



Academic Inquiries: Jinan University

E-mail: ois@jnu.edu.cn

Tel: 86-020-85220399

JINAN UNIVERSITY

Introduction to Religions

Lecturer: Paul Palmer Jr.

Time: Monday through Friday (July 2, 2018-August 3, 2018)

Office hours: 2 hours (according to the teaching schedule)

Contact hours: 60 (50 minutes each)

Credits: 4

Location: School of Tourism

Office: School of Tourism 210

E-mail: ppalmerj@indiana.edu

Course Overview

Religion is one of the most widespread and deeply entrenched aspects of human experience. It is also a phenomenon that has proven remarkably resistant to systematic explanation. This course is an introduction to an array of influential approaches to explaining religion and its core aspects – e.g. ritual, religious institutions and belief in the supernatural. Through this course, students will gain a deeper understanding for the diversity and complexity of religion/s as well as a basic understanding of the study of religion.

Aim and Objective

This subject aims at providing students with a fundamental understanding of diverse types of religions and religious practices in today's world.

At the same time, the course will examine the complex nature of religious phenomena, including religious knowledge and competing truth claims.

By the end of the course students will possess:

1. Familiarity with the features that are common in many world religions;
2. A greater understanding of the core aspects of religion;
3. An in-depth understanding of some highly influential approaches to explaining religion;
4. An understanding of the major religions and religious practice in today's world.

Course Hours

The course has 25 sessions in total. Each class session is 120 minutes in length. The course meets from Monday to Friday.

Required Material

Hopfe, L. M. & Woodward, M. R. (2009). *Religions of the World* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Additional readings and resources will be distributed in class.

Assessment

Your overall course grade will be assigned on the basis of the following components (percentage of overall grade in parenthesis):

- First exam (20%)
- Second exam (20%)
- Third exam (20%)
- Final exam – 10 page paper (20%).
- Attendance & Participation (20%).

Grading Scale

The instructor will use the grading system as applied by JNU:

Definition	Letter Grade	Score
Excellent	A	90-100
Good	B	80-89
Satisfactory	C	70-79
Poor	D	60-69
Failed	E	Below 60

Course Policies

1. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class.
2. Students are expected to read the required readings prior to the class session in which they are discussed.
3. Class Conduct: Consistent, respectful and informed participation is expected from every student in the course. This includes:
 - Respectful discussion that avoids personal history;
 - No email or Internet usage during class;
 - Cell phones turned off when class begins.
4. I will respond to emails in a timely manner. It is best to make an appointment or speak to me after lecture.
5. It is your responsibility to keep me updated with attendance, email, etc.
6. Please check your email regularly for instructions and readings.

Class Schedule

Week 1:

- Mon. Course Overview
- Tues. Basic Religions and World Religions (Chapter 1)
- Wed. Native American Religions (Chapter 2)

Thurs. African Religions (Chapter 3)

Fri. First Exam

Week 2:

Mon. Hinduism (Chapter 4)

Tues. Hinduism continued

Wed. Jainism (Chapter 5)

Thurs. Buddhism (Chapter 6)

Fri. Buddhism continued

Week 3:

Mon. Sikhism (Chapter 7)

Tues. Second Exam

Wed. Chinese Religions (Chapter 8)

Thurs. Shinto (Chapter 9)

Fri. Zoroastrianism (Chapter 10)

Week 4:

Mon. Third Exam

Tues. Judaism (Chapter 11)

Wed. Judaism continued

Thurs. Christianity (Chapter 12)

Fri. Christianity continued

Week 5:

Mon. Islam (Chapter 13)

Tue. Islam continued

Wed. Final Review

Academic Honesty

Jinan University defines academic misconduct as any act by a student that misrepresents the students' own academic work or that compromises the academic work of another scholastic misconduct includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, i.e. misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of the instructors concerned; sabotaging another's work within these general definitions, however, Instructors determine what constitutes academic misconduct in the courses they teach. Students found guilty of academic misconduct in any portion of the academic work face penalties ranging from lowering of their course grade to awarding a grade of E for the entire course.