

Items in bold indicate Honors enhancements from standard outline for RELIG 100

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

- A. Department Information:
Division: Humanities
Department: Philosophy/Religious Studies
Course ID: RELIG 100**H**
Course Title: Introduction to Religious Studies: **Honors**
Units: 3
Lecture: 3 hours
Prerequisite: None
- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:
An introductory study of religion, with emphasis on religious experience, the origins and function of religion and religious and theological modes of expression, drawing on Eastern and Western, ancient and modern religious phenomena to help in understanding various religions. **Enrollment is limited to students eligible for the Honors Program**

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon successful completion of this course students should be able to:

- A. Create and articulate a historical, cultural, and/or intellectual matrix within which the concerns and the questions of the discipline of religious studies can be placed;
- B. Read and critically evaluate selected primary sources in religious studies, (including but not limited to sacred texts, dialogues, aphorisms, essays, sermons, theological treatises, credal formulae, novels, short stories, and non-textual primary sources such as music and visual art forms **(the “primary sources” will include theoretical reflections on the nature of the study of religion as well as classical textual formulations from specific traditions [the plural is intentional] that span a wide historical spectrum)**).
- C. Respond critically, analytically, and/or synthetically in writing to issues dealing with religious studies, (including but not limited to the origin of religion, the function of religion, the expression of religion in literature, psychology, and the arts, and/or the relationships between and among religions) **(the “critical and analytical written responses” will include tasks of substantive length, i.e., one task with a minimum of five pages, and typically at least one task requiring 10 pages)**.
- D. Apply the ideas and concepts in the discipline of religious studies to contemporary experience in its social, institutional, psychological, and/or political manifestations **(the application will be done through writing and through at least one other medium, such as oral presentation, recitation, or group collaboration)**.

IV. CONTENT:

- A. What is Religion
1. What is Religion?
 2. The History of Religion
 3. The Holy
 4. The Quest
- B. Conceptual Dimensions of Religion
1. Symbolism
 2. Speaking and Knowing
 3. Sacred Stories
 4. Scripture
 5. God
 6. Evil and Human Destiny

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- C. Performative and Social Dimensions of Religion
 - 1. Holy Communities
 - 2. Patterns and Varieties of Faith
 - 3. Salvation
 - 4. Holy Rites

- V. **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**
 - A. Lecture
 - B. Discussions (class and group)
 - C. Audio-Visuals
 - D. Reading of texts, both secondary and primary
 - E. Writing tasks appropriate for the material
 - F. Computer Tutorials (if applicable)

- VI. **TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:**
 - A. Reading: Read the Bhagavad Gita. Be able to summarize the action of the dialogue as well as the key issues of the internal struggle Arjuna experiences. Be able to identify the cultural and religious bases of Krishna's advice to Arjuna. Be able to apply, the ideas of karma yoga, bhakti yoga, and the gunas to aspects of your own experience.
 - B. Writing, critical thinking: Compare the literal advice of Krishna to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita with Mahatma Gandhi's interpretation and universalization of the action of the dialogue. After noting the similarities and differences, evaluate the adequacy of each kind of interpretation--literal and metaphorical--for "postmodern" America using your own experience as well as information gleaned from researching contemporary religious experience.
 - C. **Honors Assignment: Read Michael Sell's *Approaching the Qur'an*. Listen to the CD-ROM (including prayers and Quranic recitations) that accompanies that text. Research the 2002 controversy over that book being assigned at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Clearly identify the underlying issues in that controversy regarding the academic study of religion and the confessional study of religion. Based on the understanding of religion developed in this class, assess the merits of all sides of that controversy in a 7-10 page paper. As a class, create a web site including all the papers with hyperlinks connecting the major issues in the study of religion, religion in America, Islam, and Christianity in North Carolina.**

- VII. **METHODS OF EVALUATION:**
 - A. Methods of evaluation will vary from instructor to instructor, but may include multiple choice tests, or sentence completion tests. In addition, written components such as essay tests, writing tasks (i.e. journals, summary reviews, interpretive essays, and/or term projects) will be included. Telecomputing can include downloading and uploading reading and writing tasks, on-line discussion, and computer tutorials. Grading may be comparative within a class or may be based on an absolute standard. **Methods of evaluation will adhere to the parameters set out in the "Expected Outcomes for Students" section above.**
 - 1. Sample objective test question: The Supreme Court decision that made the modern, academic study of religion "legitimate" and that prompted the proliferation of departments and programs in the study of religion was
 - a) Engle v. Vitale
 - b) Abington v. Schempp
 - c) O'Hare v. Baltimore Township
 - d) Lemon v. Kurtzman
 - e) None of the above
 - 2. Sample subjective test question: Rehearse at least three different definitions of religion, making sure to evaluate them for the purposes of the academic study of religion at a public institution of higher education.

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- B. While the frequency of evaluation will depend on the type of evaluation ("objective" or written), evaluation will take place periodically throughout the semester with enough frequency to be sufficient to measure student progress and will be sensitive to the various learning styles of students. The minimum evaluation will consist of at least two evaluative instruments (papers, projects, portfolios, or tests) chosen by the instructor of record for the class).

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

Cunningham, Lawrence S., et al. The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995.

Monk, Robert, et al. Exploring Religious Meaning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003.

Porterfield, Amanda. The Power of Religion. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. Trans., J. Strachy. New York: Norton, 1961.

McCutcheon, Russell. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

Supplementary material may include handouts, primary sources, maps, study guides, computer disks, and/or software.