

# R202

## Introduction to Religious Studies

### Winter 2017

**CRN:** 33073  
**Day and Time:** M/W 2:30pm – 3:50pm  
**Location:** NSH 109  
**Credits:** 3 credit hours  
**Instructor:** Brian Jeanseau  
**E-mail:** brian.jeanseau@linnbenton.edu  
**Office Hours:** IA 220 - Email to schedule an appointment  
(Usually right before or right after class)

#### WELCOME

I'm glad you chose to take this course. I sincerely hope you find it enlightening and challenging. Yes there is work involved, but I think you're going to find it fun as well. Our world is "shrinking" as we do more and more business, politics, and war on a global scale. One of the most important ways to successfully navigate this world is by understanding each cultures' belief systems. This type of understand helps promote peace rather than conflict. I'm here to help and guide you in the process. Welcome!

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Explores the nature of religion as experienced historically throughout the world. Examines the nature of religious experience with the divine and the relationship between science and religion. Discusses the roles of language, myths, and symbols in religion.

#### REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Pals, Daniel L. *Eight Theories of Religion* (2nd Edition). 2006. Oxford University Press.

#### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulate an awareness of the varieties of religious expression and the dynamic nature of religious traditions.
2. Describe a variety of methodological approaches to the study of religion (e.g. anthropological, philosophical, sociological, feminist, postcolonial).
3. Discuss and examine the diverse debates and issues related to the study of religion.
4. Practice reflexivity, identifying and critically examining the source and content of one's own cultural perspectives and world-views.

#### COURSE PREREQUISITES

Recommended: College level reading and writing skills.

**FINAL GRADES**

Final grades will be determined based on the following scale:

A 90-100%   B 80-89%   C 70-79%   D 60-69%   F 59% and below

**ASSIGNMENTS**

|  |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| Attendance and Participation . . . . . | 200        | 20%        |
| Reading Journal . . . . .              | 200        | 20%        |
| Reflection Essay . . . . .             | 150        | 15%        |
| Religious Service Visit. . . . .       | 150        | 15%        |
| Quizzes (5) . . . . .                  | 100        | 10%        |
| Final Exam . . . . .                   | <u>200</u> | <u>20%</u> |
| TOTAL                                  |            | 1,000      |

**IMPORTANT DUE DATES**

- Mon 2/8: Reading Journal (1<sup>st</sup> Half)
- Wed 2/27: Religious Service Visit Presentation
- Wed 3/8: Reading Journal (2<sup>nd</sup> Half)
- Wed 3/15: Reflection Essay
- Mon 3/20: Final Exam

**STUDENT CONDUCT**

There will be no tolerance for jokes or slurs regarding race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or physical or mental abilities. It is crucial to maintain a respectful environment while exploring different religious traditions and beliefs. Any attempt to undermine this environment will not be tolerated, and the student will be removed from the class. To talk and learn together, people must feel free to share and explore ideas in a safe, open environment. If I interpret your work as being disrespectful or bordering on hate speech, your work will earn zero credit. Disagreement is acceptable and even encouraged, but it must be done in an intelligent, considerate, respectful, and reasoned manner.

**TECHNOLOGY-FREE ZONE**

Our classroom will be a technology-free zone. You are encouraged to use technology outside of the classroom for research and for study. However, in the classroom we want to engage the texts and each other in discussion. Technology of any sort (laptops, phones, texting, iPods, iPads, etc.) will not be allowed in this classroom.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty is an indispensable value as students acquire knowledge and develop skills in college. Students are expected to practice academic honesty by not cheating, plagiarizing, or misrepresenting their coursework in any way. Students are ultimately responsible for understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty whether such incidences are *intentional or unintentional*. Consequences for cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty may include receiving a score of zero on an individual assignment or failing the class.

## ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS

### *Attendance and Participation*

- To receive full credit for each class, students must arrive on time, engage in discussions, complete in-class assignments, follow instructions, etc.
- I generally don't excuse absences (except for school sports or possibly extreme medical emergencies).
- I do not post my lectures or power points online.
- Check your Linn-Benton email regularly. This is my only way of communicating important information with you outside of the classroom.
- Attendance and participation affects the successful completion of all learning outcomes.

### *Reading Assignments*

- Reading assignments are *due at the beginning of each class*. Come to class ready to discuss and engage the material.
- There will be large and small group discussions, in-class writings, and quizzes.
- See learning outcome two.

### *Written Assignments*

- There is a reflection paper and a reading journal. The details for each assignment will be given in class.
- All written assignments are *due as Word documents in Moodle by 11:55pm* on the due date. (PDF format is acceptable, if you are having trouble with Word. Links to websites, Google docs, etc. are not acceptable.) Double check your Moodle submission to make sure your submission worked.
- Late submissions are acceptable; however, there will be a 10% grade reduction for each day these assignments are late.
- Students are responsible for their work. "Back up" your computer files.
- See learning outcome four.

### *Religious Service Visit Presentations*

- You and a partner will visit a different religious tradition which you have never experienced before.
- Each group will present their findings to the class. Presentations should be roughly 10 minutes in length. Further details will be given in class.
- See learning outcome one.

### *Examinations and Quizzes*

- Final Examinations will be taken on the day scheduled, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
- Quizzes must be taken on the date assigned and cannot be made up (except for school sports or possibly extreme medical emergencies).
- All tests and quizzes are "open note." You may bring any of your own original handwritten notes (no printed materials, photocopies of another student's notes, books, or electronic devices will be allowed).
- Tests and quizzes affect the successful completion of all learning outcomes.

### *Extra Credit*

- I do not give extra credit assignments. Keep up on all your assignments and reading.

**WINTER TERM 2017 SCHEDULE**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Date</b>     | <b>Description</b>  |
|-------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>1</b>    | <b>Mon 1/9</b>  | <b>Introduction to Religion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus</li> <li>• What is religion and why study it?</li> </ul>  |
|             | <b>Wed 1/11</b> | <b>Anthropology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent Origins?</li> <li>• Indigenous Spirituality</li> <li>• Native American Spirituality</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2</b>    | <b>Mon 1/16</b> | <b>NO CLASS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin Luther King Jr Day (observed)</li> <li>• <i>Read: Intro (pg 3-15)</i></li> </ul>  |
|             | <b>Wed 1/18</b> | <b>Anthropology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Native American Spirituality</li> <li>• African Spirituality</li> <li>• <i>Quiz 1</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Tylor (pg 18-31)</i></li> </ul>                                  |
| <b>3</b>    | <b>Mon 1/23</b> | <b>History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation Myths</li> <li>• Flood Narratives (Ancient Sumerians)</li> <li>• Nationalistic Narratives (Ethiopian Orthodox)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Frazer (pg 31-48)</i></li> </ul>    |
|             | <b>Wed 1/25</b> | <b>Sacred Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Tribes and Nations (Hindu and Shinto)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Freud (pg 53-69)</i></li> </ul>   |
| <b>4</b>    | <b>Mon 1/30</b> | <b>Philosophy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Overlap with Religion (Confucianism)</li> <li>• Theodicy (Christianity)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Freud (pg 69-81)</i></li> </ul>  |
|             | <b>Wed 2/1</b>  | <b>Psychology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Need for God and Ritual (Personality Types)</li> <li>• Stages of Development (Hinduism)</li> <li>• <i>Quiz 2</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Durkheim (pg 85-100)</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>5</b>    | <b>Mon 2/6</b>  | <b>Archaeology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historicity (Judaism)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Durkheim (pg 100-114)</i></li> </ul>  |
|             | <b>Wed 2/8</b>  | <b>Linguistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aryan Migration Theory</li> <li>• Persian and Sanskrit (Hinduism)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Marx (pg 118-132)</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Reading Journal (First Half)</i></li> </ul>  |

|    |          |   |
|----|----------|---|
| 6  | Mon 2/13 | <b>Sacred Texts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Quran (Islam)</li> <li>• Problems with exegesis and hermeneutics</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Marx (pg 132-145)</i></li> </ul>  |
|    | Wed 2/15 | <b>Textual History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dead Sea Scrolls (Judaism)</li> <li>• The Septuagint (Christianity)</li> <li>• <i>Quiz 3</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Weber (pg 149-159)</i></li> </ul>  |
| 7  | Mon 2/20 | <b>NO CLASS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President's Day (Observed)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Weber (pg 159-175)</i></li> </ul>   |
|    | Wed 2/22 | <b>Sociology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Hijab (Islam)</li> <li>• LGBTQ</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Weber (pg 175-188)</i></li> </ul>  |
| 8  | Mon 2/27 | <b>Field Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Due: Read Eliade (pg 193-208)</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Religious Service Visit Presentations</i></li> </ul>   |
|    | Wed 3/1  | <b>Field Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Quiz 4</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Eliade (pg 208-226)</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Religious Service Visit Presentations</i></li> </ul>  |
| 9  | Mon 3/6  | <b>Science vs. Religion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Middles Ages (Islam)</li> <li>• Origins of Fundamentalism</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Pritchard (pg 229-243)</i></li> </ul>  |
|    | Wed 3/8  | <b>Medicine and Numerology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herbal Medicine (Taoism)</li> <li>• The search for meaning (Jainism)</li> <li>• <i>Due: Read Pritchard (pg 243-257)</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Reading Journal (Second Half)</i></li> </ul> |
| 10 | Mon 3/13 | <b>Politics and Governance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious Wars</li> <li>• Universalism (Baha'i)</li> </ul>  |
|    | Wed 3/15 | <b>Conclusions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious Models</li> <li>• <i>Quiz 5</i></li> <li>• <i>Due: Reflection Essay</i></li> </ul>  |
| 11 | Mon 3/20 | <b>Final Exam</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3pm to 4:50pm (same room)</li> </ul>   |

## COLLEGE POLICIES

*Administrative Drop:* Students who do not attend class during the first week will be automatically dropped by the instructor from the course. This is usually to make room for students on the wait list (but will be done regardless of a waitlist). If you missed class in the first week due to an emergency, contact your instructor as soon as possible to explain your situation and lessen the chance of being dropped.

*Waitlist Policy:* If you are on the waitlist and wish to take the course, you must attend class the first week and let me know your intent right before or after class.

*Drop/Withdrawal Policy:* Students are responsible for knowing the last day to drop the course for a full refund. Also, be aware of the last day to officially withdraw from the course so that only a “W” shows on your transcripts. See the academic calendar for these dates <https://www.linnbenton.edu/academiccalendar>.

*Incomplete Grades:* You may be eligible for an “Incomplete” grade if you have finished 80% of the class work and you have a good academic standing in the class. Should you receive an “Incomplete,” all course work must be finished by the agreed upon date in the contract. Please contact the instructor prior to term’s end with appropriate documentation for requesting an “Incomplete.”

*Disability Services:* Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, or who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency, should speak with the instructor during the first week of class. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with CFAR, please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.