## COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number:</th>
<th>REL-101</th>
<th>Course Title:</th>
<th>Introduction to Religious Studies</th>
<th>Credits:</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Length:</td>
<td>15 Weeks</td>
<td>Co- or Pre-requisite:</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Implementation sem/year:</td>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
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**Catalogue description:** An introduction to the study of religions, focusing on that nature of religious beliefs and practices, such as sacred power, myths, texts, art and rituals, the problem of evil, and the relationship between cultures, ethics and religions. 3 lecture hours.

**Is course New, Revised, or Modified? [Modified courses are those which have a new prefix or course number]:** Revised

**Required texts:**
- Websites and handouts as directed

**Recommended Texts:**
- Peter Berger, “Religion and World-Construction” (Google books)
- Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion, Forward through p. 23; pp. 30 - 33 (Google books)


The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Emile Durkheim


Clifford Williams, “The Ethics of Belief” (1877)

Russell T. McCutcheon, “Myth” (Google books)


Mircea Eliade, “Ch. 1: Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred,” in The Sacred and the Profane (Google books)

Robert Bellah, “Civil Religion in America”

AAR (American Academy of Religion)

From Primitives to Zen, by Mircea Eliade

Eliade terms

"Darwin's God" by Robin Marantz Henig (NY Times Magazine, 3/4/07): a good discussion of theories of religion in the field of evolutionary biology

"Insides, Outsides, and The Scholar of Religion" by Russell McCutcheon

Religion News

Religion and American politics (news and opinion pieces)

American Religious Identification Survey (2008) NEW

Mircea Eliade on "The Structure of Myth"

"Enuma Elish" (Babylonian creation myth)

N.K. Sandars trans.
E.A. Speiser trans.
E.A. Speiser trans. with notes by Isaac Mendelsohn
Fanciful drawing of Marduk killing Tiamat

Ancient Near East internet sites

Judaism 101
Judaism and Jewish Resources
Jewish Virtual Library
The Tanakh (Hebrew Bible): 1917 JPS translation
Hebrew Bible (1917 JPS translation)
The Dead Sea Scrolls
Josephus: The Wars of the Jews (Project Gutenberg)
Babylonian Talmud: first page
Karaite Jews of America (small denomination of Jews who do not believe in the "Oral Torah"
Dabru Emet: Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity (Sept. 10, 2000)
Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews (Feb. 18, 2001)
NPR interview with James Carroll, 10 minutes

Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community

Judaism in China

Jewish Japan (some good stuff, some dead links, and some flaky theories)

King James version (1611)
American Standard Version (1901)
American Standard Version with links to concordance
New International Version (1973)
English Standard Version (2001)
Gospel of Thomas
Biblical Studies Guide (Yale Divinity School)

Christian Classics Online

Online Encyclopedia of Early Church History
From Jesus to Christ (1998 PBS documentary)
Peter and Paul (2005 PBS documentary)
The Jesus Seminar Forum

Gospel of Judas (National Geographic)
The Passion of the Christ, by Mel Gibson
Jesus H. Christ: Slate review

Resources on the Mel Gibson movie from Boston College
"Reflections on Mel Gibson's Passion" (Journal of Religion and Society, 2004)

Catholic Information Center
The Vatican Orthodox Christian Information Center
Orthodox Byzantine Icons
"Of Conservatism & Distinctiveness in the Religious Marketplace" (NY Times)
"Tradition vs Charisma: The Sunni Shi'i Divide in the Muslim World"
The 2005 Hajj (NY Times)

Confucian Thought and Practice (RLST 471) links page
South Asian Religions links (Timothy Lubin)

Ancient India
"The Hindu Universe" (Hindunet)
Harappa: The Indus Valley and the Raj

Yogi seal from Mohenjo-daro
British Library India Office
Manifestations of Shiva (video slide/lecture by Prof. Diana Eck, Harvard University)
"Millions at Holy Festival Bathe in Ganges" (NY Times)
The Caste System and Stages of Life (Kelley L. Ross)

Article about a Dalit (untouchable) politician
Journal of South Asia Women Studies
Indian philosophy
Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago
Hindu Temple in New York suburb
Buddhist Thought and Practice (RLST 260) links page
Tibetan Library
Zoroastrian feast in Iran

Religious Resources at University of South Carolina
Religion Facts
Religious Worlds at University of Florida
Religious Studies Online Journals Reference
Encyclopedia of Religion and Society
Why Study Religion?
Optional materials: Copies of additional materials not contained in digital or handout libraries to be supplied by/to the philosophy coordinator prior to the beginning of any term of instruction.
Other materials per the section instructor.

Revision date: 1/15/14  
Course Coordinator: Ken Howarth, 570-3809, howarthk@mccc.edu

Additional resources: The College library’s text and NetLibrary and ebrary electronic resources, accessible through http://www.mccc.edu/student_library.shtml, as well as the Library Resource page (under development) provide a wide range of philosophical reference and topic specific texts. The Philosophy Repository on the College online course platform, Angel, contains specific auxiliary readings accessible for all sections that utilize Angel as at least a ‘shell’ resource for even classroom-based sections. A library of targeted readings handouts is also available in the Coordinator’s office.

Learning Center Resources: There are no tutors or study groups through the Learning Center for philosophy topics, though there are tutors for writing. There are limited volunteers in the Philosophy S.P.A. Club available for peer-to-peer tutoring, and Professor Howarth is available to meet with students for tutoring to augment students meeting with their class professors.

Course Competencies/Goals/Student Learning Outcomes(SLO's) [to be listed on course syllabi]:

If the student does the work assigned for this course, s/he will be able to:

1. Identify and define the key religious terms, traditions, practices, materials, issues and theories
2. Employ critical thinking and academic religious studies methods and criteria to determine and analyze the different ways Western and non-Western religions influence the lives of their followers and others, individually and collectively, within and across different cultures
3. Distinguish and analyze how religious considerations relate to philosophical and scientific considerations with regard to fundamental questions (origins, meaning, etc.) and contemporary ethical, political, economic and other issues and events
4. Describe, explain, interpret, and compare the differing religiosities of individuals and groups as expressed traditionally, formally, textually and in actual practice, including factoring the issues of respect and rights
5. Frame and present your own views on religious issues, both orally and in writing, with logical and critical precision, clarity, coherence and rigor.

Each goal or outcome relates to “religious studies literacy” with respect to content knowledge and to the “discipline-specific methodologies” of the study of religion with respect to relevant content material. Other learning goals may be specified in particular sections by the instructor with the course coordinator’s approval in addition to but not as a replacement for the above listed goals.

Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.

General Education Knowledge Goals for this course:

Goal 1. Communication. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

Goal 8. Diversity. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

MCCC Core Skills for this course:

Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making. Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

Goal D. Information Literacy. Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Goal F. Collaboration and Cooperation. Students will develop the interpersonal skills required for effective performance in group situations.

Goal G. Intra-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Responsibility. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of intelligent citizenship in a diverse and pluralistic society, and will demonstrate cultural, global, and environmental awareness.

Units of study in detail. (Formal unit layout TBA)

The general plan for this course is broadly the study of religion in its various dimensions across the spectrum of myriad religions. Our REL-102 course, Living World Religions, is our “comparative religion” offering; REL-101 focuses on the study of religion more than the study of religions, even while through the examination of cases, religions do wind up being the means of studying religion. The first unit serves as a primer of religious studies approaches, dealing with definitions, stances, etc.; while Unit 2 address various aspects of religions, Unit 3 looks at issues pertaining to living in the world religiously, before winding up with Unit 4 on the interplay between religion and the wider world of understanding the fundamental human issues of the self and others.

A key consideration is for students to learn to frame discussion of religion and religious practices in “sets of terms”, by becoming aware of them and the differences between them. Many students arrive into this course with robust, even rigid ideas, expressed assertively or by retreating into a sort of us/them disengagement. Like ethics, relativistic and/or absolutist ideas about course issues should be dealt with head on; the first Unit is in place to address these, emphasizing difficulties in defining religion without bias. A general inclination to challenge or move students out of their inertial comfort zones may prove difficult or not, but in any case probably useful, even if being sure not to over-challenge or be antagonistic to their own personal commitments. A balancing act. I sometimes use the phrase, “For the purposes of our coursework…” to encourage students what we do in a college course is not necessarily at odds with or “going after” what they may do/think/say elsewhere, emphasizing the difference of the different arenas may work to soothe
defensiveness. Generally, debate is less likely to be as good as discussion, with respect to the difference of emphasizing cooperation over competition. And clear dissuasion of statements of faith or other personal declaratives by students, but especially faculty, is usually the best way to keep the atmosphere academic.

Also, comparing & contrasting morality with religion, as well as religion with governance are important considerations. There are no doubt other germane or timely issues that could be taken up per each instructor’s judgment and resourcing. I’ve included some suggested examples for homework in the listing below. I have taught with this text before. Additional supplementary readings may be especially appropriate to this course.

General format of the following is:
15 Week semester with roughly the equivalent of two class meetings per week (one per week class meeting schedules can be broken down into two “classes” for each weeks meeting);
The new, formal course outline links each unit and its topics to Course Goals/outcomes, as well as Mercer’s General Education Goals and Core Skills (left out here).

Read – what is to be read before that day’s class;
In class – besides review of assigned reading material, what else is planned to be done during that day’s class;
Bring – the assignment(s) that is/are due at the beginning of that day’s class.

15-Week/30 Class Meeting Draft Schedule

Unit 1 – Studying Religion

1-1 Orientation Syllabus review, Opening Exercise/Pre-Test
1-2 Read: SR: Ch. 1 pp.1-13
Bring: at least 1 page on: Critically compare your current religious views to those you held when you were 10 years old
In Class: Introductory matters

2-1 Read: SR: Ch. 2 pp. 14-36
Bring: Prep 1 page on Is teaching ‘about’ religion indoctrination?
2-2 Read: SR: Ch. 2 pp. 14-36 (continued)
In Class: Quiz

Unit 2 – Engaging the Sacred

3-1 Read: SR: Ch. 3 pp. 38-58 Sacred Power
Bring: Homework: SR p.55 Review Question #1
3-2 Read: SR: Ch. 3 pp. 38-58 Sacred Power (continued)
In Class: Research Case
4-1 Read: SR: Ch. 4 pp. 60-80 Sacred Story
Bring: 1 page on p.80 #4
4-2 Read: SR: Ch. 4 pp. 60-80 Sacred Story (continued)
In Class: Research Case
5-1 Read: SR: Ch. 5 pp. 82-101 Sacred Action
Bring: 1 page on: p.98 #3
5-2 Read: SR: Ch. 5 pp. 82-101 Sacred Action (continued)
In Class: Research Case
6-1 Read: SR: Ch. 6 pp. 103-126 Sacred Surroundings
Bring: 1 page on: p.121 #52

6-2 Read SR: Ch. 6 pp. 103-126 Sacred Surroundings (continued)
In Class Research Case

7-1 Read: SR: Ch. 7 pp.127-56 Sacred Experience
Bring: 1 page on p.152 #2

7-2 Read: SR: Ch. 7 pp.127-56 Sacred Experience (continued)
In Class Research Case

8-1 Read: previous materials
Bring: Homework: Three printed out questions for Final Exam review
In Class: Review for Midterm Examination

8-2 In Class: Midterm Examination

Unit 3 – Living with Religion

9-1 Read: SR: Ch. 8 pp. 159-185 Evil
Bring: 1 page on p.181 #1

9-2 Read: SR: Ch. 8 pp. 159-185 Evil (continued)
In Class Research Case, Student Presentations

10-1 Read: SR: Ch. 9 pp. 186-209 Religious Morality
Bring: 1 page on: p.203 #2

10-2 Read: SR: Ch. 9 pp. 186-209 Religious Morality (Continued)
In class: Research Case, Student Presentations

11-1 Read: SR: Ch. 10 pp. 210-239 Religion & Politics
Bring: 1 page on p.234 #9

11-2 Read: SR: Ch. 10 pp. 210-239 Religion & Politics (Continued)
In class: Research Case, Student Presentations

12-1 Read: SR: Ch. 11 pp. 240-275 Religious Institutions
Bring: 1 page on: p.268 #5

12-2 Read: SR: Ch. 11 pp. 240-275 Religious Institutions (Continued)
In class: Research Case, Student Presentations

Unit 4 – Religious Grounds

13-1 Read: SR: Ch. 12 pp. 276-299 Existence
Bring: 1 page on p.295 #1
In Class: Argumentative Essay Thesis Statement/outline due

13-2 Read: SR: Ch. 12 pp. 276-299 Existence (Continued)
In class: Research Case, Student Presentations

14-1 Read: SR:Ch.13 pp. 300-325 Truth with Diversity
Bring: 1 page on #6 p. 317
In Class Argumentative Essay due

14-2 Read: SR:Ch.13 pp. 300-325 Truth with Diversity (Continued)
In class: Research Case

15-1 In class Review for Final Examination; Post-Test
Bring Homework: Three printed out questions for Final Exam review
Evaluation of student learning:

Citizenship: Course-long assessment of how students demonstrate philosophical literacy and practice through their contributions to the class learning environment, that may include such factors as attendance, the amount and manner of class participation, helpfulness to other students’ understanding, oral presentations (may be broken out as a separate grading category), etc.

Homework: 6 or more short assignments aimed at having the student demonstrate that they did the assigned reading assignment and can address the issues covered in their own words.

Quizzes: 2 or more brief assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical literacy in a specific unit of instruction

Tests: 1 or more class-length assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical literacy in covered units of instruction

Examinations: 1 or more class-length assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical practices (and literacy) as applied to units of instruction; includes one comprehensive final exam

Essays: 1 or more assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical literacy and practices as applied to units of instruction. Well-argued papers are the first goal here, as a demonstration of philosophical reasoning, though assigning and assessing, in part a research dimension to the assignment is fitting, especially for 200-level courses.

Course Grade Breakdown:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>5-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests/Exams</td>
<td>30-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays</td>
<td>30-50%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The particular grading breakdown is to be determined by each instructor and listed clearly in her/his syllabus. Care should be taken to see that the course’s goals are assessed. It is important to “test what you teach”, while, of course, avoiding any semblance of “teaching to the test”! Aligning your lesson planning and teaching to stated goals is the best way to achieve this.

Academic Integrity Statement: [As found @ http://mlink.mccc.edu/omb/OMB210.pdf]

MCCC OMB 210

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity -- the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work, and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty.

The college recognizes the following general categories of violations of Academic Integrity, with representative examples of each. Academic Integrity is violated whenever a student:
A. Uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in any academic work.
• copying from another student’s exam.
• using notes, books, electronic devices or other aids of any kind during an exam when prohibited.
• stealing an exam or possessing a stolen copy of an exam.

B. Gives fraudulent assistance to another student.
• completing a graded academic activity or taking an exam for someone else.
• giving answers to or sharing answers with another student before, during or after an exam or other graded academic activity.
• sharing answers during an exam by using a system of signals.

C. Knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, or represents previously completed academic work as current.
• submitting a paper or other academic work for credit which includes words, ideas, data or creative work of others without acknowledging the source.
• using another author’s words without enclosing them in quotation marks, without paraphrasing them or without citing the source appropriately.
• presenting another individual’s work as one’s own.
• submitting the same paper or academic assignment to another class without the permission of the instructor.
• falsifying bibliographic entries.
• submitting any academic assignment which contains falsified or fabricated data or results.

D. Inappropriately or unethically uses technological means to gain academic advantage.
• inappropriately or unethically acquiring material via the Internet or by any other means.
• using any electronic or hidden devices for communication during an exam.

Each instructor and academic support service area is authorized to establish specific guidelines consistent with this policy.

Consequences for Violations of Academic Integrity
For a single violation, the faculty member will determine the course of action to be followed. This may include assigning a lower grade on the assignment, assigning a lower final course grade, failing the student in the course, or other penalty appropriate to the violation. In all cases, the instructor shall notify the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee of the violation and the penalty imposed.

When two (or more) violations of academic integrity are reported on a student, the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) may impose disciplinary penalties beyond those imposed by the course instructors. The student shall have the right to a hearing before the AIC or a designated AIC subcommittee.

Appeals
The student has a right to appeal the decision of the instructor or the Academic Integrity Committee. Judicial procedures governing violations of Academic Integrity are contained in the Student Handbook.

Approved: Board of Trustees May 19, 1983 Revised: May 18, 2000, March 18, 2004