

Religion 101: Introduction to Religious Studies
R 101: CRN 48609
Spring 2015, 3 Credits
M 6:30 – 8:50 P.M., LC-200

Instructor: Jarrod Hyam
Office: IA 216
Office Hours: By Appointment
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Course Description:

Introduces students to the academic study of religion. Examines the nature of religions generally, and explores recurring religious themes such as myths, rituals, aesthetics, violence and religion, the sacred, and science and religion.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Draw upon analytical skills to examine religious phenomena critically
- Expand students' understanding of religions, including analysis of Non-Western and indigenous religious traditions
- Provide students with the ability to self-reflect on their personal convictions and philosophical presuppositions
- Strengthen students' ability to develop critical reading and writing abilities *via* an assigned research paper

Required Texts:

Aden, Ross. *Religion Today: A Critical Thinking Approach to Religious Studies*. (2013). Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

- Additional handouts provided by instructor.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

- A participation grade is included in your overall assessment for this course. This grade will include in-class writings, small group discussions, as well as pop quizzes that **will not** be announced in the course schedule.
- Check your Linn-Benton email regularly as it is the instructor's first point of contact. Communication with your instructor is important! When in doubt, email!

STUDENT CONDUCT

- Students are expected to conform to all standards in Linn-Benton's Student Handbook. This includes practicing both personal and academic integrity. Students are to respect the rights of all people and contribute to a safe, cooperative and respectful learning atmosphere.
- **Respect:** We will maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect. **Cell phones** will be silenced during class

unless arrangements are made with the instructor. There will be no text messaging, no headphones, no Ipods, and laptops are reserved for note taking. To learn and grow together, people must feel free to share and explore ideas in a safe, open setting. Disagreement is fine, but it must be intelligent, considerate, and respectful. If a student is disruptive and/or disrespectful, the student will be removed. Disrespectful work will not be accepted, earning zero credit.

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: PERCENTAGES

Participation/in-class writings.....	15
Reading Journals.....	15
Midterm Exam.....	25
Final Exam.....	25
RESEARCH ESSAY.....	20

RESEARCH PAPER: TOWARD THE END OF THE COURSE, A 4-5 PAGE PAPER WILL REQUIRE YOU TO EXAMINE ONE MAJOR RELIGION OF YOUR CHOICE (OUTSIDE OF YOUR OWN TRADITION). THE RESEARCH PAPER IS WORTH 20% OF YOUR GRADE. SPECIFIC DETAILS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO YOU SOON. YOU CAN ALSO WRITE ON ANY TOPIC/THEME COVERED IN THIS COURSE.

Spring 2015: Tentative Schedule

Week One, March 30th: Introducing Religion; Syllabus Discussion; Defining “Religion.”

Week Two: April 6th: “Insider” / “Outsider;” Theology and Religious Studies; Methodology
-Introduction, pp. 1-16; Chapter 2, pp. 30-74

Week Three: April 13th: Belief structures; Free will; theodicy
-Chapter 3, pp. 77-120

Week Four: April 20th: Symbol, Myth, and Ritual
-Chapter 4, pp. 125-180
-Handout: Campbell and Mythology
-Study Guide available for Midterm Exam.

Week Five: April 27th: Midterm Exam
-Handout: Mircea Eliade and phenomenology

Week Six: May 4th: Religious/mystical experiences; neuroscience
-Chapter 5, 183-240

Week Seven: May 11th: Workshop on Essay Writing; Violence and religion
-Chapter 6, 243-291

Week Eight: May 18th: Religious Case Studies: Indigenous religions; Hinduism and Buddhism
-Research Paper Due on May 18th

-Handouts: Buddhism and Hinduism

-Handout: Indigenous religion

Week Nine: May 25th: Religious Case Studies: Christianity and Judaism

-Handout: Abrahamic religions

Week Ten: June 1st: Campus Closed

-Final Exam study guide

Week Eleven: Finals Week:

-Final Exam to cover Second Half of Course Material.

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.

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.'

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

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. 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.