



Course Syllabus

- **COURSE NUMBER:** PHIL225L Section EZZ

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- **COURSE TITLE/MODALITY:** Comparative World Religions / Online Course

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- **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

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- **SEMESTER:** Spring 2025

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- **FACULTY NAME:** Cathy Kubec, Ed.S., M.A., MSN

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- **E-MAIL ADDRESS:** ckubec@ccsnh.edu

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- **OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment

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- **PRE-REQUISITES:** None

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- **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The course examines the major “questions” or “issues” addressed by religion in general. It then examines major, representative systems of religious belief and practice, as well as their historical and sociological development. These religious systems are analyzed using a “world view outline” which addresses different aspects of religious belief and practice, such as the Absolute, the Human Problem, the Human Solution, Rituals, the Meaning of History, Life after Death, Community and Ethics, and Attitudes Toward Other Religions.

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- **TEXT/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:**
Textbook: *The World's Religions* by Huston Smith, 50th Anniversary Edition, 1991,
ISBN 978-0-06-166018-4
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- **GRADING:**

Grades will be assigned based on the total number of points earned.

Discussion Boards	40%
Individual Project	15%
World View Paper	15%
Mid-semester Quiz	10%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-669
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	Below 60

- **COURSE OUTCOMES/COMPETENCIES:**

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Discuss the historical and social context of the development of major religious systems.
 2. Critically compare several representative religious belief systems.
 3. Discuss major components of various religious practices and forms of worship.
 4. Compare excerpts from important bodies of scripture and sacred stories.
 5. Analyze various religions based on their worldview.
 6. Identify and correct misconceptions about several major world religions.
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- **DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The content of this course is designed to challenge your viewpoints and perspective as part of your learning experience. It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives are well-served by this course. Students' learning needs will be addressed both in and out of class, and the diversity of students will benefit the class and will be considered a resource and strength. Materials and activities presented in class will respect diversity including gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture.

- Discuss privately with me if you feel your success in the class is being impacted by experiences outside of class. I am always open to listening to students' experiences and want to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
- If you feel that something offensive occurred regarding DEI topics in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please let me know.
- Please make me aware if you have a name and/or set of pronouns that are different from those appearing on your official records.

- I encourage you to seek out other resources, such as an academic advisor or another trusted faculty member, if you feel more comfortable addressing issues with these individuals. [Anonymous feedback can be submitted here.](#)

It is my hope that this course meets your every expectation as a challenging, engaging, and respectful learning experience. If you find this not to be the case, I will welcome the opportunity to address your concerns. This is not only a courtesy; it is a matter of process and procedure. Should we fail to arrive at a mutually satisfactory understanding, you should take the matter to my immediate supervisor, Stephen Freeborn, at SFreeborn@ccsnh.edu.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

Week	Canvas Module	Topics	Textbook Readings (See Canvas Modules for Specific Pages Assigned)	Assignments, Quizzes Discussion Boards & Final Exam
Jan 21 - 25	1	Understanding Religion	**	Introductions
Jan 26 – Feb 1	2	Religions of Antiquity	**	DB #1
Feb 2– 8	3	Hinduism	Smith, Ch. II	DB #2
Feb 9 - 15	4	Buddhism	Smith, Ch. III	DB #3
Feb 16 - 22	5	Confucianism	Smith, Ch. IV	DB #4
Feb 23 – Mar 1	6	Shinto	**	DB #5
Mar 2 - 8	7	Islam	Smith, Ch. VI	Quiz due Mar. 8th
Mar 9 - 15	8	Islam	**	DB #6
Mar 16 - 22	NONE	Happy Spring Break— No Classes		NONE
Mar 23 - 29	9	Judaism	Smith, Ch. VII	DB #7
Mar 30 – Apr 5	10	Judaism (continued)	**	Individual Project due by Apr 5th
Apr 6 - 12	11	Christianity	Smith, Ch. VIII	DB #8
Apr 13 - 19	12	Christianity	**	DB #9
Apr 20 - 26	13	Jainism, Sikkism, Taoism	** Smith, Ch. V	Worldview Paper due by Apr 26
Apr 27 – May 3	14	Wiccan: modern paganism. Course Wrap-up.	**	DB #10
May 4 - 10	15	Take Final Exam		Final Exam due by FRIDAY, May 9th

*Note: If any updates or revisions are needed to this schedule, they will be posted in the Canvas Modules. Please refer to the Canvas Modules for all due dates.

** *See additional required resource material and links posted in Canvas modules.*

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

- **CANVAS AND EMAIL**

Since this is a fully online class, students are expected to regularly check Canvas and their college email. If I communicate with you by email, it will be using your college email address. All work should be submitted via Canvas. If you are having trouble with Canvas, contact me as soon as possible.

- **DISCUSSION BOARDS**

There will be a total of 10 required discussion board assignments during this course. Each of the discussions will be worth up to 40 points each (25 points for your initial response to the thread and 15 points for your reply to other students' posts). Your response to the instructor's posted question should be posted by 11:59 pm Wednesday night of that week, and your reply to two other students' posts must be submitted by 11:59 pm on the Saturday night of the week that the discussion board topic was assigned. You will be graded according to a rubric provided in Canvas. Remember: you must respond to the instructor's question and then comment on two other classmates' posts. More information on the discussions will be posted under the weekly modules on Canvas.

- **INDIVIDUAL PROJECT**

You will create a Power Point presentation that explains major misconceptions (misunderstandings) people have about three major world religions we have studied this semester. You must choose to discuss two widespread misconceptions about each of those religions. Your Power Point should contain a title page with your name, PHIL225L and the title "Misconceptions about (*insert the names of the 3 religions*)." It will consist of four (4) slides for EACH misconception you identify. The order of the presentation should be as follows:

Title Slide (as described above)

Then, for each misconception you identify you will need four slides as follows:

Slide 1: State the name of the religion and clearly state what the misconception is.

Slide 2: State how the misconception originated.

Slide 3: Provide a factual refutation of the misconception.

Slide 4: This will be a reference slide providing the source(s) of your information regarding that misconception. (Include ONLY the references you actually used in the presentation).

Your entire presentation will contain 25 slides and should be visually appealing as well as accurate and informative. Additional instructions about this assignment will be provided in Canvas in the Week 4 Module.

- **WORLDVIEW PAPER**

In this paper you will research and explain how having a better understanding of multiple religions might affect one's "worldview." This is to be a scholarly paper in which you are to address the following four topics:

1. Development of a person's moral and ethical code, and what role religious beliefs play in forming that code
2. How a person arrives at their beliefs about the existence of God or gods, heaven, hell, reincarnation, etc.
3. Cause(s) of hostile views such as antisemitism, islamophobia, anti-Christian sentiment, etc., in the world today
4. Discuss whether a better understanding of different religions might decrease the amount of prejudice exhibited in society. If so, how? If not, why not?

The Worldview Paper should be double-spaced in either Calibri or Times New Roman 12-point font. It must ALSO have a Reference Page. The body of the paper (i.e., the four topics you will write about) should be no less than three full pages in length, followed by the reference page, which does not count as part of the body of your paper. Each of the four topics must have at least one in-text citation within that section. Then, all of your references will be listed on the last page. Papers must be formatted in current MLA Style. The paper will be graded by a rubric. Additional information regarding this assignment will be provided in Canvas.

Note: Plagiarism, as well as the use of AI to generate any portion of the content of your paper is considered academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the paper.

- **DUE DATES AND MAKEUP/LATE WORK**

Students are expected to turn in assigned work on time. Unexcused late submission of an assignment will earn either no points or a reduction in points, depending on the assignment. To request an extended deadline, you **MUST** submit a written (email) request and be given written (email) permission by the instructor. See Canvas for details.

- **NEED HELP?**

Students sometimes need additional help in understanding course materials or assignments. Providing help is part of an instructor's responsibility. Please contact me as soon as possible at ckubec@ccsnh.edu if you need additional guidance, clarification, or are otherwise experiencing difficulty being successful in the course. You can generally expect a reply to your email within 24 hours, and we can set up a Zoom appointment if necessary. If you have not heard back from me after 24 hours, please resend your email!