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# JINAN UNIVERSITY

## Introduction to Religions II

**Lecturer:** Irene A. Wolf

**Time:** Monday through Friday (June 18, 2018-July 20, 2018)

**Teaching hours:** 25 hours

**Credits:** 2

**Location:** Huiquan Building

**Office:** Huiquan Building 518

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### Aims and Objectives

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.

### Course Objectives

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. By the end of the course students will possess:

1. Familiarity with the philosophy and doctrines common in many world religions, including the Roman Catholic Church, Judaism and Islam.
2. A greater understanding of the traditions and history of the Roman Catholic Church.
3. A greater understanding of the traditions and history of Judaism and Islam.
4. An in-depth understanding of the most influential people in the largest and oldest religions, including Jesus and the 12 Apostles (Catholicism), Moses, Abraham (Judaism) and Muhammad (Islam).
5. An understanding of other religions and religious practices in today's world.

### Required Textbook

Invitation to World Religions – Authors: Jeffrey Brodd, Layne Little, Bradley Nystrom, Robert Platzner, Richard Shek and Erin Stiles – Oxford University Press

World Religions: The great Faiths explored and explained by John Bowker, DK London, New York, Melbourne 2006

Additional readings and resources will be distributed in class including: readings from Bible, New Testament including Sermon on the Mount, Parable of the Last Sheep, Parable of the Last Coin, Jesus the True Vine, etc.

### Assessment

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

- First exam (25%)
- Second exam (25%)
- Final Exam (30%)
- Attendance (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. The largest religions of the World: Chap. 1:

What religions do

Dimensions of religions,

Religions in the world

An Academic Approach to the Study of Religion

Wed. Christianity: Chap. 12

Study some of the parables from Bible New Testament,

The teachings of Christianity

The Life of Jesus

The passion and Crucifixion of Jesus

Thurs. Continues Christianity Chapter 12 & The World Religions textbook, 148

The History of Christianity after Jesus

Protestant Churches

Friday: Group review

#### **Week 2:**

Mon. First exam first, then Judaism: Chap. 11

Tues. Judaism continues: Chap. 11

The Teachings of Judaism

The History of Judaism

Minor Festivals, The Sabbath

Wed. Islam: Chap. 13

The teachings of Islam

Before Islam

Sacred practices and Prayer

Thurs. Islam from World Religions textbook and Chap. 13

The Qur'an in daily life

What is Jihad

The Islamic Year and holidays

Sharia's Islamic Law

Sufism

Fri. Group Review

**Week 3:**

Mon. Buddhism Chapter 5, & World Religions text, 96

The teachings of Buddhism

Two selves of Buddhism

Eight-fold path of Buddhism

Tues. Sikhism, chap. 7

The teachings of Sikhism

The ten Guru's

The Golden Temple

Wed. Chinese Religions Ch 8

Confucianism Teachings

Taoism Teachings

Practices of both

Thurs. Shinto Chapter 9

The teachings of Shinto

General Practices

As a way of life

Fri. Group Study

**Week 4:**

Mon. Second exam,

Indigenous Religions of North America chap. 2

The teachings of Native American Indigenous Religions

The history of Native American Indigenous Religions

As a Way of life

Tues. Hinduism: World Religions text, 96

Hindu sacred texts

The sects of Hinduism

The paths of Hinduism and Faith

Wed. Indigenous Religions of Africa

The teachings and practices

As a Way of Life

Thurs. Jainism, Chap. 6

The teachings and practices

As a Way of Life

Fri. Group Study

**Week 5:**

Mon. New Religious Movements

What is new about new religious movements?

Alternative Christianities and their offshoots

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Tue. Christian Science and New Thought

Adventism Jehovah;s Witness

The Family (Church of God)

The Church of Scientology

Wed. The Baha'i Faith

Unitarian Universalism

New Atheism

World Religions text, Golden Rule cuts across all religions, 208

Thurs. Final Exam

Friday: TBA

NOTICE: To provide students with an interesting and enjoyable educational experience, this syllabus may be changed at the discretion of the instructor at any time with notification.

### **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 ones' 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.