

REL-1010: INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Cuyahoga Community College

Viewing: REL-1010 : Introduction to Religious Studies

Board of Trustees:

January 2022

Academic Term:

Fall 2022

Subject Code

REL - Religious Studies

Course Number:

1010

Title:

Introduction to Religious Studies

Catalog Description:

Comprehensive introduction to foundational elements, concepts and language of religion, including: faith and reason, myth, rituals, historical doctrines and practices, mysticism and attributes, and study of the Divine.

Credit Hour(s):

3

Lecture Hour(s):

3

Lab Hour(s):

0

Other Hour(s):

0

Requisites

Prerequisite and Corequisite

None.

Outcomes

Course Outcome(s):

Critically Analyze principles, terminology, and compare key concepts of religious traditions through primary texts and historically relevant figures.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Oral Communication: Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication for an intended audience that is clear, organized, and delivered effectively following the standard conventions of that language.

Cultural Sensitivity: Demonstrate sensitivity to the beliefs, views, values, and practices of cultures within and beyond the United States.

Written Communication: Demonstrate effective written communication for an intended audience that follows genre/disciplinary conventions that reflect clarity, organization, and editing skills.

Objective(s):

1. Explain concepts and ideologies of religion for individuals as integrated into global cultures.
 2. Compare and contrast the dynamics and worldviews apart from and as incorporated into religious traditions.
 3. Examine aspects of truth claims; moral theology and the environment; asceticism and mysticism; information technology and science.
 4. Describe and analyze the phenomenological versus reductionism approaches to religion.
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Course Outcome(s):

Examine historical development of religious traditions ideologies, structures, and modes of religious thought.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Oral Communication: Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication for an intended audience that is clear, organized, and delivered effectively following the standard conventions of that language.

Cultural Sensitivity: Demonstrate sensitivity to the beliefs, views, values, and practices of cultures within and beyond the United States.

Written Communication: Demonstrate effective written communication for an intended audience that follows genre/disciplinary conventions that reflect clarity, organization, and editing skills.

Objective(s):

Supporting Objectives

1. Identify creative processes of imagination, critical thought and autonomous reasoning through examination of sacred texts.
2. Construct contextual analyses of the origins, inspiration and progression of various belief systems.
3. Examine multi-disciplinary religious beliefs that may include: anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, geography and art.
4. Identify structures of autonomous religious communities, including significant holidays, rituals, and devotional practices.

Course Outcome(s):

Analyze the span of cross-cultural commonalities and differences among mythical, allegorical and traditional religious narratives.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Oral Communication: Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication for an intended audience that is clear, organized, and delivered effectively following the standard conventions of that language.

Cultural Sensitivity: Demonstrate sensitivity to the beliefs, views, values, and practices of cultures within and beyond the United States.

Written Communication: Demonstrate effective written communication for an intended audience that follows genre/disciplinary conventions that reflect clarity, organization, and editing skills.

Objective(s):

1. Discuss the breadth and depth of the experiential aspect of religion on human culture.
2. Discuss cross cultural concepts of the Divine through literature, art, and language.
3. Examine mythic, doctrinal, ethical, ritual, and social aspects of religion.

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Essay exam questions and/or substantive writing assignments
2. Minimum of two examinations
3. Midterm or periodic quizzes
4. Reflective class discussion and comprehensive material review
5. Individual and/or group projects
6. Individual or group presentations
7. Comprehensive or topical final examination

Course Content Outline:

1. Definition of religion
 - a. Latin definition of "religion" - the linking of humans and the divine
 - i. As the response of human beings addressing the human condition
 - ii. As an attempt to rise out of a sense of futility
 - iii. As a belief in a God or gods and associated activities
 - b. Dimensions of religion
 - i. doctrinal, mythological and symbolic
 - ii. ethical and moral codes of conduct
 - iii. ritual and liturgy
 - iv. experiential
 - v. social/institutional and organizational
 - c. Worldview
 - i. supernatural vs. natural
 - ii. dualism

- iii. pluralism
- iv. monotheism
- v. secularization
- d. Contemporary disdain for religion
- 2. Doctrine and teachings
 - a. What is the Divine?
 - i. monotheism vs. polytheism
 - ii. agnosticism and atheism
 - iii. phenomenology and reductionism
 - iv. deism and natural religion
 - v. ontological proofs for the existence of God
 - vi. what kind of God? (attributes: a personal God?)
 - b. Faith and reason
 - i. belief system to explain all of reality
 - ii. revelation
 - iii. scriptures
 - iv. tradition
 - v. prophecy
 - c. Eastern and Western traditions
 - i. Western (Semitic roots: includes Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and their offshoots; prophetic; "world affirming")
 - ii. Eastern (Indian roots: includes Hinduism, Buddhism, and their offshoots; mystical; "world denying")
 - d. Timeline and historical overview
 - i. ethnic religions
 - ii. Hinduism
 - iii. Buddhism
 - iv. religions of China and Japan
 - v. Jainism
 - vi. Sikhism
 - vii. Judaism
 - viii. Christianity
 - ix. Islam
- 3. Myth and symbol
 - a. Notion of symbol (vs. sign): notion of myth
 - b. Stories about the Divine and the gods
 - i. creation and salvation
 - ii. interpretation of historical events
 - c. Religious art and architecture
- 4. Ethics and codes of conduct
 - a. Arise from myths and scriptures
 - i. absolute vs. relative moral norms
 - ii. virtue
 - iii. grace
 - iv. a good person vs. good action
 - b. Law codes
 - i. Torah
 - ii. Ten Commandments
 - iii. Tao
 - iv. Yoga
- 5. Ritual and liturgy
 - a. Notion of ritual
 - b. Notion of liturgy
- 6. Religious experience
 - a. Western vs. Eastern tradition
 - b. Spirituality <
 - i. mysticism
 - ii. asceticism
 - iii. legalism
 - iv. prophecy
 - v. worship

7. Social/institutional aspects
 - a. Ecclesiology: concept of church
 - b. Sociological and anthropomorphical aspects
 - c. Role of religious leaders

Resources

Monk. *Exploring Religious Meaning*. 6th. Prentice-Hall, 2002.

Livingston, James C. *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*. 6th ed. Prentice Hall, 2008.

Lawrence S. Cunningham and John Kelsay. *The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion*. 6th ed. Miami, Pearson Publishing, 2013.

Stephen Prothero. *Religion Matters*. 2nd ed. Norton Publishing, 2021.

PRIMARY TEXTS.

Gary E. Kessler. *Studying Religion: An Introduction Through Cases*. 3rd ed. International: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 2008.

Mary Pat Fisher. *Living Religions: Brief Introduction*. 10th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson, 2017.

Instructional Services

OAN Number:

Ohio Transfer 36 TMAH

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