

Tentative  
– subject  
to revision



## RELG-350-001 WORLD RELIGIONS

Exploring Worldviews and World Religions from a Christian Perspectives

May Express

May 4-29, 2020

### Course Description

Credits: 3.0

This course explores major worldviews and religions. Students learn the fundamental teachings, beliefs and practices of different worldviews and religions. Exploration includes consideration of each major religion's analysis of the basic human problems and the proposed solutions. Students learn to respect and understand diverse beliefs and practices. The course is taught from a Christian perspective and explores common ground and challenges between Christianity and the major world religions.

### Schedule

**Class sessions: remote (Zoom) 11:30-1:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday**

**Required live class sessions**

Optional and Office Hours

11:30-1:00 Wednesday

There will be also be asynchronous class materials (pre-recorded presentations). As indicated on the May Express webpage, students should plan on dedicating approximately 5 hours per weekday to be involved in the course.

### Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Glenn Russell

Email: [glenn@andrews.edu](mailto:glenn@andrews.edu)

*Email is the best way to contact me.*

Cell Phone – 269-876-7657 - this is my personal cell phone, use if needed.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

\* *The Bible*: a good Bible for study, not a paraphrase.

\* *World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored and Explained*. Bowker, John. DK Publishing. NewYork. 2006. ISBN: 9780756617721

## Program Outcomes (PO)

University Mission	Program Outcome Objective (BA in Theology)		RELG350 World Religions
	Goal No.	<i>At the end of the program the graduate should</i>	
Seek Knowledge	1	Possess a <b>foundational knowledge</b> of in the areas of Bible, history, and theology, from an SDA perspective	The class builds on the pre-requisite content of RELT 100 God & Human Life. The course provides basic essential working knowledge of the world's primary worldviews and religions. The student is equipped to respect and discern other worldviews and practices.
Affirm Faith	3	<b>Expression of faith:</b> In the context of present society, history, and theology, be able to articulate the Seventh-day Adventist view of life both orally and in writing	A survey of the major worldviews and world religions includes a Christian perspective and analysis. The course affirms the biblical, Christian, Seventh-day Adventist worldview.
	4	Exhibit growth in Christian <b>life skills:</b>	One of the most important life skills is the ability to respect the life and faith of others while discerning the biblical boundaries that delineate faith. Evidence greater understanding of and capacity for respecting faith diversity in the campus community and in other cross-cultural contexts.
Change the World	5	Document experience & skills in personal <b>ministry</b> and evangelism on the level of local church and community and in a cross cultural context.	This World Religions course articulates a global mission perspective and challenge for students as they thoughtfully construct a biblically-based worldview that recognizes the roles of Scripture, nature, and human discovery as sources of truth. Understanding the worldviews and religions of others is fundamental preparation for mission and evangelism.

## ACE Learning Outcomes

### Seek Knowledge

- Strengthen the ability to communicate effectively. Oral and written. [S1]
- Thoughtfully construct a biblically-based worldview that recognizes the roles of Scripture, nature, and human discovery as sources of truth. [A1]
- Document a foundational knowledge in the areas of Bible, history, and theology, from an SDA perspective [A3]

### Affirm Faith

- Effectively communicate the global mission, beliefs and heritage of the Seventh-day Adventist Church [S1]
- Exhibit growth in awareness of Christian values and life skills [A4]

### Change the World

- Evidence greater understanding of and capacity for respecting faith diversity in the campus community and in other cross-cultural contexts [C3]

## Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the basic premises, beliefs and practices of the major worldviews and world religions (Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity.)
2. Exhibit understanding, respect and discernment regarding people of different religious perspectives.
3. Intelligently interact cross culturally with those who practice other religions.
4. Integrate their own background and journey of faith into the world of religions.

## Course Requirements

### a) Course Requirements

This course is offered for 3 credits; therefore, it is expected that you will spend 90 minutes in class sessions 3 times per week during May Express (May 4-20). For each hour in class, you should expect to spend an additional 3 hours outside of class reading, working on assignments, projects, reading, preparing for quizzes and exams, and writing papers.

### b) Course Content:

This course will begin to explore major philosophical worldviews and philosophies such as existentialism and pantheism. The major portion of the course will focus on the fundamental beliefs and practices in traditional African religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

### c) Teaching Strategies:

This class will incorporate a variety of instructional strategies including reading, class lecture and online discussion; presentations, media exploration, texts and exams. Students will be expected to have a laptop, tablet or phone with camera and microphone for the live online class sessions.

## Critical Thinking

Upon the completion of this course, students will

1. Acquire a foundational understanding of the central beliefs and philosophical assumptions of various worldviews and major world religions.
3. Develop a respect for the diversity of worldviews and religions/
4. Develop discernment skills to recognize the influences of various worldviews and world religions in contemporary culture and to articulate a Christian perspective with regard to these views.
5. Appreciate a Christian worldview even if that is not one's primary worldview.

## Course Hour Declaration

An undergraduate 3-credit course requires a total of 135 hours for course lectures, written assignments, quizzes and test. For this course, the professor estimates that this course will include:

\* Class lectures: 38 hr                      \* Reading, Online presentations, assignments : 62 hr      \* Quizzes & Tests: 35 hr

## Quizzes and Exams

There will be quizzes each week throughout the course to provide a way to evaluate the student's retention of online presentations and assignments as well as materials presented in class. Some quizzes will be online. **There are no make-up quizzes but the lowest quiz will be dropped.**

There will be three unit exams (about 1 per week) and the final exam at the end of the semester. There are no make-up exams. The tentative exam schedule is included at the end of the course outline. The unit exams only cover the material since the last exam. The final exam will have some elements that are comprehensive (from the entire semester).

## Schedule/Course Outline

Please see the attached course calendar. Be aware that this schedule is subject to change and needed during the course. Changes will be announced in class and through emails.

## Final Exam Schedule

The final exam is scheduled for May 29.

## Evaluation of Student Performance

Student success in this class is evaluated according to the criteria of attendance, written assignments, quizzes and exams and major projects. All assignments must be printed (not handwritten) and are due at the beginning of class. Some assignments will also be submitted electronically to the Learning Hub as TurnItIn Assignments.

## Assessment and Grading Scale

### Grading:

The following items will make up the grading content for this class.

Attendance	20 points	4%
Quizzes	80 points	16%
Assignments	75 points	15%
Unit Exams (75 pt each x 3 )	225 points	45%
Final Exam	100 points	20%
<i>Total points</i>	<i>500 points</i>	<i>100%</i>

The grading scale is as follows:	94-100% = A	90-93 % = A-
87-89 % = B+	83-86 % = B	80-82 % = B-
77-79 % = C+	73-76 % = C	70-72 % = C-
60-69 % = D	0 - 59 % = F	

Please consult the bulletin for further guidelines regarding a Withdrawal or Incomplete.

## The Learning Hub: Online Course Tools for Remote courses

This course will utilize course management tools and resources available through the Moodle software available online at the Andrews University Learning Hub or Moodle website <https://learninghub.andrews.edu/> These tools include Zoom class sessions, handout materials, class announcements, on-line quizzes, various articles and forms as well as class grades. Students will need to use their Andrews email and log-in to access the course materials.

## Assignments & Late Penalty

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Any assignments turned in after the beginning of class are late. There are no makeup quizzes but the lowest quiz score will be dropped. Late exams are only possible in the case of a rare emergency or medical condition and permission to take the exam must be arranged before the exam time. Late papers and late exams will receive a 20% late penalty.

Please see the instructor if you face a major illness or personal crises and I will try to be fair. Getting your work completed before it is due is an effective protection against last minute problems.... such as computer hassles, dating traumas, etc)

## Course Policies

### Course Procedures:

1. Reading assignments will be done prior to class period.
2. It is important for students to participate in classroom discussion and activities.
3. Students are expected to take all exams or quizzes when they are scheduled.  
There are no late exams unless there is a serious emergency.
4. Please see the instructor if you face a major illness or personal crises and I will try to be fair. Getting your work completed before it is due is an effective protection against last minute problems.... such as computer hassles, dating traumas, etc). Exceptions must be cleared in advance.
5. No provision is made for exams/quizzes missed due to voluntary absences.
6. If sick, the student will provide the professor with written confirmation through the dean or medical center.
7. **There are no makeup quizzes. The lowest quiz will be a drop quiz.**
8. Notes From Lectures & Discussion: The maximum value will be gained by taking careful notes. The class lectures and discussions will generally follow the course content outline but may vary as deemed appropriate by the professor

## Attendance Policy

"Excuses for absences due to illness are granted by the teacher. Proof of illness is required. Students should show written verification of illness obtained from their own physician. Excuses for absences not due to illness are issued directly to Student Success or the dean's office. Excused absences do not remove the student's responsibility to complete all requirements of a course. Class work is made up by permission of the teacher" *AU Bulletin 2019-2020–Student Responsibilities*

Attendance is required because much of the learning process takes place in online sessions together. Irregular attendance (more than 3 absences) and late arrival will definitely affect your grade. Active and positive class participation will enhance your academic success. If you need to be absent be sure to make arrangements as indicated above.

Class Absences. Whenever the number of absences exceeds 20% of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.

## Academic Integrity Policy

Technology is a wonderful gift but it also presents challenges for online courses. There is a myriad of methods for cheating on assignments, quizzes and exams. So, do honest work, don't cheat. You will be better for it!

Honesty in all academic matters is a vital component of personal integrity. Breaches in academic integrity principles are taken seriously. Acts of academic dishonesty as described in the University *Bulletin* are subject to incremental disciplinary penalties with redemptive intent. Such acts are tracked in the office of the Provost. Repeated and/or serious offenses will be referred to the Committee on Academic Integrity for further recommendations on penalties.

Academic dishonesty (cheating) is most harmful to one's own self and will be dealt with according to the university bulletin. At minimum this means receiving zero credit on the assignment or test. The issue of plagiarism, taking someone else's ideas or words and presenting them as your own, is a very serious one for students on a Christian campus. Students must avoid plagiarism in written and oral work. They should:

- \* consider a variety of sources critically, not just one source
- \* use their own words and sentence structures as they express their own style.
- \* always give proper credit by citing sources properly
- \* always use footnotes/endnotes when referring to someone else's facts or idea

## Disability Accommodation

If you qualify for special assistance under the American Disabilities Act, please contact the Student Success office at [disabilities@andrews.edu](mailto:disabilities@andrews.edu).

## Professionalism

Each student enrolled in this course is expected to act in a respectful and professional manner. This includes, but is not limited to, being punctual and prepared for every class session; respecting one's classmates and the instructor during class discussions; working independently of classmates when asked to do so; working in a positive and productive manner with classmates on group projects; respecting oneself by presenting one's own ideas in a positive and thoughtful manner that demands the attention and respect of classmates; being committed to a positive learning experience.

## Emergency Protocols

Andrews University takes the safety of its student seriously. Signs identifying emergency protocol are posted throughout buildings. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting that specific location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during any evacuation or sheltering emergency.

## Late Submission of Assignments

If accepted, late assignments will receive a 20% late penalty. There are no late or makeup quizzes. Late exams are only possible due to a serious emergency

## Examinations

Credit is not granted in courses unless the required examinations are completed. Students are expected to follow the published examination schedule. In cases where the schedule requires a student to complete four exams in one day, arrangements may be made with the dean to complete one of the examinations at another time.

**COURSE CALENDAR: May Express 2020**

**REL360-001 Topics: World Religions**

*Tentative – subject to revision*

Dates	Content
<b>Week One</b> May 4-8 M- Fri	<b>WEEK ONE: Unit 1</b> <b>Course Syllabus and Orientation</b> <b>Introduction to Worldviews</b> <b>Origins of Religion</b> <b>Worldviews &amp; Philosophies:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Theism:</b> Deism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity</li> <li>2. <b>Naturalism:</b> Existentialism, Nihilism, Postmodernism, Buddhism</li> <li>3. <b>Polytheism:</b> Hinduism, Animism, tribal religions</li> </ol> <b>Exam- Unit 1 – Introduction of World Views &amp; Religions</b>
<b>WEEK TWO:</b> May 11-15 M-Fri	<b>WEEK TWO: Unit 2</b> <b>AFRICAN RELIGIONS:</b> characteristics <b>HINDUISM:</b> Origins, gods, beliefs and practices <b>BUDDHISM:</b> Origin, Buddha, beliefs and practices <b>Exam 2: African Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism</b>
<b>WEEK THREE:</b> MAY 18-22 M-Fri	<b>WEEK THREE: Unit 3</b> <b>Islam:</b> Origins, beliefs and practices <b>Judaism:</b> Historical overview, beliefs and practices <b>Exam 3: Islam and Buddhism</b>
<b>WEEK FOUR:</b> May 25-29	<b>WEEK FOUR: Unit 4</b> <b>Christianity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biblical Worldview</li> <li>Christianity’s Contributions to Humanity</li> </ul> <b>Exam 4: Christianity</b>

**Instructor Profile:**

Glenn Russell was born in Egypt to missionary parents and his formative years were spent living in Beirut, Lebanon. He graduated from Columbia Union College, later graduated with a Masters of Divinity degree from the Andrews University Theological Seminary. He earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from Trinity International University with an emphasis on missions and ministry. Dr. Russell is chair of the Department of Religion and Biblical Languages at Andrews University.



He is married to Sharon Russell, a reading specialist and mentoring coordinator in the Benton Harbor public school system. They have two adult children and one precious granddaughter Gemma. Pastor Russell spent 10 years pastoring in Virginia and Maryland and then 15 years serving as the Bible teacher at Andrews Academy. He has authored two books in the secondary Bible curriculum for North America. He is the host of the weekly international radio and television program Scriptural Pursuit and has recorded a series of television programs for 3ABN on the gospel according to Matthew. He frequently speaks at academies, universities, camp meetings and youth congresses.

One of his passions is missions and he conducts at least two mission trips per year and has taught classes in Romania, Lebanon, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, Austria, Brazil and Zimbabwe. His doctoral research focused upon developing missiologically and biblically based short-term missions in the context of long-term missions. In his limited spare time he enjoys playing the guitar, playing soccer, and learning about being a global Christian in the more than 28 countries where he has served. Most importantly Glenn Russell is a sinner saved by the marvelous grace of Jesus Christ.



