REL2300-17 Summer AW60
World Religions

Instructor Contact

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***The official modes of communication for this course are external email and internal Canvas messages. The instructor will only respond to external email sent to her @ucf.edu email address (listed above) by students using their @knights.ucf.edu email addresses. Also, please do not expect an immediate response to messages and emails. Forty-eight hours is a reasonable amount of time in which to expect a response.

Course Information

- Course Name: World Religions
- Course ID & Section: REL2300-AW59
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Summer 2017
- Location: Online

Course Description

In this class, we will look at the five major world religions and several minority traditions, seeking a basic literacy of the central tenets and practices of each tradition, as well as deeper engagement through field visits, films, and discussions. Across cultures and global contexts, religion plays a significant role in shaping interpersonal and social values, and subsequently, public life. For example, consider the significance of abortion and same-sex marriage debates in the U.S. or the tide of violence besetting Buddhist and Muslim communities in Myanmar. These issues and others, and the religious ideologies that seem to fuel these tensions require careful reflection. We will adopt an academic posture in our considerations of the entanglement between religious identification and social life. This means breaking-down assumptions and working toward understanding through critical engagement – critical engagement of our own beliefs and social contexts, as well as those of others.

Course Objectives

- To develop an understanding of the distinctive nature of several major world religious traditions through intellectual inquiry into their beliefs and practices in their specific historical and socio-cultural context
- To analyze the challenges faced by religions in the modern and postmodern periods and some characteristic responses of religions to those challenges
- 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

- To introduce students to some of the main themes and issues involved in the academic study of religion

Required Text

- *Living Religions*, Mary Pat Fisher, 9th edition
- **The textbook is available in both print and digital formats.** It is imperative that you have your textbook immediately as there are readings assigned beginning on the second day of class.
- Throughout the course, there may be additional readings, films, and other materials assigned that are not in the textbook. These readings will be specified under Modules for each respective week and will be available electronically through Canvas.

Evaluation and Grading

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100-94%
A-	93-90%
B+	89-86%
B	85-80%
C+	79-76%
C	75-70%
D+	69-66%
D	65-60%
F	59 and below

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Quizzes	55%
Discussions	30%

Site Visit	15%
Total	100%

Course Requirements

Readings: There are readings, films, and other materials assigned each week in this course. The assigned materials are listed in each weekly overview and on the weekly readings pages available under Modules. Your success in graded discussions and on quizzes will depend on your demonstrating clear understanding and critical engagement with these materials.

Discussions: You are required to participate in a graded discussion each week. Your initial posts will respond to a structured prompt. Be sure to answer these prompts in their entirety using direct references to the assigned readings, films, etc. Your initial posts are due by Wednesday at 11:59pm. You are also required to respond to at least two classmates in each discussion before Sunday at 11:59pm. Discussions will be graded based on three criteria: 1) the quality of your initial post, 2) the quality of your responses to classmates, and 3) whether or not you meet the participation requirements. Please review the Discussion Guidelines available under Course Expectations for more information. Please note that for all written work in this course, you should use either MLA or Turabian style guidelines for source citations and bibliographies.

Quizzes: Quizzes are assigned at the close of each week, except for the Syllabus Quiz which is assigned for the first day of class. Quizzes are administered through Canvas. Generally quizzes will be 25-30 questions and will combine multiple-choice, matching, and true/false formats. These are open-book assessments. However, you will only have 45 minutes to complete the quiz once you begin the assessment. Each quiz will be available for 24 hours, 12am-11:59pm on Friday each week.

***IMPORTANT -** As of Fall 2014, all 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 Syllabus Quiz no later than Friday of the first week of classes at 11:59PM. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

Site Visit: You will visit a religious site and observe a religious ceremony or event of your choice. However, it cannot be a site that any of you have practiced in previously or part of a tradition that you belong to. You will submit a write-up of your site visit using the Field Notes Template available with the assignment prompt in Webcourses. Your write-up should be 2.5-3 pages double-spaced with 1-inch margins and using 12-point Times New Roman font. You are required to engage at least one primary source in your write-up. A primary source is something particular to the site that you visit, such as the website, publications, or an interview with a leader or member. You may want to engage other sources to help with definitions, explanation, etc. However, all secondary sources must be peer-reviewed. Please use MLA or Turabian style guidelines for your source citations and bibliography. The write-up is due via Webcourses by Sunday, June 18 at 11:59PM.

Emergencies/Missed Assignments

Emergencies. Make sure that any health or personal emergencies are properly documented, and please contact me **as soon as possible** if difficulties arise during the semester.

Late Work. Ten percent will be deducted for each day an assignment is late except in the case of appropriately documented emergencies. Please pay close attention to the deadlines listed for each assignment in the Course Schedule and weekly overviews. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.**

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Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit www.turnitin.com.

Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. 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 Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students' opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind.

The University of Central Florida recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. In this class, people of all ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences may in some way isolate you from UCF's community or if you have need of any specific accommodations, please speak with the instructor early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active and engaged member of our class and community.

Tech Concerns

The instructor cannot provide technical support. If students are experiencing problems with myUCF or Canvas, they will need to contact the appropriate department. The Computer Services & Telecommunications Service Desk can be reached at (407) 823-5117, telecom@ucf.edu, and OTC 550 (Main Campus).

Even though computers and word processing software are marvelous time and energy-saving tools, they can and do cause problems from time to time. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.** It is advised that students make sure their work is saved appropriately, and in more than one location (such as a USB flash drive, external hard drive, CD/DVD, online storage, or even emailing a copy to oneself).

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.