

Religion 102 Course Syllabus
Religions of the Western World - Online
Winter 2021 - 3 credits

Instructor Information

Ruth Chadd, MA

Office Hours: Tues 2-4, Thurs 2-4

Office Hours Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/join/96970534681>

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Course Description

Investigates religion in the Western World. Includes discussion of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Focuses on how the outward forms of religion integrate with other cultural traditions.

Overview and Introduction

You are very welcome to R102 Intro to Western Religion! This course examines the history, beliefs, practices, and sacred writings of Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Indigenous and New Religious movements within Western Religious traditions.

It is my hope that this course will:

- 1) Engage your curiosity by inviting more questions than answers;
- 2) Deepen your understanding and appreciation of the Western Religions within the world's wisdom traditions;
- 3) Invite you to consider their vast relevance in relation to current events in our world today.

I'm so very glad you're here, and look forward to hearing your voices and wisdom in relation to the study and experience of Western Religions.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Articulate an awareness of the varieties of religious expression and the dynamic nature of religious traditions.
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the core tenants, practices, and institutions of Western religious traditions within their historical and contemporary contexts.
- Analyze the interaction of religious traditions with political, economic, social, and cultural institutions, groups, and individuals.

Learning Activities

Mini-Lecture/Forum Discussion

Watching, Listening and Commenting on Film, Podcasts and PowerPoint Presentations

Group-learning activities

Self-directed Reading (Text and Moodle), Writing, and Research

Prerequisite Course(s)

Reading 90 and Writing 115 or above are strongly recommended.

Required Text

- *Fisher, Mary Pat & Robin Rinehart, *Living Religions*, Tenth Edition (Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc., 2017).
- Novak, Philip, *The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).

**I support purchasing this copy as downloadable edition and saving some money online. If you need additional resources or financial assistance in purchasing the textbook, please contact the Roadrunner Resource Center at resources@linnbenton.edu to find out about funds that are reserved for students to receive help in purchasing textbooks.*

Course Requirements

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on assignments and activities:

Reading/Writing/ Online Participation: Each week you will write a short Reading Response on the assigned readings and the lecture commentaries. You will be answering questions on the material and adding your own reflections. You will also be required to post comments/responses to 2 of your classmates each week.

- Weekly learning modules will be posted by 11pm the Sunday before each week. Example: If week 2 falls on the 11th-17th of the month, your work for week 2 will be posted on the 10th of that month.
- Assignments and discussions need to be completed by 11:55pm on Sunday evening of each week. Example: Week 2, 11th-17th would be due on the 17th. This structure includes some overlap, which allows for flexibility in your scheduling. Any exceptions will be posted on the syllabus and in the weekly guidelines.

Exams: There will be one (1) midterm exam, which will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay-type questions.

Reflection Essay (2): There will be two (2) reflection essays in which you will be asked to reflect on your learnings from the tradition(s) we have discussed up to this point in the term. Each essay is a 1-2 page, 12-pt Times New Roman font, discussion on the religious tradition(s).

Research Project: During the second half of the term, a 4-5 page research project will be due. The research paper is worth 80 points. Instructions are posted on the “Welcome & Introductions” sections in Moodle, under the “Course Syllabus”.

Extra credit: Up to 8 points available. Topics listed on the last page of the syllabus.

Grading

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the total number of points earned divided by the total possible points (see chart below). It is possible that the total number of points will change during the term (to include extra assignments, snow days etc.). I reserve the right to curve the grading scale positively if deemed necessary.

Work	Points Available	Your Work
Forum Discussions	150	
Reflection Essay #1	100	
Reflection Essay #2	100	
Midterm Exam	50	
Extra Credit	(+8)	
Final Research Project	100	
TOTAL POINTS	508	

Tentative Course Schedule

Week/Class	Readings	Material to be Covered	Assignments/Homework Due Dates/Exams
Week 1: Jan 4-10	Fisher, Mary Pat. <i>Living Religions</i> . Pp 5-11; 11-14; 14-17; 17-19	Course Introductions; Syllabus; Why Religion?	<u>Forum Posts (all forum posts due on Thurs & Sun by 11:55pm</u> 1) Intro Video (DUE 1/10) 2) Reading Response (DUE 1/7 & 1/10)

Week 2: Jan 11-17	<i>Living Religions</i> , pp. 242-247 (Zoroastrianism); additional online articles; Lecture Slides	Intro to Religion (cont'd); Religions of Antiquity; Zoroastrianism	<u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 1/14 & 1/16)
Week 3: Jan 18-24	<i>Living Religions</i> , pp. 250-264 Novak, Philip. <i>The World's Wisdom</i>	Introduction to Judaism, Ancient Origins (1800 BCE-70 CE), Biblical Judaism	<u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 1/21 & 1/24)
Week 4: Jan 25-31	<i>Living Religions</i> ; <i>World's Wisdom</i>	Judaism, cont'd, Second Temple (70 CE to Present Day), Rabbinical Judaism, Kabbalism	Submit Research Project Topic Ideas Due Sun 1/31 <u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 1/28 & 1/31)
Week 5: Feb 1-7	Reflection Essay Prep	Introduction to Christian Traditions	Reflection Essay #1: Judaism DUE Sun Feb 7 @ 11:55 pm
Week 6: Feb 8-14	<i>Living Religions</i> ; <i>World's Wisdom</i>	Christian Traditions, cont'd	Midterm Study Guide Handout <u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 2/11 & 2/14)
Week 7: Feb 15-21	Midterm Prep	Introduction to Muslim Traditions	Midterm DUE Fri 2/17 @11:55 pm
Week 8: Feb 22-28	<i>Living Religions</i> ; <i>World's Wisdom</i>	Muslim Traditions, cont'd (Sufism)	<u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 2/25 & 2/28)
Week 9: Mar 1-7	Reflection Essay #2 Prep	Indigenous Traditions	Reflection Essay #2 DUE Sun 3/7 @ 11:55pm
Week 10: Mar 8-14	<i>Living Religions</i> ; <i>World's Wisdom</i>	New Religions & Movements	ALL EXTRA CREDIT DUE by Sun 3/14 @11:55pm <u>Forum Post</u> Reading Response (DUE 3/11 & 3/14)
Week 11: Mar 15-21	<i>Living Religions</i> ; <i>World's Wisdom</i>	Current Issues in Western Traditions Wrap-Up	FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT DUE Fri 3/19 @ 11:55pm Forum Post - Reflections

Class Policies:

Plagiarism: I reserve the right to issue an “F” grade for an assignment or the entire course if a student is found to have cheated or plagiarized. I do not allow students to re-write research papers for a higher grade. All direct quotes and information from outside sources must be cited within the text and in a bibliography or reference page. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you are unsure, please seek help in the writing lab.

READ ALL Inclusive community / constructive discussions Student Conduct: This material is inherently interesting, but it can also be a sensitive subject to discuss. As a class we must welcome participation, open discussion, and insight from all. Please remember to keep an open mind, and be respectful to me as your instructor and to your peers. The field of religious studies is incredibly vast and we simply do not have time to delve deeply into each topic. You are expected to engage positively, and even critically, with the material presented. However, using online class forums to complain or to be consistently negative towards another’s traditions or culture will not be tolerated. I reserve the right to delete posts if necessary.

Late work: I do not accept late work (research papers, exams, weekly assignments etc). I do not allow students to retake exams, or to re-write research papers. Please talk to me in the case of severe medical emergencies.

Email: Read the email etiquette guidelines posted at the top of the course. I will respond to your emails within 2 business days. Please plan accordingly.

College Policies:

Disability Services: Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, 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 have not accessed services and think you may need them, please contact Disability Services, 917-4789.

Basic Needs Statement: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Roadrunner Resource Center for support (resources@linnbenton.edu , or visit us on the web www.linnbenton.edu/RRC under Student Support for Current Students). This office help students get connected to resources.

Institutional Withdrawal / Waitlist Policy: There is no waitlist for this course. Students who do not participate in week 1's discussion boards will be dropped from the course.

Drop 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 this course for transcripts to show a 'W.'

Incomplete Grades: You may be eligible for an 'Incomplete' grade if you have finished 90% of the class work. Should you receive an 'Incomplete,' all course work must be finished by the end of the next term. Please contact the instructor prior to term's end with appropriate documentation for requesting an 'Incomplete.'

Extra Credit: (You may complete one of each activity) If you are struggling in the class, and are worried about your final grade, there will be up to 8 points available for extra credit. If you have questions about your choice of activity / program you will use (or, if you have an idea of your own), please do not hesitate to ask me. I hope you take advantage of the extra credit opportunities offered for this course. This is your chance to experience religion and the ongoing dialogue about religion happening presently in our community -- which can be easily accessed by the curious-minded!

- 1) **Attend an online lecture / event (5 points):** If you would prefer to attend a lecture or event about religion (for example, an online debate on Jesus hosted by the Socratic Society at OSU would be a great option), I will accept a 2-page, double-spaced paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject. Please get approval for your choice of event before turning in an extra credit report.
- 2) **Listen to a podcast / watch video (3 points):** You may enjoy streaming a radio program or watching a documentary while earning extra credit. I will accept a full 1-page, double-spaced, paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject.
 - **“On Being”**, hosted by Krista Tippett <https://onbeing.org/series/podcast/> - Pick a program that interests you personally. Please choose a program that coincides with the course material.
 - **The Religious Studies Project** <https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/> - The Religious Studies Project (RSP) is an international collaborative enterprise producing weekly podcasts with leading scholars on the social-scientific study of religion. Pick a program that interests you personally.
 - **Frontline – The Mormons** (video) <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/mormons/> (Watch part 1 and part 2) This is a very interesting documentary on the historical and modern Mormon traditions. If you have an interest in learning about this rapidly growing religion, please check it out.