

Add/Drop Info: Last day to enroll is September 8th. Last day to drop with a “W” is November 19th. Final examination will be the final day of class on December 14th.

Course Description: This course is an introductory survey of important and influential world religions. Emphasis is on the origins, beliefs, and interpretations of philosophical concepts underlying Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism. Major topics include ideas of revelation, mysticism, religious myths, worship, and ritual. These topics will be investigated by looking into the major philosophical tenants of each religion as they attempt to answer epistemological, metaphysical and ethical concepts.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify and distinguish basic terms, beliefs, and concepts of various religions from several different cultures.
- Understand how different religions answer the major philosophical questions – epistemological, ethical, metaphysical, etc.
- Evaluate the cultural and historical developments of various religions.
- Compare and contrast different religious beliefs and traditions within the culturally diverse environment of the United States and elsewhere.
- Identify and evaluate the contributions of several religious traditions to cultural diversity in the United States and elsewhere.
- Identify and evaluate the contributions of relevant religious traditions to art, music, and literature.

Required Textbook:

Matthews, Warren. (2010). *World Religions: 6th Edition*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning: Belmont.

Recommended Books

Dictionary – It is recommended that you own at least one good dictionary. It need not be something that you bring with you to class, but since you will be writing papers/essays for this

class, you will use one. In addition, you may use a dictionary on all in-class assignments, exams and writing assignments.

Student Standards of Conduct

• Cheating in this class will not be tolerated, and if a student is caught cheating he or she will receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or the course depending on the severity of the action. Cheating includes – but is not limited to – the following:

- Copying a fellow student's answers on an examination
- Submitting work that is not your own – more below under plagiarism
- Using material during an exam that is not allowed
- Contacting someone else for assistance, outside of the professor, during an exam

• Plagiarism of any type will not be tolerated in this class. Anyone caught plagiarizing on an assignment will receive a failing grade on that assignment. Plagiarism includes – but is not limited to – the following:

- Incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or any part of another individual's work as your own or failing to provide the proper documentation for such in your own work. We will discuss this more when you receive your first writing assignment; however, in the mean time, if you use someone else's work, make sure to cite it
- Submitting a paper purchased from a research or paper writing service

• Purposely “obstructing” the viewpoint of another student in the classroom during classroom discussions is prohibited.

- This class will involve many discussions concerning the material assigned for homework and the material presented during the classroom lectures. This being a course on world religions, many of these readings and discussions will challenge certain beliefs that you hold. Open dialogue and proper methods of argumentation are not only expected but required for this class. Meaning, expect to disagree with your fellow classmates at times or with your professor at times. However, always allow others the chance to express their views.

• Attendance/Participation: Students are expected to attend each class session. Attendance will be taken each class. The Student handbook explains that students who miss more than 6% of the class (1 class session for a 3 hour class) must be dropped from the class. Point being, do not miss class. In addition, this class will involve many in-class discussions. Students are expected to have completed the readings and participate in these in-class discussions. Your final grade will also include a participation percentage.

• Cell Phones: Please turn all cell-phones to vibrate or off before the class session begins. It is extremely disruptive to your instructor – namely, me! – and to your fellow classmates when a cell-phone rings. I do not care how inventive or “cool” your recently downloaded call/text alert is! Furthermore, cell phones are not to be used in class. If you must take a call, please step outside before you answer. No texting or Internet use will be allowed in class – it is distracting to me, your fellow students and, most importantly, to you. This is especially true during exams - anyone who is caught sending an un-authorized text or found using the Internet during an exam will receive an automatic failing grade on that exam.

• Food: This class is held during the morning period. The rulebook states that no food or drink is allowed into any classroom on this campus; however, I personally could not get by without a cup of

coffee or water while I lecture. So, as long as you promise to not spill, feel free to bring drinks into the class such as coffee or some other “allowed” beverage. Foodstuff that is quiet will also be allowed. With that said, I ask that you do not bring something that smells wonderful or enticing or that is very loud. This can be very distracting. We should be thinking about philosophy here and not KFC chicken.

- Lastly, all students are expected to follow the College Rules and Guidelines located in the SCC Student Handbook. Please obtain a copy of the SCC Student Handbook and refer to page 42 – 43 for the college’s rules concerning student misconduct. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with all college policies and procedures.

Now to the really important stuff...

Class Assignments

This class will require a substantial amount of reading – whether from the textbook for this class or from supplemental materials supplied by me. All students are expected to complete the assignments before the class begins. In addition, the class will involve at least two writing assignments to be completed outside of class (more on this below).

- **Quizzes:** Each class session will begin with a short *group* quiz on the reading assigned for that class. These quizzes will generally involve one or two short answer questions (never more than two) and will be worth a total of 10 points. These points add up, so do not miss class. Also, since there are NO MAKE-UPS on quizzes – please do not ask – do not be late to class. If you were to miss 2 quizzes (20 points) it could be the difference between an ‘A’ and a ‘B’. More importantly, if you were to miss 2 quizzes, it could be the difference between an F and a low (very low) C. At the conclusion of the semester, the lowest score received on one quiz will be dropped.

These quizzes will be group quizzes (groups will be assigned on Saturday, August 31st). You will remain in the same group throughout the term. At the conclusion of the term, you will be asked to evaluate each of your group members’ level of group participation and this evaluation will in part determine your participation grade in the class (possible 50 points).

- **Writing Assignments:** There will be two detailed writing/essay assignments for this class. Each assignment will be worth a total of 100 points. These assignments must be a minimum of 5 pages (not including the bibliography page – longer is better) and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All papers must be written using 12-point font
- All papers must be double spaced
- All papers must include a properly formatted reference/bibliography page (will be discussed in class)
- No cover page
- The student’s full name, date and the class title in the upper right hand corner of the first page
- Student’s last name and a page number in the upper left hand corner of each page (header)

All papers that do not adhere to these basic structural guidelines will not be accepted. Make sure that you ask questions if you have any.

A detailed handout will be provided which will provide further instructions (including basic grammar instructions) for each paper.

Written assignments will be graded based on the following specifications:

- Content: Did the papers adequately cover the assigned question
- Grammar and clarity: Being able to express your ideas clearly is extremely important in the study of philosophy. Using proper grammar is an extremely important aspect of writing clearly. Thus, on your papers I will deduct 1 point for every 2 grammatical errors (this works out to .5 points for every error committed). In addition, if I receive a paper that is “full of” grammatical errors, I will return that paper without a grade and you will be asked to re-do the paper. These papers will be considered late and will be penalized accordingly. Get it right the first time to avoid this.

The topics for these writing assignments will be provided to you in class. The tentative assignment and due dates for these writing assignments will be as follows:

- Topic for paper assignment one provided: Saturday, September 14th
- Topic for paper assignment two provided: Saturday, October 26th

Due Dates:

- Paper assignment one due: Saturday October 5th (This gives you three weeks)
- Paper assignment two due: Saturday, November 16th (Once again, this gives you three weeks for this paper)

Late papers will be docked 5 points for each day that they are late (not class but day)

• Exam: There will be two exams in this class: a midterm and a final exam. These exams will consist of a series of short answer questions (much like what you see on the quizzes) and *at least* one essay question. The exam will be based on the material discussed in class and in the readings. The exam will be worth 100 possible points. You will receive a study guide for this exam on one week prior to each exam.

- Midterm Exam: Saturday, October 19th
- Final Exam: Saturday, December 14th

Grade Breakdown:

1) 14 quizzes	=	140 Possible Points
2) 2 papers	=	200 Possible Points
3) Mid. Exam	=	100 Possible Points
4) Final Exam	=	100 Possible Points
5) Participation	=	50 Possible Points (Speak up – I keep track)

Total Possible Points 590 Possible Points (Note: Depending on the class, there may also be a series of in-class assignments/thought experiments that will be worth a total of 5 points each)

Reading/Lecture List:

Note: You will notice as you look over this list that I do not provide exact dates that the reading assignments will be due (or, rather, dates that we will be discussing said reading assignments). I

do this because I have found that more often than not in a class such as this (especially seeing that we meet only once a week) a definite schedule will be re-written so many times that it becomes counterproductive. We will, however, read and discuss *each* of the following topics *in* the following order. Some will be from the textbook—most will be from the textbook—but a few will also include supplements provided by me. Under the lecture time I give approximations. If you miss a class DO NOT assume that we are working according to the schedule below. I recommend that you either e-mail me or speak to one of your classmates to see what the assigned reading is.

<u>Readings</u>	<u>Potential Lecture Time</u>
1) Introduction – What is religion? What is philosophy? What is the philosophy of world religions?	One Class Period
2) Religions of India: Hinduism a. Please read <u>Chapter 10</u>	One Class Period
3) Religions of India: Buddhism a. Please read <u>Chapter 11</u> b. Movie on Buddhism	Two Class Periods
4) Religions of India: Jainism and Sikhism a. Please read <u>Chapter 12 and 13</u>	Two Class Periods
5) Religions of the Far East a. Please read <u>Chapter 14</u> i. Taoism ii. Confucianism	Two Class Periods
6) Religions of the Middle East a. Please read <u>Chapter 16</u> i. Zoroastrianism	One Class Period
7) Religions of the Middle East: Judaism a. Please read <u>Chapter 17</u>	One Class Period
8) Religions of the Middle East: Christianity a. Please read <u>Chapter 18</u>	One Class Period
9) Religions of the Middle East: Islam a. Please read <u>Chapter 19</u>	One Class Period

This completes (roughly) 12 class sessions – with room to spare! I format the reading to encompass 12 class sessions for we will need that “room.” It is certain that many of the “One Day” lectures will carry over. We need to complete 13 sessions – 14 including the final exam.

Welcome to the philosophy of World Religions.