

## **World Religions: 2300, Section 0004**

**Fall 2018**

**MWF 11:30 -12:20 HEC 0118**

**Dr. Stephanie Theodorou**

**Office: 228A Philosophy (PSY)**

**Office hours: MW 2:30-4:00 pm and by appointment**

This course introduces students to the historical and thematic study of the world's major religions, covering Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, and Christianity, among others. Students will develop an understanding of historical origins, socio-cultural contexts, core beliefs, and rituals, aiming to develop a deeper appreciation for the interrelationships among the major systems. Ultimately, the course will reinforce cross-cultural awareness, independent critical thinking, and an open engagement with diverse traditions.

**Face-To-Face Instruction** –This course requires classroom attendance and meets on a regularly scheduled basis. Students may encounter online, video, or adaptive elements as part of the instruction, thus requiring a computer.

### **Required Text**

**Brodd, et al. *Invitation to World Religions, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.***

***Primary texts and other articles: provided by instructor on UCF Webcourses, TopHat, etc..***

***Course text is available as an etext through REDHAT***

**Other Resource Requirements: TOPHAT CMS (linked to UCF Webcourses)**

### **Course Outcomes:**

1. Students will develop an understanding of the distinctive nature and world views of several major world religious traditions through intellectual inquiry into their beliefs and practices of Indigenous religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
2. Students will consider how the formation of religions are influenced by historical, social, and political aspects of experience.
3. Students will engage with tools and methods for independent critical thinking in the formation of their own vantage point.
4. To develop a cross-cultural awareness and openness that is a mark of the global citizen and which will enable the student to engage in informed and respectful dialogue with other religious traditions.

## **REQUIREMENTS & GRADING**

- Attendance=active participation (TopHat questions during class), including completion of all assigned readings: 25%%
- Midterm and Final Exams: 30%
- Weekly Quizzes: 20%
- TopHat study questions (on assigned readings) ahead of class:20%

## **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION**

As a significant part of learning in this course grows out of in-class discussions, attendance and active participation are very important. Three absences are allowed; after the third absence, each absence will cost the student 3 percentage points. Students should come to class prepared to participate actively in our class discussions; this includes having read all the assigned readings prior to the beginning of class and having completed all other assigned tasks. Failure to participate in class (through TopHat) may lower your grade by several points.

To encourage attendance and class participation, weekly quizzes will be given at random times during class. If missed, these quizzes and other in-class exercises cannot be made up, However, each student is given 10 bonus points at the beginning of the semester to offset the penalties for missing one class or quiz. If a student fails to show up for a midterm or final examination, she/he fails the test. If you anticipate a scheduling conflict with an examination, you must consult the instructor at least two weeks prior to the exam.

Students are expected to arrive promptly for class; after two late arrivals, each subsequent late arrival penalizes your final grade by two percentage points. Students who need accommodation for a religious holiday occurring at any time during the semester should notify the instructors during the first week of class; otherwise, they will be held fully accountable for the class period missed. Also, be advised that we will often cover materials in class that are not included on the syllabus or mentioned explicitly in the text. You are responsible for all material covered during your absence.

## **Top Hat**

We will be using the Top Hat ([www.tophat.com](http://www.tophat.com)) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

You can visit the Top Hat Overview (<https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide>) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

An email invitation will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting the website: [www.tophat.com](http://www.tophat.com)  
Note: our Course Join Code is **XXXXXX**

Top Hat will require a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: [www.tophat.com/pricing](http://www.tophat.com/pricing).

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email ([support@tophat.com](mailto:support@tophat.com)), the in app support button, or by calling [1-888-663-5491](tel:1-888-663-5491).

## **GRADING SCALE**

A=90-100,B+=86-89,B=80-85,C+=76-79,C=70-75,D=60-69,F=0-59

### **Verification of class participation (the “Are you here?” Test)**

Faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the “Are you here - Test” (in Webcourses) by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

## **MAKE-UP WORK / EXTRA CREDIT**

As a rule, no make-up assignments or extra credit will be given. See above 10 point bonus under “attendance and participation.”

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are expected to complete their work by the due date. The final grade of an assignment is lowered five points for each day that it is late. Understanding that things happen during the semester, the professor will allow up to three assignments to be turned in late (with pre-set late deadline) with no points lowered during the semester.

## **WEBCOURSE-SITE**

The Webcourse site contains links to reserved readings, the most recent version of the syllabus and schedule, and additional announcements. It also provides the opportunity for students to discuss course related topics. Students should check the Webcourse site frequently to be well informed about any changes or additional material relevant to the course.

## **PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

All work that you submit for this class must be your own, and it must be written exclusively for this course. All answers for in-class work and pre-class preparation should be your own. Your quizzes and tests are designed to minimize these incidents. Any sources consulted for your writing must be properly documented. Plagiarism includes rewriting someone else's work (changing a few words), copying, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, incorrect source information.

The standard punishment for plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment is an "F" for the assignment or even for the entire course. Plagiarism and cheating subjects a student to referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further disciplinary action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

## **SYLLABUS AMENDMENT**

This syllabus may be amended or modified in any way upon notice; changes will affect the schedule, so be sure that you know if any due dates change.

## **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

Proper classroom behavior is expected at all times. Students must follow UCF standards for personal and academic conduct as outlined in The Golden Rule. As a matter of common courtesy, please arrive on time prepared to stay for the entire class, and do not engage in conversation other than the classroom critical discussions we will be having about the text and concepts. Proper classroom conduct also entails creating a positive learning experience for all students, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or any other feature of personal identification.

## **ELECTRONICS, COMPUTERS, AND CELL PHONES**

Electronic devices are to be used only for linking in to TopHat for attendance and interactive learning activities requiring student participation during lectures. Should the instructor decide to give a quiz or exam through TopHat, students' response time to questions will be automatically monitored by the system so that there is no room for looking up answers during the test.

## **FOOD AND DRINK POLICY**

Food and drink are discouraged, but accepted if necessary. If it is necessary for you to eat or drink during class, please remember do so quietly out of respect for the students around you.

## **E-MAIL ETIQUETTE**

When communicating with e-mail, please use good manners. Include a greeting (e.g., "Dear Dr. Theodorou" and a closing ("Sincerely"). Use proper spelling and punctuation. Although e-mail in some ways encourages informal communications, do not forget that your correspondence for coursework requires attention to detail so that you can present yourself in a professional manner.

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## **WEEKLY COURSE**

### **SCHEDULE**

WEEK 1: AUG 20: INTRODUCTION TO WR

IWR Chapter 2 and 3 (excerpts); Indigenous Religions of North America and Africa

WEEK 2: AUG 27 iWR Chapter 3; Hinduism

WEEK 3: SEPT 1 IWR Hinduism, continued  
WEEK 4: SEPT. 10 IWR Chapter 4; Buddhism  
WEEK 5: SEPT 17 iWR Buddhism, contiinued  
WEEK 6: SEPT 24 IWR Chapters 6/7 (excerpts); Jainism and Sikhism  
WEEK 7: OCT 1 IWR Chapter 8; Confucianism and Daoism  
WEEK 8: OCT 8 IWR Chapter 10; Zoroastrianism  
WEEK 9: OCT 15 MIDTERM, Introduction to Western Religions, Judaism !WR 11  
WEEK 10: OCT 22 Judaism, continued  
WEEK 11: OCT 29 iWR 12; Christianity  
WEEK 12: NOV 5 Christianity, continued  
WEEK 13: NOV 12 IWR 13; Islam  
WEEK 14: NOV 19 Islam, continued  
WEEK 15: NOV 26 IWR 14 (excerpts); New Religious Movements  
WEEK 16:FINAL