

RELG 1320, Spring 2015  
25147 - MWF 10:00-10:50, Irby 311  
25148 - MWF 1:00-1:50, Irby 311  
Office: Irby 301a  
Office Phone: 450-5506

Prof. Clayton Crockett  
ClaytonC@uca.edu  
Office Hours:  
MWF 8:30-10am, 2-3pm  
TTH 11am-12:15pm

# **World Religions**

**"If I went back to college today, I think I would probably major in comparative religion because that's how integrated it is in everything that we are working on and deciding and thinking about in life today." John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, August 7, 2013.**

## **Course Description:**

World Religions is an introductory cross-cultural survey of the major religious traditions of the world with emphasis on Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This course seeks to introduce students to the study of religion as an academic discipline through examination of the major religious traditions of the world, as well as some of the important theoretical distinctions and problems involved in thinking about one's own and other religions.

## **Course Objectives:**

World Religions fulfills three hours of the Diversity in World Cultures requirement of the UCA Common Core. This course fulfills the Diversity requirement by: (a) introducing students to the histories and core teachings, values, practices, and social structures of the major Western and non-Western world religions, and (b) providing the opportunity for students to develop an understanding of the diversity within and among these traditions, as well as of the conceptual connections across religious traditions. In addition, World Religions exposes students to the diverse values inherent within and among the major world religions, as well as the difficulty of claiming exclusivity for one's own point of view. This focus provides students with the opportunity to develop a greater understanding not only of religious traditions that differ from their own, but also of their own traditions, and of the differences and connections between the two.

**Required Textbooks** (available for purchase):

Michael Molloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge and Change*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

*The Bhagavad-Gita: Song of God*

*Zohar: The Book of Splendour*

**Course Requirements:** Class attendance is required. Attendance will be taken, and 10% of the final grade will consist of attendance in class. As a general rule, students start off with 100 points, and I will reduce your attendance grade by 5 points for each missed class. In the case of excessive absences, after more than twelve absences a student will automatically fail the course. Excused absences are restricted to university business and medical situations, and require documentation.

Three essay tests will be given. Each test will count 20% of the final grade.

Students will write and turn in three papers, each worth 100 points, or 10% of the final grade. One paper will focus on the text of the Bhagavad-Gita, one on The Zohar, and one will focus on an alternative religious movement.

Attendance: 100 points

3 tests (200 points each): 600 points

3 papers: 300 points

Total points: 1000

**Grade scale:**

900-1000 = A

800-899 = B

700-799 = C

600-699 = D

below 600 = F

An **A** grade represents excellent work, and is given for work that goes beyond the expected in terms of critical thinking and creative insights. Students should not expect to earn an **A** for simply completing assignments.

A **B** grade represents good, above-average work that demonstrates solid understanding of the material. A **B** is a good grade.

A **C** grade represents average or adequate work that fulfills the assignment and shows basic understanding of the material but does not go beyond a basic understanding or demonstrate a creative, insightful application of it.

A **D** grade represents unsatisfactory but passing work. It shows some understanding, but does not reflect a thorough or complete understanding of the material.

An **F** grade represents failing work, and is not of sufficient quality to pass the class.

### **Extra Credit**

Each student may earn a total of 10 extra credit points to be added to his or her final point total. The extra credit assignment is to visit and observe a religious service of any church or religion that is not your own church or religious tradition, if you have one. Alternatively, students may attend any academic lecture that deals explicitly with religion. The assignment is then to write up a brief summary of what you experienced, and a brief reflection on that experience, which may be personal or more connected with the ideas of the course or both. The extra credit paper should be between 1 and 2 pages, typed, double-spaced, and may be turned in at any point during the semester, but no later than the last day of class.

### **Evaluations**

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

### **Statement on Academic Integrity**

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**Note to students:** if you copy material from the internet, you must cite it as a source in your papers. If you do not, you will receive a zero on that assignment in the best-case scenario. Keep in mind that it is much easier for professors to recognize plagiarized work than you might think; we have access to most of the same resources, search engines and paper databases that you do.

### **Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS)**

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

### **Statement on Americans with Disabilities Act**

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135.

### **Student Handbook Policies**

Students are responsible to familiarize themselves with the policies listed in the Student Handbook. Special attention should be given to the Sexual Harassment and Academic Policies.

#### **NOTE:**

**"If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member, the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>."**

## Schedule of Classes

F. 1/9 Introduction to the Course, Syllabus.

M. 1/12 – F. 1/16 Understanding Religion.  
Read Molloy, Chapter 1, pp.3-31.

M. 1/19 No Class: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

W. 1/21 – M. 2/2 Hinduism.  
Read Molloy, Chapter 3, pp.72-121.  
\*2-3 page paper on the Bhagavad-Gita due 2/4.

W. 2/4 – W. 2/18 Buddhism.  
Read Molloy, Chapter 4, pp.123-179.

\*F. 2/20 Test on Hinduism and Buddhism.

M. 2/23 – M. 3/9 Judaism.  
Read Molloy, Chapter 8, pp.281-331.  
\*2-3 page paper on the Zohar due 3/9.

W. 3/11 – F. 4/10 Christianity.  
Read Molloy, Chapter 9, pp.333-405.

M. 3/24 – F. 3/28 No Class: Spring Break.

\*W. 4/1 Test on Judaism and early Christianity.

M. 4/13 – W. 4/22 Islam  
Read Molloy, Chapter 10, pp.407-469.

\*2-3 page paper on an alternative religious movement due 4/22.

F. 4/24 No Class: Study Day.

\*Third exam on Islam and later Christianity will be held on date and time scheduled for final exam.

### **Final Examination Schedule:**

**10am section: 8am-10am Monday, April 27**

**1pm section: 11am-1pm Monday, April 27**

