

Phil 1150 Introduction to World Religions

A. Course Description

1. Number of credits: 3
2. Lecture hours per week: 3
Lab hours per week: none
3. Prerequisites: none
4. Co-requisites: none
5. MnTC Goals: 6 and 8

A comparative religions course which examines the fundamental beliefs, practices and traditions of world religious traditions. The origins, major figures, sacred scriptures and creeds will be reviewed and compared. Topics may include justification for beliefs, cosmology, practices of the faithful, and the role of women, artistic expression, and contemporary issues. Major religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam will be studied. Additionally alternative spirituality, paganism, Egyptian religions, Native American traditions, atheism, secularism and other religious movements may be covered.

B. Date last revised: Fall 2015

C. Outline of Major Content Areas

1. Scholarly study of religious traditions, beliefs and practices.
2. The foundations and justifications of religious beliefs.
3. The difference between religion and other human activities.
4. Change, challenges, alternatives and criticisms of religion from within and outside religious world view.
5. Significant philosophical, social, cultural, artistic, political influences on religion.

D. Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of religions especially regarding their philosophical, cultural, and social differences. (8b)
2. Be able to understand specific religious traditions and their underlying human values within a historical and social context. (6b, 2b)
3. Recognize and articulate and respond critically to the value assumptions which underlie and affect religious and spiritual decisions, interpretations, analyses and evaluations made by ourselves and others. (6c, 2d)

4. Articulate an informed personal reaction to the scriptures, stories, traditions and beliefs of the religions under discussion. (6e)
5. Describe and analyze religious elements and their various expressions which influence relations of states and societies in their historical and contemporary dimensions. (8a)
6. Analyze specific international problems, illustrating the religious and cultural differences that affect their solution. (8c, 2d)
7. Imagine and seek out a variety of possible religious goals, assumptions, interpretations or perspectives which can give alternative meanings or solutions to given situations or problems. (2b)

E. Methods for Assessing Student Learning

1. Essays and papers
2. Exams
3. Discussion projects and homework assignments
4. Service learning
5. In-class assignments and participation

F. Special Information None