

Dr. Katherine Dugan
kdugan@springfieldcollege.edu
(605) 868-1706
Weiser Hall 205

Office Hours:

Mondays, 3:30-5pm
Wednesdays, 3:30-5pm
Thursdays, 12:15-2:15pm

Religions of the World (Religion 109)

Tuesdays & Thursdays

RELI 109-21: 9:30-10:45 in Hickory 2016

RELI 109-22: 11:00-12:15 in Hickory 202

Catalog Course Description

Religions of the World (RELI 109) is an introduction to several religious traditions of the world. The course examines the history, key teachings, major rituals, and contemporary practices of each religion and religious practitioners. Traditions studied include Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism.

Our Course Description

This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion and an introduction to several of the world's religions. It is an introduction to the way people think, talk, and analyze religion, religions, and being religious. During this semester, we will ask questions about what religion is and how people have defined religion. The goal here is to give you a foundation in taking other courses in Religion and to help you be a more careful observer of religion in daily life. We will consider questions about what is "sacred" and what "rituals" are. What is the role of sacred texts and belief in various religions? How does religious identity affect day-to-day life around the world.? To study religion is to study a complex and messy dimension of human life. Welcome!

In this class, we will study various religions' founders and key individuals, examine major ideas within these religions, and explore how these religions look in the contemporary U.S. The goal is to give develop working knowledge about these religions. You should walk away from this semester able to understand the complexity of Christianity when it is referenced in the news, and how Sikhism is different than Islam. Likewise, you should be able to articulate some of the key ideas about Buddhism and how they are different than Hindu ideas. Finally, I have designed the course so that you can become more astute observers of religious diversity in the U.S. Why does it matter, for example, that there is a large interfaith movement in the U.S? How do different religions get along and why do they fight? We will investigate these sorts of questions throughout the semester.

This class asks you to think open-mindedly and creatively about religion. We may study ideas or people or traditions that are surprising to you. You may encounter worldviews with which you

disagree. Be prepared to think with this material. I look forward to hearing and reading how you engage perspectives you may not have encountered before.

Learning Objectives

One of the primary goals of this course is that you examine some of the assumptions you have about religion. Toward that goal, this class has four objectives. Members of this class will:

- Analyze several working definitions of, and approaches to, religion.
- Understand some of the history of the academic study of religion, including how others have defined, classified, and explained religion.
- Develop working knowledge of several of the world’s religions, including their central tenets, practices, and contemporary iterations.
- Investigate major themes in a variety of religions through case studies in American religious life.

Additionally, these are the Springfield College outcomes that this course aims to meet:

Spiritual Outcomes Assessment

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which spiritual concerns have been expressed in religious concepts, texts, and movements, and of how lack of such knowledge can result in superficiality, prejudice, and manipulation.
2. Reflect thoughtfully and critically on the personal, spiritual, and cultural values expressed in religious concepts, texts, and movements and the ways in which religion has influenced society.
3. Explore the foundations of spiritual values that contribute to leadership in improving the human condition and transforming human society.
4. Examine the contemporary and historical roles of faith and spiritual values in relation to leadership and the human condition.

Required Texts

- Espito, et. al. *World Religions Today*, 5th edition (available in the campus bookstore)
- Short readings and videos available on Moodle

Assessment

Participation/Attendance	10%
Oral History with religious person	15%
World Religions in the News Memo	15%
Midterm	20%
Design-a-religion and Presentation	15%
Final	25%

Participation/Attendance (10%)

Your attendance grade will be based on both you being in class and the quality of your participation in class. I understand that some people have difficulty discussing texts and ideas in class. If this is true for you, please let me know. I am open to discussing other ways for you to be

participating in the course. I will take attendance at each class meeting. If you have to miss a class, please email me 24 hours in advance (if possible). If you miss more than two meetings, please plan to meet with me to make sure you are able to participate fully in the class.

Oral History with Religious person (15%)

Due: Tuesday, 1/31.

For this assignment, you will interview someone who is either in or used to be in a religious tradition. You can interview a friend or family member or someone else on campus, but it cannot be someone in our class. The interview should last for about 45 minutes. We will talk more about how to organize this interview and ask questions in class. Then you will write a **3-page** oral history focused on one part of this person's experience with religion.

Midterm (20%)

This exam is a mixture of defining terms, short answer and one longer integrative essay. It will cover all the material through East Asian religions.

In class 3/2.

Design-a-religion & Presentation (20%)

This is a group assignment. At the middle of the class, you will work in groups of three or four to invent your own religion. I invite your creativity here! The goal is to think about what makes religion a religion—and then to try to convert us all to it during your in-class presentation after the midterm. You'll also turn in a one-page description of your religion.

Due: Tuesday, 3/9.

World Religions in the News (10%)

One of the great reasons to take this class is to increase your “religious literacy,” which means your general knowledge about religions in the world. I hope that taking this class improves your ability to read or hear about religion in daily life and know understand the religious context of the events. For this assignment, you will find a substantial news article and write a short (2 pages) analysis of the article. What did the reporter do well? What did the reporter miss? If you were covering this topic/event, what else would you have included? What further questions does this story raise for you? What information from our course might have helped the reporter do a better job?

Due: Thursday, 4/20.

Final Exam (25%)

The final exam is in two parts. This in-class exam will be structured like the midterm and will focus on material from the second-half of the semester: defining terms, short answers, one longer essay. The second part of the exam is essay based and covers material from the entire course. I will ask you two questions that aims to synthesize the course material and you will answer one of them.

9:30 section (RELI 109-21): **TBA**

11:00 section (RELI 109-22): **TBA**

Course Calendar

Introductions

R, 1/19. Who we are and what we will do this semester

Monday, 1/23: Required event: “Religious responses to Trump”

T, 1/24. Discussion of 1/23 event (*20-minute class*)

R, 1/26. Introduction to study of religion

- Read: Stephen Prothero, “Introduction,” *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World—and Why Their Differences Matter* (2010), pp. 1-24.

Hinduism

T, 1/31. Philosophical & Devotional Hinduism

****Due:** Oral History

R, 2/2. From the Vedas to the Upanishads

Read: Prothero on Hinduism (pg. 131-168)

T, 2/7. Case study: Hindu Summer Camp

- Watch: PBS Online Film Festival 2013, *Indian Summer* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PruuM-cGzw>)



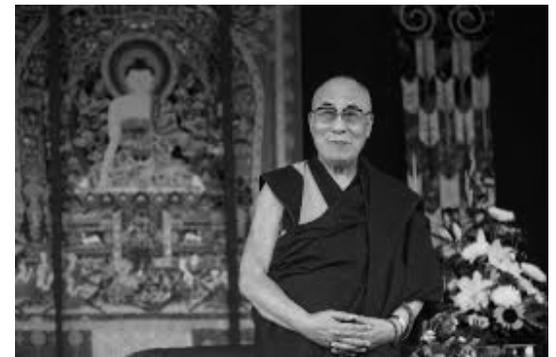
Buddhism

R, 2/9. Life of the Buddha

T, 2/14. Buddhism, *samsara* and enlightenment

Read: Prothero on Buddhism (pg. 169-202)

R, 2/16. Dalai Lama in American pop culture



East Asian Religions

T, 2/21. Confucianism

Read: Prothero on Confucianism (pg. 101-130)

R, 2/23. Daoism

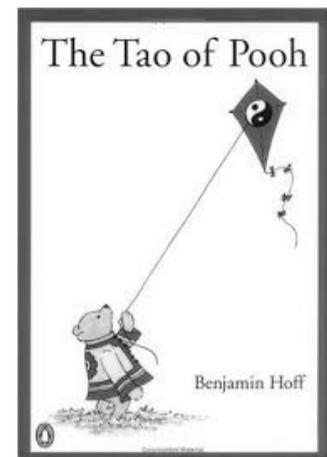
Read: Prothero on Daoism (pg. 279-316)

Interlude

T, 2/28. Midterm Review

R, 3/2. Midterm

T, 3/7. In-class work session: Design-a-Religion project



R, 3/9. **Design-a-Religion Presentations

March 13-17. Spring Break

Judaism

T, 3/21. From Moses to the Rabbis

R, 3/23 Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative

Read: Prothero on Judaism (pg. 243-198)

T, 3/28. Judaism in contemporary America

Christianity

R, 3/30. Jesus, the Christ, and the Gospel of Matthew

T, 4/4. Christian worldview(s) and three branches of Christianity

Read: Prothero on Christianity (pg. 65-100)

R, 4/6. Catholics & Pope Francis and/in the U.S.

Islam

T, 4/11. Muhammad and the Quran

R, 4/13. Five Pillars and three sects

Read Prothero on Islam (pg. 25-64)

T, 4/18. Islam and Religion in Public Spaces

Sikhism

R, 4/20. Guru Nanak and the “Five K’s”

****Due:** Religion in the News Memo

T, 4/25. Sikh Community & Sikhism in the U.S.

Finals

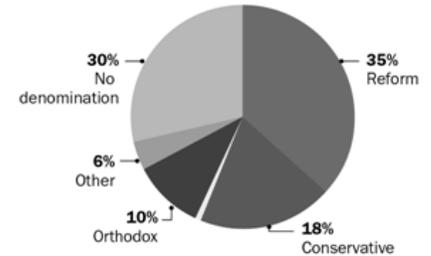
R, 4/27. Review & Conclusions

Final Exam

9:30 section (RELI 109-21): Monday, 5/8 at 12:30pm

12:30 section (RELI 109-22): Friday, 5/5 at 2:45pm

Jewish Denominational Identity



Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Based on the net Jewish population (both Jews by religion and Jews of no religion).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



Additional Notes

Late Paper Policy

Extensions for any assignments must be requested at least 24 hours in advance of the due date. Assignments for which no extensions have been granted will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for every day they are late, beginning immediately after the class during which they are due.

Grading Scale

I grade on a 100-point scale and will keep your grades updated on the course website's Gradebook.

A: 100-93	C+: 79-78
A-: 92-90	C: 77-73
B+: 89-87	C-: 72-70
B: 86-84	D: 69-60
B-: 83-80	F: Below 60

Communication

The primary way that I will communicate with you, outside of class, will be through our course website. Please make sure your account settings are set to receive emails and course announcements. I am also easy to reach over email. I reply to emails within 24 hours. If you haven't received a reply from me, please send it again (sometimes emails do slip through the cracks, despite my best efforts!). I try not to reply to email after 9pm, but I'll get to it in the morning. Should you need me by phone, you can call me at (605) 868-1706 before 9pm. I'm also available for office hours. Please do swing by to chit-chat about the class or ask questions about the assignments or to discuss how this class relates to others you are taking.

The most important thing to remember is to be in regular communication with me if your quarter starts to get out of control. Most things we can manage if I know about them as soon as they start affecting you and your work. I'm happy to accommodate and help make this class a good experience for you. At the same time, if you aren't in touch and just stop showing up, there is less and less I can do. Please don't wait for an emergency to be in touch with me about your progress in the course.

Other Notes

Academic Assistance. A wide variety of academic assistance is offered through the Academic Success Center. Students can receive a variety of services, such as tutoring through Writing Support Services, Math-Science Support Services and the Content Tutorial Program. The Academic Coaching Program is available to help students improve time management and study skills. The Assistive Technology Program provides training in a range of assistive technology software. The MTEL Assistance Program provides support for students preparing to take the Communications and Literacy Skills portion of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator - 124 - Licensure®. The Conversation Partners Program provides support for non-native speaking students wishing to improve linguistic skills in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, and other languages as available.

The Academic Success Center is located on the first floor of Hickory Hall, room 109 and can be contacted at 413-748-3747 or asc@springfieldcollege.edu. The most up to date information and support service schedules are available on the ASC's PrideNet page:

https://pridenet.springfieldcollege.edu/ICS/Academic_Departments/Academic_Success_Center/

Accommodation Planning. If you have a documented physical, learning, or psychological disability on record with the Academic Success Center's Learning Support Services, you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. It is your responsibility to request such accommodation in advance and to provide appropriate documentation. Students on the main campus should contact the Director of Learning Support Services, who is located on the first floor of Hickory Hall, room 105, and can be contacted at 413-748-3768. Please let me know of your request as soon as possible so that I can work with you and the Director to arrange for appropriate and reasonable accommodations. College

Policies on Attendance and Academic Honesty. Springfield College students are expected to attend all class sessions for which they are registered; they are also responsible for the material covered in each class session and the completion of assigned work by the announced due dates. Certain situations are recognized as college-excused absences from class, including participation in an athletic activity, participation in a curricular or co-curricular activity, and observance of religious holidays. A student who anticipates an absence of this nature must provide adequate notice and documentation to his/her instructor regarding the nature of the absence. Given this notice, the instructor may allow the student to make up the class work or complete an alternative assignment. Should the instructor feel that the proposed absences will interfere with the student's ability to successfully complete the objectives of the course, the student must seek to reduce the absences or withdraw from the course.

Absences Due to Illness or Emergency. In the event of illness or emergency, the student should notify his/her professors as soon as possible and discuss the options available for obtaining missed material. If the student cannot contact the professor directly, they should leave a voice-mail or e-mail message for the professor.

College Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy. Springfield College students are expected to be academically honest. Misrepresentation of facts, omissions or falsifications in any connection with the academic process, (including both course work and official college documents), are violations of the Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy. Misunderstanding of the Policy will not be accepted as an excuse for dishonest work, and students are advised to read the complete College Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity printed in the College Catalog and the Student Handbook. A student's name on any exercise, which term shall include, but not be limited to, a theme, oral report, notebook, report, computer program, course paper, quiz, examination, or any other assignment related to a course or internship thereto, is regarded as assurance that the exercise is entirely the result of the student's own thoughts and study, stated in his or her own words, and produced without assistance, except as quotation marks, references, and footnotes acknowledge the use of printed sources or other outside help.

In some instances an instructor or department may authorize students to work jointly in solving problems or completing projects. Such efforts must be clearly marked as the results of

collaboration. In addition to fraudulent uses of sources as described above, dishonesty includes a number of offenses that circumvent procedures set up to produce a fair grade. Students are not allowed to present the same “exercise” previously or concurrently completed for another course, without the permission of the instructor(s) of the current course(s) in question. And, the use of the services of commercial “research” companies is cheating and a punishable offense. In cases of academic dishonesty, the course instructor is authorized to enact any of the following sanctions that he/she feels are appropriate in the situation: reprimand, repeat of exercise or assignment, loss of credit for the exercise/assignment, or removal of the student from the course with an automatic grade of F. In such latter cases, the instructor will notify the Dean of Students Office of the offense for inclusion in the student’s permanent file.

This syllabus reflects the plan of the course as of 1/18/16. Subject to change.