

REL 2300: World Religions
Spring 2023 Online Course Syllabus
3 Credits

Final Exam: Monday, April 24th 12 Midnight
Professor: Mr. S. Lloyd Walters, M. Div.
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Course Description:

Designed for students interested in exploring various ways people have expressed religious views. The course explores questions that lead people to formulate religious answers and various religious doctrines that formalize religious concerns. Balances different opinions from major religious traditions such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism, among others, and helps students broaden perspectives on religion (course catalog, pg. 292).

Course Outcomes

Understanding Religious Traditions deals with the historical, cultural and social context of a variety of religious expressions enabling students to understand and interact with persons of all religious backgrounds. The course outcomes are to enable the student to

- understand the relationships between specific religious traditions and their cultural contexts
- compare and contrast differences within religious traditions
- understand the moral and ethical precepts of religious traditions
- discover religious concepts and connect this study to everyday life
- develop college-level writing.

Course Prerequisites

None

Course Text

Matthews, Warren *World Religions* Seventh Edition California: Wadsworth, 2013, 2010 and 2007 with handouts and other media as required.

Important Dates

Drop/Refund Deadline	January 17, 2023, 11:59 pm
No Show Period	January 19 - 28, 2023
Withdrawal Deadline (to receive a “W”)	Friday, March 24, 2023, 11:59 pm

Class Policies

Student Conduct

Interaction between students and the professor, as well as other students, must be respectful at all times. Content will be presented by the professor in an objective and direct format, with opportunities for open discussion. If you are not prepared to objectively listen to a religious perspective other than your own and conduct yourself in a manner that exhibits respect for people who hold other viewpoints, you may want to consider taking another course.

Valencia Community College is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning but is concerned with the development of socially responsible persons. By enrolling at Valencia Community College, a student assumes the responsibility for becoming familiar with and engaging in the general rules of conduct. Violation of any classroom or Valencia Community College rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Valencia. The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty.

Any behavior that is deemed by the professor as disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated. If the instructor determines a student's online behavior as being disruptive, the behavior will be discussed with the student in private. If there is a second occurrence, the student will be asked to leave the Discussion group. A third occurrence will lead to a meeting of the student, professor, and the Humanities Department Chair to discuss the student's withdrawal from the course. Failure to attend the meeting may result in automatic withdrawal. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the professor to leave the class.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class.

Communication

Canvas access is necessary for success in this course. Students are responsible for contacting the professor as soon as they realize they will be absent and are responsible for informing themselves of class changes by regularly accessing our course site and emails through Canvas.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted must be your own! When quoting another person's work or ideas be sure to give them credit using proper MLA citation. All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited at Valencia Community College. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, furnishing false information, forgery, alteration or misuse of documents, misconduct during a testing situation, and misuse of identification with intent to defraud or deceive. Any student determined by the professor to have been guilty of engaging in an act of academic dishonesty shall be subject to a range of academic penalties as determined by the professor. These penalties may include, but not limited to, one or more of the following: loss of credit for an assignment, examination or project; reduction in the course grade; or a grade of "F" in the course. For further detail, refer to the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook.

Attendance, Tardiness and Participation Policy

Preparation for and participation in each class activity is necessary to excel in this class. Regular access to the course is considered your attendance to the class. Participation in Discussion groups is a factor taken into consideration when determining the final grade.

The No-Show period is listed above. Students who have not attended class by the end of the No-Show period will be dropped from the class.

Please note Valencia College policy on attendance and withdrawal from class:

A. A student is permitted to withdraw from a class on or before the withdrawal deadline, as published in the College calendar. A student is not permitted to withdraw from a class after the withdrawal deadline.

B. A faculty member is permitted to withdraw a student from the faculty member's class for violation of the faculty member's attendance policy *with written notification to the student prior to the beginning of the final exam period*, as published in the faculty member's syllabus. A faculty member is not permitted to withdraw a student from his or her class as a response to student conduct which falls under the jurisdiction of the Student Code of Conduct (6Hx28:10-03).

C. Attendance in an online class is based on a student's completion of assignments, quizzes, discussion board postings, and tests. Students who fail to complete six (6) assigned items (whether assignments, discussions, quizzes, or exams,) will receive a warning. Upon the **seventh (7)** missed assignment, the student will automatically be withdrawn from the course by the instructor.

- (NOTE: The instructor does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.)
- Upon the sixth missed assignment, the student will be notified that missing one other assignment will result in their withdrawal from the course.
- For severe **medical conditions** that result in excessive absences, consult the Dean of Students concerning Valencia's medical withdrawal policy.
- International students, and students receiving financial aid, should be aware of how a "W" will affect their status.

D. A student who withdraws from a class before the withdrawal deadline will receive a grade of "W." A student who is withdrawn by a professor will receive a grade of "W." A student who is withdrawn for administrative reasons at any time will receive a grade of "W" or other grade as determined in consultation with the professor. Any student who withdraws or is withdrawn from a class during a third or subsequent attempt in the same course will be assigned a grade of "F". The grades of "WP" and "WF" are eliminated.

E. A student who receives a grade of "W" will not receive credit for the course, and the W will not be calculated in the student's grade point average; however, the enrollment will count in the student's total attempts in the specific course.

F. If a student withdraws from a class, the student may, upon request and only with the faculty member's permission (which may be withheld at any time in the sole discretion of the faculty member), continue to attend the course. If a student is withdrawn by a faculty member or is administratively withdrawn, the student is not permitted to continue to attend the class

Requirements for Written Work

All writing assignments must be typed, or word processed and double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. The formatting of the one-page essays should follow the Sample One Page Essay format including documenting works referenced, page numbers and one-inch margins. The Vocabulary and Long Writing Assignment can use MLA format or the Sample One Page Essay format. All writing assignments are *not* required to have a cover page.

Grading Policy

Grades are based on the following definitions:

Grade A (100-90%) is reserved for work which is exceptional in quality; work which shows insight, understanding and initiative, and which is presented in the correct format, with no spelling or grammatical errors and on time

Grade B (89-80 %) suggests work which is consistently good and shows interest, effort and originality; it is also given to work that is presented on or before the due date and is in the correct format. A and B papers and assignments are never late.

Grade C (79-70%) is a respectable grade; it reflects work that is competent but average, which meets the requirements but is not fully successful for any number of reasons. A grade of C suggests that the student has completed the course expectations satisfactorily.

Grade D (69-60%) is less than satisfactory and is not a transferable grade.

Grade F (59 or less %) is a failing grade.

Please note: If a student decides to withdraw from this course, it is the student's responsibility to file all of the necessary paperwork. Failure to do so will result in a grade of WF.

Class Requirements

This class is organized to maximize the possibility for the student to excel and to get as high a grade as possible. The student is required to do the following:

- **4 Assignments and 4 Tests (60% of Final Grade)**
 - 4 Assignments
 - Definitions, biographies, glossary items etc.
 - Full credit given if turned in on early or on time in the format described in the syllabus
 - 4 Tests
 - 25 True/False and Multiple Choice questions
- **2 Short Writing Assignments (10% of Final Grade)**
 - One-page essays (*including all citations*)
 - Follow instructions on the sheet
 - Be aware of the rubric based scoring on the sheet as well
- **1 Long Writing Assignment (20% of Final Grade)**

- **3–5-page Essay**
 - Follow instructions on the sheet
 - Be aware of the rubric based scoring on the sheet as well
- **Discussion Groups (10% of Final Grade)**
 - At least 4 posts for each discussion
 - One substantive original post
 - Three responses to your classmates' posts

The Course Outline (in this syllabus), the Course Road Map and the Calendar (both online) establish the time frame of all of the course requirements. Please make note of all of these resources.

Canvas Grading

Your average and Final Grade in Canvas is a running total. That means that at the beginning of the semester everyone begins with a 0.00 average that results in your grade showing an “F.” As the semester progresses and Assignments and Unit Tests grades are inputted, your average will improve and the grade will reflect whatever that average is at that time. At the midpoint of the course (after Unit Test #2), if you are following the Course Road Map and everything is turned in, your average should be in the 40’s. If you multiply your average by 2 that will give you your Midterm average. At the end of the semester, once everything is graded, is the only time you will see your actual grade.

Also, do not underestimate discussion groups. These 24 discussion groups make up 10% of your grade and can be the difference between an “A” and a “B.” Your posts (even your responses) must be substantive, not just “Good job!” “Great post” or “I agree.” That will cost you points. Remember, you must have a total of four posts (one original and three responsive posts) to receive full credit for each discussion group.

Make-up Policy

NO make-up on tests or quizzes unless arranged in advance. All assigned work is due at the beginning of class as attendance is taken. You may turn in work early.

Course Outline:

- I. Unit I (January 9 – 30)
 - A. Week 1 (January 9 - 13) *Religion of the Americas*
 1. Read pages 15-43 (Chapter One)
 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. The Mantu
 - b. Religion of the Americas
 - B. Week 2 (January 17 - 20) *Religions of Africa*
 1. **Short Writing Assignment 1 (due Tuesday, January 17)**
 2. Read Pages 44-67 (Chapter Two)
 3. Discussion Groups
 - a. The Influence of African Religions
 - b. Sub- Saharan African Religion
 - C. Week 3 (January 23 - 27) *Hinduism*
 1. Read Pages 69-107 (Chapter Three)
 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. The Law of Karma
 - b. The Laws of Manu
 - c. M. K. Gandhi
 3. **Vocabulary Assignment 1 due (Friday, January 27)**
 - D. Week 4 (January 30)
 1. **Unit 1 Test (Monday, January 30)**
- II. Unit II (January 31 – February 27)
 - A. Week 4 (January 31 – February 3) *Buddhism*
 1. Read pages 109-149 (Chapter Four)
 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. On Suffering
 - b. Theravada vs. Mahayana Buddhism
 - B. Week 5 (February 6 - 10) *Jainism and Sikhism*
 1. Read pages 151-174 (Chapter Five)
 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. Jainism and Karma
 - b. The Five K's
 - C. Weeks 6 and 7 (February 13 - 24) *Religions of China and Japan*
 1. Read pages 175-217 (Chapter Six)
 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. The Yin-Yang
 - b. The Confucian Idea of the Junzi Today
 - c. State Shinto
 3. **Vocabulary Assignment 2 due (Friday, February 24)**
 - D. Week 8 (February 27)
 1. **Unit II Test (Monday, February 27)**
- III. Unit III (February 28 – March 27)
 - A. Week 8 (February 28 – March 3) *Ancient Religions of Iraq and Iran and Judaism*
 1. Read pages 219-241(Chapter Seven)
 2. Discussion Groups

- a. What influence does Zoroastrianism have on other Religions?
 - b. Tammuz and Ishtar
 - B. Week 9 (March 6 - 10) *Judaism*
 - 1. Read pages 243-286 (Chapter Eight)
 - 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. Jewish Holidays
 - b. Abraham
 - c. The Old Testament and Violence
 - C. **Week 10 (March 13 - 17) Spring Break**
 - D. Week 11 (March 20 - 24) *Christianity*
 - 1. Read pages 289-333 (Chapter Nine)
 - 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. Christianity and Violence
 - b. Between Judaism and Christianity
 - 3. **Vocabulary Assignment 3 Due (Friday, March 24)**
 - E. Week 12 (March 27)
 - 1. **Unit III Test (Monday, March 27)**
- IV. Unit IV (March 28 – April 24)
 - A. Weeks 12 and 13 (March 28 – April 7) *Islam*
 - 1. Read pages 33-374 (Chapter Ten)
 - 2. Discussion Groups
 - a. Islam and the Nation of Islam
 - b. Islam and Violence
 - c. The Issue of Jesus
 - 3. **Long Writing Assignment Draft (due Friday, March 31)**
 - 4. **Long Writing Assignment due (Monday April 7)**
 - B. Week 14 (April 10 - 14) *New Forms of Older Religion*
 - 1. Read pages 375-393 (Chapter Eleven)
 - 2. Discussion Group
 - a. New Forms of Older Religions
 - 3. **Short Writing Assignment due (Friday April 14)**
 - C. Week 15 (April 17 - 21)
 - 1. Read pages 394-411 (Chapter Twelve)
 - 2. Discussion Group
 - a. Religion and Science
 - 3. **Vocabulary Assignment 4 due (Friday, April 21)**
 - D. Week 16 (April 24)
 - 1. **Final Exam (Unit IV Test) available Monday, April 24 at 12:00 Midnight**