

Department of Religious Studies
Religion 100-A01: The Human Religious Experience

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Summer 2008
T 222
MTWR 9:30 -11.45 a.m.

Course Description

An examination of the primary forms of the expression of the human religious experience and of the nature and function of religion: the dimensions of religion, experiential, mythic, doctrinal, ethical, ritual, social and artistic, will be studied with reference to selected world religions. Contemporary as well as classical interpretations of religion and religion's future will be discussed.

Course Goals

To provide an intellectual framework in which the student can understand and reflect upon the human religious experience

To introduce students to the various dimensions that make up religion and how these are expressed and practiced in selected world religions.

To examine how religion tries to answer some ultimate questions of human existence

Required Text

L.S. Cunningham and J. Kelsay, The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion (4th Edition, 2006) **SQ**

Course Requirements

Readings: as assigned

Examinations: Mid-term – **Thursday June 5th**

Final - **Wednesday June 18th at 10.30 a.m.**

Students **MUST** take examinations on the given dates or incur the penalty of a lower grade. Should some major crisis make this difficult I should be notified as far in advance as possible. INcompletes must be requested in writing and are only granted in the most extreme circumstances. Students who do not complete all of the course work will be given a failing grade. Lateness to class and leaving early are totally unacceptable and students will be called upon to explain. Eating, cell-phones, I-pods, lap-tops or other electronic paraphernalia are not permitted in class.

Evaluation

Students are expected to attend lectures, participate in class discussion (time permitting) and display an ability to absorb, understand and analyze the course material. Sheer factual knowledge of the details of the religions studied and a grasp of religious concepts is absolutely necessary to the satisfactory completion of this course. No textbook is ever completely adequate and much material is provided in the lectures. Read the assigned material in advance.

Attendance and Participation – 10%

Exams – 45% each

COURSE OUTLINE

5/19 Introduction to the Study of Religion – **SQ** 1-9

5/20 Defining Religion – **SQ** 11-24

5/21 The Sacred – **SQ** 27-37

5/22 The Sacred Revealed – **SQ** 39-57

5/26 Memorial Day Observed – no class

5/27 The Sacred Revealed – ctd.

5/28 Sacred Words: Myth, Sacred Language and Scripture – **SQ** 58-73

5/29 Sacred Words ctd.

6/2 Ritual and Symbolic Life – **SQ** 76-89

6/3 Ritual Life ctd.

6/4 Sacred Communities and Organizations – **SQ** 91-107

6/5 Mid-term Exam

6/9 Sacred Communities ctd.

6/10 Religion, Ethical and Moral Issues – **SQ** 125-140

6/11 Ethics and Morality ctd.

6/12 Evil, there's a lot of it about – **SQ** 108-123

6/16 More evil

6/17 "What must I/we do to be saved?" – **SQ** 142-158

6/18 Final Examination