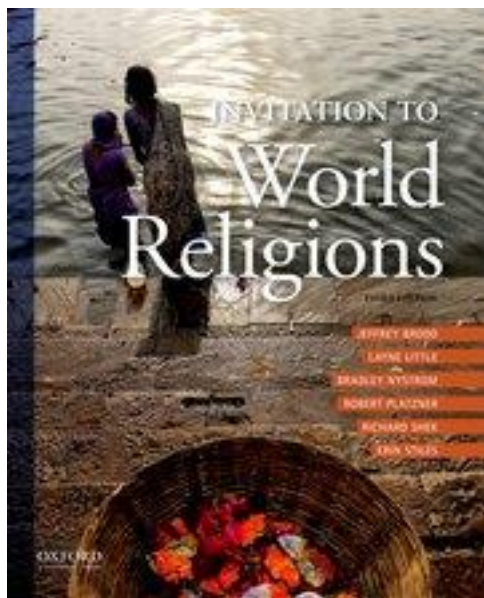


VALENCIA COLLEGE



REL 2300: World Religions

Fall, 2022

CRN 12439, MW 10:00 am - 11:15 am

Building 1-326

Valencia College, East Campus

Instructor: Dr. Dale Truscott

Email: dtruscott@valenciacollege.edu

Office Hours: by appointment



Text: Brodd, Jeffrey, et al, *Invitation to World's Religions*, 3rd Edition, Oxford.

This book is absolutely necessary for this course. It is available from the Valencia bookstore new, used or rental or eBook, at reduced prices from Oxford, Amazon, eBook from Oxford, Amazon, CourseSmart and rental

from chegg.com, eCampus.com.

Yes, you must have one and read it.

Course Description: WORLD RELIGIONS Prerequisite: ENC 1101 or ENC 1101H or IDH 1110 Basic introduction to the world's religions. Explores practices and beliefs of major religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism. Gordon Rule course, which requires demonstration of college level writing skills through multiple assignments. Minimum grade of C required if used to satisfy Gordon Rule requirement

What is our goal in studying World Religions?

You will probably spend the rest of your life living and working with people from religious traditions different from yours. How will you relate to them, to their faith? Perhaps it will even be your spouse or partner! And, we live in a world plagued by religious violence when, not so many years ago, many thought that religion in this world was "going away." How can we understand what is happening with religion in the world today? This course aims to inform you, to enrich your experience so that you can live more successfully, with more understanding and empathy, in a very religious world. It should provide a foundational knowledge of the world's great religions as well as what the issues are in religion and religious life. It is core education for those entering any field of study and foundational for those who may want to go further in religious study.

This course has a lot of CONTENT in it!

Much of what you read about will be new to you. There are a lot of "foreign" words. For many of us, religious experiences and practices are strange, even bizarre. There is a lot for me, the instructor, to tell you. But we will try to spice up our class sessions with online options, videos, group discussions, student presentations, writing and experiential activities.

I am available to all students for consultations. Please feel free to ask to meet with me. Teaching is what I do. I love to be of help to students. I may ask for individual sessions with students experiencing difficulties.

YOU MUST BE IN CLASS – ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is necessary for successful completion of this course. Students are allowed TWO personal absences for free. There is no need to notify the instructor about the reason for these. After the two free absences, each unexcused absence will result in 50 points deducted from the course score (1000 points). Excused absences are completely at the discretion of the instructor. Excused absences must be documented. For example, COVID symptoms must be verified by an antigen test, the results of which are available in 20 minutes. Illness, legal

obligations, military obligations, deaths in the family, employment obligations can be excused if documented. Phrases like "family emergency" will not be excused without details and documentation.

In extreme situations where extended absences are necessary, negotiate with the instructor for a faculty withdrawal or for a D or F grade that may be eligible for grade forgiveness when the course is repeated. See the College rules about this.

As of the college withdrawal-by-student date, students in this class will receive the grade earned for the course. Students will not be permitted to secure a faculty withdrawal by not attending after the student withdrawal date.

- Students who do not come to class before August 31 will be withdrawn as NO SHOW. There is no refund of fees for NO SHOW withdrawals.
- The attendance records of the instructor are the official record of attendance.
- *If I become ill, I will endeavor to notify the class. Please wait 20 minutes before leaving the classroom if I am not there.*
- Students not signed in within the first 15 minutes of class will be marked absent.
- This class meets for 75 minutes. Unless you have a health condition that warrants it, leaving the class for restroom breaks should NOT be necessary.
- Students who leave class early for any reason and do not return will be marked absent for the day. I reserve the right to take attendance more than once during the session.
- Class time is a cell phone free space. Students who use cellphones in class will be marked absent. Students who leave the classroom during class for the purpose of using a cell phone will be marked absent. Discuss any special need for cellphones with the instructor.
- Students may withdraw from this class up to the published deadlines for withdrawal with and without refund of fees.
- See the College Catalog for information about the effect of Withdrawals on your record.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams and Essays

1. **In Class Summative Exams** There will be SEVEN short in-class exams. These will be administered on the day assigned in the Class Calendar. Regular class will continue at the conclusion of each of these exams. These exams will be standardized using Scantrons, which will be provided to you, for answers. These exams will be based on the textbook and on the class presentations. **80 points each; 560 possible points total.**
2. **Essays and Religion Visits.** Students will have a choice between the following assignments.
 - a. **Two Essays and One Visit to a worship experience at a religious institution.**
 - i. An introductory essay toward the beginning of the term to explore basic questions about religion and to establish a baseline for your Gordon Rule writing skills.
 - ii. An essay chosen from a list of questions based on the major religions studied in this course. You may NOT choose the question on the religion that you choose to visit.
 - iii. A visit to a worship experience at one of the world religions chosen from a list of locations, days and times provided by the professor.
 - b. **Three Essays**
 - i. An introductory essay toward the beginning of the term to explore basic questions about religion and to establish a baseline for your Gordon Rule writing skills.
 - ii. Two essays chosen from a list of questions based on the major religions studied in this course.
 - iii. You may choose this three-essay assignment ONLY if it is impossible for you to do a religion visit.
 - c. **150 points each part of the assignment; 450 possible points total. These essays are submitted in the Assignment in Canvas AND on paper in class on the due date.**

3. Gordon Rule Requirement: Students must achieve a C grade or better on the Essays in order to pass the Gordon Rule Requirement. If, after the two or three essays, a student still has not achieved a 70% or better on the most recent essay but IS achieving a 70% or better grade in the course, the professor will assign remedial writing exercises to achieve the Gordon Rule Requirement.

Total Points for the course: 1010.

It is very important that students are able to read and comprehend a college level textbook. Attempts to bypass the textbook by online searches, etc. will not work and will result in reduced grades.

Extra Credit: Because the role of religion in American life is so masterfully affirmed and restricted by our Constitution, and because this course is concerned about the role of religion in life, I offer the following: If you show proof that you voted in the November 2022 election, you will receive **25 bonus points**. If you are not yet eligible to vote, or if you are not a citizen of the US or have some other reason that you cannot be a voter, you may show me proof of voting in another country or write a 2-page essay about the importance of a religious person participating in a democracy.

• NOTE: This course is outlined and graded in our Canvas site. In class exams and group participation are listed in Canvas as "assignments" to create a gradebook column. Keep in mind that Summative Exams are in class, NOT online. Essays are submitted online AND on paper in class. Class participation is, of course, in class. Meetings with Prof. Truscott about your writing will be in person before or after class or by appointment.

Disclaimer: As many factors may affect the development and progress of a class, the instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule as may be required to assure attainment of course objectives.

Grading Scale

900 – 1000	A	Superior work, creative, exceeding basic expectation
800 – 899	B	Meets basic expectation very well, shows strong potential
700 – 799	C	Meets basic expectation adequately
600 – 699	D	Less than basic expectation, has trouble understanding
0 – 599	F	Fails to meet expectations, fails to understand material, fails in attendance and/or assignments.

State Law HB 7 Statement

This class requires participation in discussion to meet course-learning outcomes. We are a class comprised of individuals. As such, there will be multiple opinions expressed throughout the semester that you may not personally agree with or even understand - as may be expected. My role as an instructor is to facilitate freedom of expression that is relevant to the course, credible, open and respectful without the promotion or endorsement of a single viewpoint. Conversations informed by diverse viewpoints contribute to critical thinking and higher-level learning. Even if you don't agree, listening to different points of view may give you further insight into your own perspectives. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief in a concept. Concepts as presented are not endorsed by the instructor but are presented as part of the larger course of instruction. Should a student feel uncomfortable with how course content is presented or discussed, please contact the instructor for further conversation.

Students are welcome to record lectures by the instructor in class. **HOWEVER, DO NOT RECORD** the responses of any students. That is a violation of privacy. Since this class will be presented in a presentation/discussion format, extreme care will need to be taken if you choose to record the instructor's presentations.

Student Conduct and Academic Honesty:

- Exams and homework are considered individual effort; any submissions that are too similar for coincidence will receive no credit.
- Students are responsible for preparing for class by reading pre-assigned readings and completing assignments. Students who are absent are fully responsible for all material covered in class.
- Students may *collaborate* on design and project issues. This does NOT include duplication of programs or designs. Collaboration should be used to find bugs in programs or to solve program syntax and general structure problems. Copying, regardless of the number of editor changes, renaming, and/or retyping is considered cheating, and a student's inability to describe the function of a submitted assignment will be considered evidence of cheating. All students involved in incidents of cheating will be given a zero ("0") for

that assignment/quiz/exam/project without regard to who did the original work or who may have benefited.

- During exams and quizzes, students may not leave the room or receive phone calls.
- The instructor's phone and email are provided for emergency situations, such as missing an exam, and brief questions about specific assignments. Messages should consist of your name, your class and class time, and a brief message. Questions such as "What did we cover in class?" will not result in a response. Due to the problem of "phone tag", student phone calls will normally not be returned. Emails with specific questions will be answered as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours. Students who need more than a brief response should arrange a meeting with the instructor.

Expected Student Conduct:

Valencia College is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning but is concerned with the development of responsible personal and social conduct. By enrolling at Valencia College, a student assumes the responsibility for becoming familiar with and abiding by the general rules of conduct. The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty to leave the class. Violation of any classroom or Valencia's rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Valencia. Disciplinary action could include being withdrawn from class, disciplinary warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate and authorized actions. You will find the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook.

Computer/Equipment Use Policy:

- Use of computers in the Business, IT, and Public Services classrooms at Valencia Community College is restricted to those activities designated by the instructor to enhance the class materials. Any other use is strictly forbidden. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:
 - Use of computer to send E-mail or access Internet sites not specifically assigned in class.
 - Use of computer for job, internship, homework or other activities not assigned in class.
 - Modifying any hardware or software system configuration or setting.
 - Activities not in accordance with the Valencia Student Code of Conduct
- Use of computers in the Business Students open lab (Bldg. 2, Room 304) is limited to those activities involved with preparing homework or coursework in the IT or Business departments and is subject to the same

restriction as listed above.

- Computer use is remotely monitored; any student using computers inappropriately may be subject to dismissal from class or banishment from the lab. Subsequent offense may be sent to the campus administration for further disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a notification from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the instructor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities. The East Campus Office is located in Building 5, Room 216.

Bay Care Services

Valencia students can get immediate help that may assist them with psychological issues dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, and time management, as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. Students have 24-hour unlimited access to the BayCare Behavioral Health’s confidential student assistance program phone counseling services by calling (800) 878-5470. Three free confidential face-to-face counseling sessions are also available to students.

Disclaimer Statement

As many factors may affect the development and progress of a class, the instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule as may be required to assure attainment of course objectives.

COMPUTER AND EMAIL REQUIREMENTS

- You must have access to a computer with up-to-date Windows or Mac OS operating systems.
- You must have access to MS Word. Some students will want to use MS Power Point or Excel. Do NOT submit anything to me with a .wps suffix. Do not submit Mac Pages.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader, latest edition, is required to view pdf documents.
- You must have access to Canvas.
- You must have and use your Valencia email address to communicate with the instructor or students. Please put REL2300 + CRN number, <your last name>, <the subject of your email,> in the Subject Line.
- **You MUST have a Valencia email account. This will be the ONLY email address that I can use to communicate with you.**

Students ARE permitted to use laptops, iPads, Notebooks and SmartPhones for class purposes ONLY. Any student caught using an electronic device or phone in class for any other reason than class participation will be reported to the Dean’s office for violation of the Code of Conduct and may either be Withdrawn or assigned a grade of F. Students may contact the instructor in person if they have special reasons to be available by phone and *may* be granted an exception.

Assignments, Topics, Videos, Exams and Student Presentations

Date	Subject-Chapters	Text Pages and Topics covered within the chapters 3 rd Edition	Videos	Exams
8/22	Get Acquainted Syllabus		Maybe some video fun!	
8/24	#1 Understanding Religion			
8/29	#2 Indigenous Religions of North America			
8/31	#3 Indigenous Religions of Africa			
9/7	#4 Hinduism		Hinduism	Exam 1 – Chapters 1,2,3, Introductory Essay Due
9/12	#4 Hinduism			
9/14	#4 Hinduism			

9/19	#4 Hinduism			
9/21	#5 Buddhism		Buddhism	Exam 2 – Chapter 4 Chapter 4 Essay Due if chosen
9/26	#5 Buddhism			
9/28	#5 Buddhism			
[10/2] Sunday				Visit to Buddhist Temple if chosen
10/3	#5 Buddhism			
10/5	#8 Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Daoism	251-301	Confucius/ Daoism	Exam 3 – Chapter 5 Chapter 5 Essay Due if chosen
10/10	#8 Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Daoism			
10/12	#8 Chinese Religions: Confucianism and Daoism Video Presentation: <i>The History of God</i>			Student appointments on essays chapter 4 and 5
10/17	Video Presentation: <i>The History of God</i>			Student appointments on essays chapter 4 and 5
10/19	#11 Judaism	361-417	Judaism	Exam 4 – Chapter 8 Chapter 8 Essay Due if chosen
10/24	#11 Judaism			
10/26	#11 Judaism			
[10/28] Friday				Visit to Jewish Synagogue if chosen
10/31	#11 Judaism		Jewish Rabbi in class	
11/2	#12 Christianity	419-477	Christianity	Exam 5 – Chapter 11 Chapter 11 Essay Due if chosen
11/7	#12 Christianity			
11/9	#12 Christianity			
[11/13] Sunday				Visit to Christian Church if chosen
11/14	#12 Christianity		Christian pastor in class	Student appointments on essays chapter 8 and 11
11/16	#13 Islam	479-535	Islam	Exam 6 – Chapter 12 Chapter 12 Essay Due if chosen
11/21	#13 Islam			
TB A				Visit to Islamic Masjid if chosen – The date and time will be announced.

11/28	#13 Islam		Muslim Imam in class	
11/30	Chapter 14 New Religious Movements, selections			Chapter 13 Essay Due if chosen
12/5 10:00 a.m.				Exam 7 – Chapter 13-14 Student appointments on essays chapter 12 and 13

Locations for Religion Visits

Dates and times of student visits will be assigned by the professor in consultation with the student(s).

Religion Visit-Buddhism - Guang Ming Temple on Hoffner Rd. in Orlando Religion Visit-Judaism - Congregation of Reform Judaism, Orlando Religion Visit-Christianity/Orthodox - Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Maitland, FL Religion Visit-Christianity/Roman Catholic - St. Margaret Mary Roman Catholic Church, Winter Park Religion Visit-Christianity/Mainline Protestant - St. Richard’s Episcopal Church, Winter Park Religion Visit-Christianity/Evangelical Protestant - First Baptist Church, Orlando Religion Visit-Islam - Islamic Society of Central Florida Orlando on Goldenrod near our campus
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