

REL101 | Introduction to Religious Studies

Course Text

Molloy, Michael. *Experiencing the World's Religions*. 8th ed., McGraw Hill, 2021. ISBN: 9781260813760

The text is provided digitally as part of the course enrollment. Students may find used, new, or rental print copies by searching for the ISBN.

Course Description

This course introduces the major religions of the world with consideration to origin, history, beliefs and practices. Students will understand the impact and influence religions have had on human society and development. As religion is a powerful motivator in both ancient and contemporary society, students will examine the importance of religious thought and expression, along with the central elements of a religious worldview (e.g., deity, cosmogony, theodicy, eschatology).

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Define the term religion.
2. Analyze the differences between the world religions.
3. Explain religious world concepts (such as creation of the world, good and evil, salvation).
4. Discuss religious expression and belief (such as rituals, sacred sites, symbols).
5. Recognize the importance of religion as a participant and as an observer.
6. Demonstrate the influence major world religions have on society and the importance of studying religion today.
7. Identify and evaluate the scholarly methods used in the study of religion.
8. Explore and determine the diversity of human religious expression and belief.
9. Describe the influence of religion socially and politically on humanity.
10. Examine the impact of religion on the development of human society over time and found in different parts of the world.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and academic misconduct. Failure to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy can result in a failure and/or zero on the attempted assignment/examination, a removal from the course, disqualification to enroll in future courses, and/or revocation of an academic transcript. Penalties for academic integrity violations can be retroactively applied upon discovery, and at our discretion.

Course Completion Policy

In order for a course to be considered complete, **all required coursework must be attempted, submitted, and graded.** Required coursework consists of graded assignments. Any Academic Integrity Policy violations may prevent a course from being considered complete.

Course Evaluation Criteria

Your score provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. A passing percentage is 70% or higher.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Topic	Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
1	Chapter 1 Quiz	40	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8
1	Reflective Response: Understanding Religion	50	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
2	Chapter 2 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
3	Chapter 3 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
4	Chapter 4 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
4	Reflective Response: Buddhism	50	3, 4, 5
5	Chapter 5 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
6	Chapter 6 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
7	Chapter 7 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
7	Compare/Contrast Essay	150	2, 3, 4, 7
8	Chapter 8 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
9	Chapter 9 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
10	Chapter 10 Quiz	40	2, 3, 4, 6, 8
11	Course Review Wrap Up Quiz	100	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10
11	Travel Slideshow Presentation	250	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
TOTAL		1000	

Intro | Introduction and Getting Started

Subtopics

- Welcome
- Academic Honesty

Assignments

- Welcome video
- Academic Honesty and Integrity Lesson
- Statement of Academic Honesty and Integrity (required)

Topic 1 | Understanding Religion

Subtopics

- What is Religion
- Patterns Among Religions
- Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Study of Religion
- Key Critical Issues
- Why Study the Major Religions of the World
- The Journey

Assignments

- Chapter 1 Reading
- Chapter 1 Presentation
- Chapter 1 Flashcards
- **Chapter 1 Quiz**
- **Reflective Response: Understanding Religion**

Topic 2 | Indigenous Religions

Subtopics

- Discovering Indigenous Religions
- Studying Indigenous Religions: Learning from Patterns
- Sacred Practices in Indigenous Religions
- Personal Experiences: Meeting Maori People
- Indigenous Religions Today

Assignments

- Chapter 2 Reading
- Chapter 2 Presentation
- Chapter 2 Flashcards
- **Chapter 2 Quiz**

Topic 3 | Hinduism

Subtopics

- The Origins of Hinduism
- The Upanishads and the Axis Age
- Living Spiritually in the Everyday World

Assignments

- Chapter 3 Reading
- Chapter 3 Presentation
- Chapter 3 Flashcards

- Devotional Hinduism
- Personal Experience: A Visit to the Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine Temple
- Hinduism and the Arts
- Hinduism: Modern Challenges

- **Chapter 3 Quiz**

Topic 4 | Buddhism

Subtopics

- The Beginnings of Buddhism: The Life of the Buddha
- The Basic Teachings of Buddhism
- The Influence of Indian Thought on Early Buddhist Teachings
- The Early Development of Buddhism
- Theravada Buddhism: The Way of the Elders
- Mahayana Buddhism: The "Big Vehicle"
- Vajrayana Buddhism: The "Diamond Vehicle"
- Personal Experience: New Year's Day at Wat Saket
- Buddhism and the Modern World

Assignments

- Chapter 4 Reading
- Chapter 4 Presentation
- Chapter 4 Flashcards
- **Chapter 4 Quiz**
- **Reflective Response: Buddhism**

Topic 5 | The Fundamentals of Jainism and Sikhism

Subtopics

- Shared Origins
- Jainism
 - Background
 - Mahavira and the Origins of Jainism
 - Worldview
 - Jain Ethics
 - The Development of Jainism and Its Branches
 - Jain Practices
 - Jain Scriptures
 - Jain Art and Architecture
- Sikhism
 - Background
 - Nanak and the Origins of Sikhism
 - The Worldview and Teachings of Nanak
 - The Development of Sikhism
 - Sikh Scriptures
 - Sikhism and the Modern World
- Personal Experience: A Visit to the Golden Temple

Assignments

- Chapter 5 Reading
- Chapter 5 Presentation
- Chapter 5 Flashcards
- **Chapter 5 Quiz**

Topic 6 | The Fundamentals of Daoism and Confucianism

Subtopics

- Basic Elements of Traditional Chinese Beliefs
- Daoism
 - The Origins of Daoism
 - Basic Early Teachings
 - Daoism and the Quest for Longevity
 - The Development of Daoism
 - Daoism and the Arts
 - Daoism and the Modern World
- Confucianism
 - The Dao in Confucianism
 - The Life of Confucius
 - Living According to Confucian Values
 - Confucian Literature
 - The Development of Confucianism
 - Confucianism and the Arts
- Personal Experience: Qing Ming, a Ceremony in Spring

Assignments

- Chapter 6 Reading
- Chapter 6 Presentation
- Chapter 6 Flashcards
- **Chapter 6 Quiz**

Topic 7 | Shinto

Subtopics

- The Origins of Shinto
- The Historical Development of Shinto
- Essentials of Shinto Belief
- Shinto Religious Practice
- Personal Experience: An Unexpected Shrine
- Shinto and the Arts
- Shinto Offshoots: The New Religions
- Shinto and the Modern World

Assignments

- Chapter 7 Reading
- Chapter 7 Presentation
- Chapter 7 Flashcards
- **Chapter 7 Quiz**
- **Compare/Contrast Essay**

Topic 8 | Judaism

Subtopics

- An Overview of Jewish History
- The Hebrew Bible
 - Biblical History
 - Cultural Conflict during the Second Temple Era
- The Development of Rabbinical Judaism

Assignments

- Chapter 8 Reading
- Chapter 8 Presentation
- Chapter 8 Flashcards
- **Chapter 8 Quiz**

- Questioning and Reform
- Judaism and the Modern World
- Personal Experience: A Visit to a Kibbutz in the North
- Jewish Belief
- Religious Practice
- Divisions within Contemporary Judaism
- Jewish Identity and the Future of Judaism

Topic 9 | Christianity

Subtopics

- The Life and Teachings of Jesus
- Early Christian Beliefs and History
- The Early Spread of Christianity
- Influences on Christianity at the End of the Roman Empire
- The Eastern Orthodox Church
- Personal Experience: Mar Saba Monastery
- Christianity in the Middle Ages
- The Protestant Reformation
- The Development of Christianity Following the Protestant Reformation
- Christian Practice
- Christianity and the Arts
- Christianity Faces the Modern World

Assignments

- Chapter 9 Reading
- Chapter 9 Presentation
- Chapter 9 Flashcards
- **Chapter 9 Quiz**

Topic 10 | Islam

Subtopics

- The Life and Teachings of Muhammad
- Essentials of Islam
- The Historical Development of Islam
- Sufism: Islamic Mysticism
- Personal Experience: Visit to a Mosque
- Islam Law and Philosophy
- Islam and the Arts
- Islam and the Modern World

Assignments

- Chapter 10 Reading
- Chapter 10 Presentation
- Chapter 10 Flashcards
- **Chapter 10 Quiz**

Topic 11 | Review & Final Assessments

Assignments

- **Course Review Wrap Up Quiz**
- **Travel Slideshow Presentation**
- End of Course Survey

Related Courses

ART101:
Art Appreciation

CIV101:
**Western
Civilization I**

COM101:
**Introduction to
Communications**