

INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RLST 100-L02
Fall 2014
1:00 – 2:15 pm TR
Room 100 Luther College

F. Volker Greifenhagen
200.2 Luther
585-4859
Franzvolker.Greifenhagen@uregina.ca

Office Hours: Please make an appointment to see me in my office by speaking to me after class or calling Karen Prior at 585-5034. You can also contact me by phone or e-mail.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Religion matters. Whether you are a religious person or not, or whether you think religion has played a positive or negative role in history, religion is a major aspect of human experience. From pre-historic times, humans have engaged in activities that we now call religion, such as worship, prayer, sacrifice, and rituals marking important life passages. Religions have also been the medium for raising fundamental questions such as: What is the meaning and purpose of life? Is death the end? How do we explain suffering and injustice?

This course introduces the academic study of religion and the major religious traditions of the world. Issues covered include the definition of religion, the identification and analysis of the major components of religions, the key elements of the major religious traditions of the world, and strategies of comparison between different religious traditions. In addition, this particular course includes readings on the “etiquette” of social interaction with people from different religions.

COURSE GOALS:

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and describe the key defining characteristics of the major world religions.
2. Recognize the usefulness of the comparative method in gaining a clearer understanding of various religious traditions, and the impact of religions in the world.
3. Critically analyze the portrayal of religion in the news media.
4. Know how to interact appropriately with people from different religious traditions.

META-SKILL OUTCOMES:

Various elements of this course will help you to work on the following general skills, skills that employers look for in university graduates. These skills will be developed by specific parts of the course:

1. Written communication: quizzes, final exam, comparative media analysis, religious site visit assignment
2. Interpersonal communication: group work on the religious site visit assignment
2. Cross-cultural competence and religious literacy: course content and religious site visit analysis
3. Critical thinking and analysis: course content, quizzes, final exam, religious site visit analysis
5. Comparison: course content, comparative media analysis
4. Information literacy: readings, media analysis, religious site visit assignment

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Introduction to Religious Studies*, 4th edition., ed. Leona Anderson. Regina: University of Regina Department of Religious Studies, 2012-2014. This textbook is available **digitally on a flash drive** which you can buy from the university bookstore; ask for it at the checkout tills.

2. *How To Be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook*, eds. Stuart M. Matlins & Arthur J. Magida, 5th ed. Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2011. This is an **actual physical book** which you can buy from the university bookstore. There is also a copy on reserve for 2 hour in-library use at the Luther Library.

3. *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. John R. Hinnells. New York: Routledge, 2005. This book is available in two forms: (a) as an **e-book accessible through the on-line university library catalogue** (<http://www.uregina.ca/library>) – it is easiest to do a search under the “catalogue” tab for the **title** of this book; (b) on reserve for 2 hour in-library use at the Luther Library.

You will need to read two chapters in this book: “Comparative Religion” by William E. Paden (chapter 11, pp. 208-224) and “Insider/Outsider Perspectives” by Kim Knott (chapter 13, pp. 243-255).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. *Attendance*: Please attend class punctually, complete the assigned readings for each class period, and participate in discussions on-line and in class. Note the academic regulation concerning class attendance in the *U of R Undergraduate Calendar* 5.3 (<http://www.uregina.ca/gencal/ugcal/>). If you are persistently absent or late to class, you will find it difficult to pass this course.

2. *Quizzes*: You will be tested with four short quizzes throughout the semester. Quizzes will be announced a week in advance. They will be based on the reading assignments and class lectures. These quizzes will motivate you to keep up with the material and provide you with a measure of your progress. Missed quizzes due to unexcused absences cannot be made up. You must apply with the instructor for permission to write a make-up quiz if you miss a quiz due to circumstances beyond your control (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family) – see the form attached to this syllabus.

3. *Comparative Media Analysis*: You will write a comparative analysis of media reporting on a particular incident relating to religion by October 2. Further details will be provided in class.

4. *Religious Site Visit*: You will attend the worship service or ritual of a religious tradition with which you are unfamiliar, and write a description and analysis of your experience. This will be done in groups. Before attending, you will hand in a pre-visit plan, no later than October 16. The description and analysis are due November 20. Further details will be provided in class.

5. *Final Exam*: A final exam on Thursday, December 18, 2:00-5:00 pm, will cover the material from the assigned readings and lectures. You must write the final exam in order to pass this course.

EVALUATION:

Comparative Media Analysis	15%
Religious Site Visit:	Pre-Visit Plan 10%
	Description & Analysis 15%
Quizzes	28%
Final Examination	32%
[Bonus Marks	a maximum of 5 bonus marks can be earned; further details will be provided in class]

WRITTEN WORK

All written assignments for this course must be *typewritten* on 8 1/2" by 11" white paper, provided with a cover page with your name and student number, and stapled in the upper left-hand corner. No binders or report covers, please! Written work should follow the format of the *Style Sheet* published by the University of Regina; see:

<http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/581/291995/stylesheet-1.pdf>

For further guidance, consult the *MLA Handbook* or Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*.

Written work is due on the deadlines specified in the class schedule. If, for circumstances beyond your control (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family), you are unable to complete the written work on time, you must apply, in advance if possible, with the instructor for an extension – see the form attached to this syllabus. Assignments submitted late without permission of the instructor will be penalized 10% for every day overdue.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will result in severe academic penalties that can include a failing mark or even expulsion from the university. See the academic regulations regarding cheating and plagiarism on in the *U of R Undergraduate Calendar* 5.13.2 (http://www.uregina.ca/gencal/ugcal/attendanceEvaluation/ugcal_77.shtml).

STUDENT PRIVACY

To protect your privacy, please provide the instructor with a standard 9" X 12" envelope labeled with your name (last name first!). This envelope will be used to return your quizzes and written assignments after they have been marked.

COURSE WEBSITE

You will need to access the course website for at least four purposes:

- To participate in any on-line discussions and/or ask questions.
- To find up-to-date information on readings and other assignments.
- To access various course materials.
- To check your marks.

Log in at <http://urcourses.uregina.ca>. If you need help, contact the Information Services Helpdesk at helpdesk@uregina.ca or 585-4685.

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| 6. Jainism(s) | Oct 21 |
| Read Anderson “Jainism(s)” (IRS) | |
| 7. Buddhism(s) | Oct 23, 28, 30 |
| Read Oh “Buddhism(s)” and Anderson “Women in Buddhism” (IRS), and (5) “Buddhist” (HTBPS) | |
| 8. Sikhism(s) | Nov 4 |
| Read Anderson “Sikhism(s)” (IRS), and (26) “Sikh” (HTBPS) | |
| 9. Confucianism(s) | Nov 6, 13 |
| Read Ren “Confucianism(s)” (IRS) | |
| Note: November 11 = Remembrance Day Holiday | |
| 10. Daoism(s) | Nov 18 |

Read Ren “Daoism(s)” (IRS)

11. Shinto

Nov 20

Read Bond “Shinto” (IRS)

Religious Site Visit Description & Analysis due Nov 20

12. Aboriginal Traditions

Nov 25, 27

Read Miller “Aboriginal Traditions” (IRS), and (18) “Native Americans/First Nations” (HTBPS)

13. Religion in Canada

Dec 2

Read Hillis “Religion in Canada” (IRS)

14. Conclusion & Summary

Dec 4

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, Dec 18, 2:00 – 5:00 pm.

HELPFUL STUFF

If, because of a disability, you have need for accommodations in this course, please discuss this matter as soon as possible with the instructor, and also contact the Centre for Student Accessibility at 585-4631 (Riddell Centre 251). See <http://www.uregina.ca/studserv/disability/index.shtml>

The University of Regina Counselling Services at 251 Riddell Centre (585-4491) provides personal counseling and emergency counselling. See <http://www.uregina.ca/counselling/facts.shtml>.

Luther College’s Studentsfirst Program provides support and programs for students entering university for the first time, and also offers opportunities for discerning your career path or vocation and preparing for a successful launch into the work world after university. It also provides spaces for Canadian and international students to interact and learn from each other. See <http://www.luthercollege.edu/university/students/studentsfirst>

The University of Regina Student Success Centre offers writing tutoring, student success workshops, and one-on-one learning skills consultations. See <http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/>.

The Religious Studies Students Association (RSSA) is an organization of students interested in the study of religion, and welcomes you to participate in their activities. The RSSA will sponsor various events during the year - watch for posters and announcements. See <http://www.uregina.ca/arts/religious-studies/current-students/rssa.html>

TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

You, as a student, are responsible for your own learning; I, as an instructor, am responsible to assist you with your learning. I do not claim to have all the answers on the subject matter; rather, together we will generate productive questions and explore possible answers. Instead of competing with other students in class, make friends and collaborate.

I will strive to be prepared each class; I expect you also to be prepared. I will work hard, be involved and enthusiastic; I expect the same from you. I expect you to read the required readings, take notes, ask questions and talk about what you are learning. I will respect your contributions and alternative views of the material.

I will maintain standards to ensure learning. I will endeavour to inform you of your standing in the class in an ongoing manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor about any questions or problems connected with the course. See the next page of academic announcements for helpful information on student responsibilities, and various procedures and deadlines.

SOME ADVICE FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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| 1. Ask questions. | 4. Read the required readings. |
| 2. Sit in the front. | 5. Talk with others about what you are learning. |
| 3. Take good notes. | 6. Manage your time. |
| 7. Make friends or acquaintances in the class | |

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT CONDUCT

The overwhelming majority of future employers believe that universities should develop professionalism in students regardless of their field of study. A job applicant's professionalism has a huge impact on the likelihood of being hired. Therefore, it is well worth the effort for you to cultivate professional attitude and behavior as a student. Aspects of professional student conduct have already been touched on above, but here is a list of some things to which you will want to pay attention in order to develop your sense of professionalism:

1. Be on time for classes. If you are late try to slip in without disrupting the class.
2. Stay for the whole class. Do not start packing up your things until the instructor has indicated that the class is over.
3. During class, be attentive to the instructor. Do not talk during class unless asking the instructor a question or unless the instructor wants a time of discussion or is requesting responses from the students.
4. Turn cell-phones off or set them to vibrate.
5. Do not distract other students by texting or surfing the web during class.
6. Hand in assignments on time, at the beginning of class, clearly printed, stapled and with your name.
7. Respect the opinions of other students in the class; avoid rudeness.
8. Use a formal approach to communicating with your instructor; do not assume familiarity unless the instructor permits or encourages it.
9. Never ever plagiarize! It is stealing and unprofessional and not worth it in the long run.

“A mind is not a vessel to be filled. It is a fire to be kindled”

Plutarch

Luther College Academic Announcements: Fall 2014

Special Needs

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations should discuss these with the course instructor, and contact the Coordinator of the Centre for Student Accessibility at (306)585-4631.

Student Responsibilities and Course Prerequisites

Students are responsible for understanding and following the academic regulations outlined in the University Calendar. Please see §5.1 of the 2014-15 Calendar under Responsibilities of Students. Your first responsibility is to ensure that you have the necessary prerequisite for this class. If not, you will not receive credit for it at graduation time, and you may have difficulty in completing your degree program.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of students in their courses. Students who are persistently tardy or absent or who neglect academic work may be subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from the final examinations (§5.3 of the 2014-15 Calendar). **Please note any specific requirements for attendance in this course.**

University Email Accounts

Check your University of Regina email account regularly or have your University email forwarded to your preferred email address; see <http://www.uregina.ca/is/student/email/index.html>

Procedures and Dates for Dropping Courses

All changes to course registration must be made in writing to your Faculty or College. Students who are not attending but have not formally withdrawn are still considered to be registered, are liable for fees, and are assigned a failing grade of NP for failing to complete the course. **Non-attendance does not constitute withdrawal.**

Last day to drop a course and receive 100% refund	September 16, 2014
Last day to drop a course without a transcript record	September 16, 2014
Last day to withdraw from a course and receive 50% refund	September 30, 2014
Last day to withdraw from a course without a failing grade	November 17, 2014

Academic Misconduct – Plagiarism and Cheating

Note the definitions of plagiarism and cheating in §5.13.2.2 of the 2014-15 Calendar, as well as the potential punishments (which range from a grade of 0 on the test or essay in question up to expulsion from the University). **If you have any questions about the proper methods of citing sources, the extent to which sources (including internet resources) must be cited, or what might constitute plagiarism, please discuss your questions with your instructor before handing in work!** Please note that when you hand in assignments, it is assumed that you handed in the version you intended to hand in – the excuse that you ‘accidentally’ handed in the wrong file will not be accepted.

Procedures for Requesting Deferrals of Final Exams or Term Work

If you are unable to finish your final exam or term work for reasons beyond your control (e.g., illness, accident, death in the family), please contact the Assistant/Associate Dean of your Faculty or College as soon as possible for advice. Procedures for requesting deferral of final examinations or term work are outlined in see §5.7 of the 2014-15 Calendar. If you experience any personal difficulties during the semester, for example due to illness or family issues, please discuss your situation with your instructor and/or your Assistant/Associate Dean as soon as possible.

University Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy

All members of the University community are entitled to a professional working and learning environment free of harassment and discrimination. See §8.4.6 of the 2014-15 Calendar for more details.

Wishing you a successful semester!



Luther Safety Guide

Fire Alarm and Evacuation

- If you see a fire, **PULL THE ALARM AND EVACUATE.**
 - If a Fire Alarm sounds (loud beeping, red flashers in hallways) everyone must evacuate the building immediately.
 - Exit the building via the nearest stairway. Do not use the elevator.
 - If you have limited mobility, exit to a stairwell along the exterior of the building and wait there for assistance. Ask someone to tell emergency personnel where you are. You will be safe there.
 - Leave all belongings behind and close the door behind you.
 - Follow the instructions of emergency wardens, senior Luther staff, and the fire department.
 - Do not return to the building until clearance is given.
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Other Emergencies

- Warnings of other emergency situations will be given via the Emergency Notification System (yellow *Alertus* beacons in the academic wing hallways, loudspeakers in the Residence, and notices displayed on computer screens).
 - Alert others in your area.
 - Follow all instructions given.
 - If a violent intruder is on campus, exit your building if safe to do so and leave campus. If the intruder is in your building, seek shelter in a room, lock and barricade the door, make the room seem unoccupied, and **DO NOT** open the door until a Regina Police Officer instructs you to do so.
 - In the event of a power failure, proceed immediately to a sunlit spot. If it is dark
 - In the residence, go to the nearest lounge
 - In the academic wing, go to the student lounge on the northwest corner of the first floor. If the power failure lasts longer than 15 minutes, you will be met there by RAs with flashlights.
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Call for Help if you need it!

- Call 911 **first**. If you are calling from a Luther land line, dial 9-911.
 - Phone Campus Security: 306-585-4999. If you are calling from a Luther land line, dial 9-306-585-4999.
 - Seek help from the Luther Student Services Office (LC 110, 306-585-5333) or the Academic Office (LC 200, 306-585-5444) during regular business hours.
 - Alert a Luther staff member as you are able.
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AED

- Located on the **FIRST FLOOR** in the foyer between the Academic Wing and Residence.
 - Instructions for use are on the AED.
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Name: _____

Student ID#: _____

RLST 100

APPLICATION FOR:

(Note: Applications are NOT automatically approved!! You need to provide a description of circumstances beyond your control for missing a quiz or not meeting an assignment deadline)

MAKE-UP QUIZ

I will miss/have missed the quiz on _____.

Reason:

I would like the opportunity to write a make-up quiz on _____.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

EXTENSION

I would like to request an extension to _____ on
the due date for the following assignment:

Reason:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructor's Response: