AU RELG 350 World Religions
Summer 2015
RELG 350 World Religions  
Consortium of Adventist Colleges and Universities

Interactive Online Format
This course follows an interactive online format, has Wednesday/Friday deadlines. You are expected to login regularly during the course to participate in the online discussions. Please plan accordingly. The last day to withdraw with a full refund is 15 days after this course begins.

Instructor Contact
Instructor: Mr. Alexej Muran  
E-mail: muran@andrews.edu  
Phone: 269.815.0965

Other Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Username and password assistance</td>
<td><a href="mailto:helpdesk@andrews.edu">helpdesk@andrews.edu</a> (269) 471-6016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment and cancellations</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sderegister@andrews.edu">sderegister@andrews.edu</a> (269) 471-6323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td><a href="http://bookstore.mbedirect.net/andrews.htm">http://bookstore.mbedirect.net/andrews.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance with Moodle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dlit@andrews.edu">dlit@andrews.edu</a> (269) 471-3960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance with your Andrews account</td>
<td><a href="http://www.andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php">http://www.andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam requests</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sdeexams@andrews.edu">sdeexams@andrews.edu</a> (269) 471-6566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any other questions: sde@andrews.edu, (800) 782-4769 or (269) 471-6570

Part 1: Course Information

Course Descriptions
Explore major worldviews and religious traditions and their fundamental teachings, beliefs and practices. Consider each major religion’s analysis of basic human problems and the proposed solutions. Students learn to respect and understand diverse beliefs and practices. Taught from a Christian perspective, the course seeks to explore common ground and challenges between Christianity and the major world religions.

Course Learning Outcomes
- Discover ways in which religion lies at the foundation of culture.
- Examine how religion shapes society’s values, providing working models to live by.
- Explore how the underlying principles of your own belief system influence your everyday life.
- Learn to listen to and understand the diversity of the wisdom traditions.
- Appreciate the rich multicultural backgrounds encountered in your surroundings and on the larger scale of the global village.

Required Text/Material
Credit Hour and Commitment
This course takes about 3 hours/day not including Sabbath. This course is offered for 3 semester credits. In a face to face 15-week semester class, that typically requires 3 hours of classroom time per week, and 6 hours of homework per week for a total of about 135 hours. This class is delivered online in 8 weeks; so you should plan to spend about 3 hours/day on this class, including reading, accessing instructional materials, interacting with your instructor and classmates, and completing homework.

Part 2: Course Methods and Delivery

Methods of Instruction
Methods of instruction include assigned readings, writing responses to the readings, weekly interactions with the instructor and peers in the discussion, written a visit to a place of worship, and two exams. Regular participation in the course is essential to good performance.

Technical Requirements
- Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable).

Learning Management System
This course is delivered online through LearningHub at http://learninghub.andrews.edu

Your username and password are your Andrews username and password. You need to activate your username and password to access LearningHub.

Please do this online here:
https://vault.andrews.edu/vault/pages/activation/information.jsp if you haven’t already. (269) 471-6016 or email helpdesk@andrews.edu if you need assistance.

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course, or to report a problem with LearningHub, please email dlit@andrews.edu or call 269-471-3960.

Part 3: Course Requirements

Important Note: This online class is not self-paced. You can arrange your schedule flexibly during each week, but you MUST participate each week. You are expected to “show up” to class by interacting in the discussion forums a minimum of two times per week. In addition, assignments are due regularly each week. Adequate Internet access during the duration of the course is critical for your participation. To be successful, plan to spend time daily on the course.

Please Be Advised: The schedule is provided in advance so you may read ahead of schedule. Your dedication, professionalism, and excellence in study skills habits are necessary. If you have any course content questions, please contact your professor. If you have technical questions, contact dlit@andrews.edu.
Assessment Descriptions
All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Moodle unless otherwise indicated. Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each week’s corresponding learning module. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.

Regular Participation: This online class is not self-paced. You can arrange your schedule flexibly during each week, but you MUST participate each week. You are expected to “show up” to class by interacting in the discussion forums a minimum of two times per week. In addition, assignments are due regularly each week. Adequate Internet access during the duration of the course is critical for your participation. To be successful, plan to spend time daily on the course.

Assigned Readings: Readings are drawn from the textbook and other online materials. The course schedule below lists the reading assignments and their due dates.

Discussions: 8 discussion forum questions plus one based on the movie for 20 points each appear throughout the course. A fundamental part of this course is the online discussion forums in which the students and the teacher will take part. These online interactions will allow participants to consider significant questions raised by the teacher, class content, and their fellow students. Think of the discussion board as an opportunity to learn from one another. A chance to share your thoughts and in the process have your perspective broadened. Discussion participation is worth 20% of the course.

Each week students are required to make at least three postings on the discussion board in accordance with the following parameters:

1. Respond to the question posted by the teacher.
2. Respond to at least two of the replies or questions made by other students.

Rubric for Online Discussion Board Participation:

1. Submissions must be made on time to receive a credit. If they are late, they will not receive a credit unless a valid excuse is provided. The week’s postings are worth 20 points.
2. Posts and responses must be thoughtful and careful to include sufficient explanation. Stating simply that: I agree,” or “I disagree,” or “This is wrong,” is unsatisfactory. Use examples, personal experiences, and specific references to the course content to explain yourself. Remember, your fellow students will be reading your work.
3. All posts should be limited to one paragraph between 75 to 250 words. Writing longer posts will not improve your grade but will not detract from it either.
4. All posts must address the question or questions posed. Writing on completely separate topic will yield no credit. Likewise, if post content is inaccurate or irrelevant to the discussion at hand it will not yield high marks.
5. When appropriate refer to your personal experiences in your posts. If you have learned something about the world that is relevant to the topic at hand share it with us.

6. Posts should be always complete when posted and use proper grammar. No one likes to read anything riddled with mistakes.

If for whatever reason your post(s) on the discussion board do not meet these criteria they will not receive full credit.

Assignment Worksheets: There are eight assignment worksheets to complete, with several short essay questions. Answer each question with about 50-75 words and give evidence of your thinking.

Journal Assignments: You will read two news articles and comment on them throughout the course. Keep your eyes open for online current event news which highlights faith stories. Select a magazine or newspaper article reporting on up-to-date issues relating to a faith covered in this course. Write a one-page commentary to briefly summarize the main points of the article (not more than half the page), and then explain how the teachings of the featured religion interface with the context of its broader culture as displayed in the article. Substantiate your comments by referring to specific religious viewpoints discussed in your textbook. Include the corresponding page numbers from the textbook in a short reference list. Include the url for the article. Each journal assignment should be about a different religion.

Watch the movie “Inside Mecca” and write a response to the movie based on the following questions:
- How is the problem of different background, race and gender present in Islam and how do Muslims deal with this problem?
- What positive things could you take from Islam after watching this movie?
- How does this movie help you better understand this religion and the people who follow this religion? Did it change your view of Muslims and Islam in any way?

Ancient Sacred Texts. Read two sacred texts and write a reflection based on the following criteria.

Choose one text from each group. Read for 20 minutes or more. You can read slowly or fast, the key and the objective of this assignment is to think about the text you are reading. Some are more difficult to read than others. Read a continuous passage, do not skip from passage to passages reading several passages out of context.

Ancient Sacred text 1: choose from the following texts one that is different from your own religion: The Vedas, The Sutras, or Tao Te Ching.

Ancient Sacred texts 2: choose from the following texts one that is different from your own religion (note, if you are a Christian you will have to choose Quran since the Jewish Bible is the same as your Christian Bible): choose from the following texts one that is different from your own religion: the Quran, the Tanak (Hebrew Bible), or the Bible (Old and New Testament).
For the two texts write a 2-3 page reflection. Include the pages (or chapters/verses) you have read. The reflection should cover, but not have to be limited to the following questions: How would you summarize the basic teaching and the message of the text? How did this text reflect the foundational teachings of its religion? How does this text compare/contrast with your own religion and beliefs? Could this text be applied today? (This can be positive or negative). Could this teaching be taken out of context and misinterpreted and misused (do you know of any specific examples)? Does this teaching give you any further insight into its religion? (Positive or negative). Is there anything from this teaching that you can learn and use in your everyday life?

PROJECT: 3 parts
In this course we do not have time to go deeper into each of the seven world religions but this assignment is your chance to become more acquainted with one of these world religions. You will study this religion, visit the place of worship for this religion and gain a deeper knowledge of it. This assignment has three parts. Note that each part is due on a different date!

PART A (5 points)
- a. choose a religion from those covered in this course which is outside your own religion.
- b. find a place of worship for this religion in your area which you will visit later during the course.
- c. submit the name and address for the place of worship.

PART B (10 points)
Before you visit the place of worship explore this religion beyond the class materials. Write 2-3 page, double spaced, overview of this religion. It should include the religion’s history, beliefs, current issues, customs etc. It must include outside sources with a minimum of 2 books and 2 articles.

PART C (15 points)
Visit the place of worship and write a reflection on your experience based on the following questions:
- What are your first impressions? Does the place give you a sense of reverence or awe, or do you feel uneasy? Are you made to feel welcome?
- Describe the atmosphere of this place. What do you see, hear, smell, perhaps even taste or touch? Especially make note of any symbols and architecture.
- What do you notice about their mode of worship? Is it a corporate or individual style of worship? What role do any authority figures play (priests, rabbis, etc.)?
- What insights did you gain? (Out of the required three pages, write one page for this section.) Comparisons, contrasts, implications for your life . . . Were any stereotypes dispelled or reinforced? Does this place and the mode of worship give you an impression about the kind of God these people worship? What do the requirements of this religion imply about their deity?
- Would you return to this place? Is there anything about their belief system or worship atmosphere that you would like to incorporate into your own way of life?

Exams
All exams must be supervised by a school or community official, such as a teacher, librarian, registrar, or pastor, who is not related to the student.
The exam request form will be available in Moodle after you have completed the assignments prior to the exam. The student must state clearly on the exam request form the professional status, job title, or any other qualifications of the supervisor that will aid the testing department in the approval process. If you are attending a college or university, you must use the testing center at that institution. A student living near the Andrews University School of Distance Education main office in Michigan must have the exams supervised at the School of Distance Education testing office. However, the exam request should be sent in ahead of time.

The midterm and semester exam will each be 120 minutes long. You will be required to bring your photo ID. The midterm and semester exam will each be worth 25% of your final grade.

An online exam code cannot be sent to a supervisor who has the same address as the student unless the address is known to be that of a school, mission facility, etc.

Students must present photo identification to their supervisor’s before taking exams.

Schedule for completion:
All times in the schedule are for the U.S. Eastern Time Zone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Module(s)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Introduction and Orientation</td>
<td>Orientation Writing Expectations</td>
<td>Tell About Me Academic Honesty</td>
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</table>
| Week 1: June 8 - June 12 | Lesson 1: Point of Departure | The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 1 (pages 8-15) | Due on Sunday at 11:55 pm  
  - Assignment 1  
  - First post to discussion forum |
| Week 2: June 14 - June 19 | Lesson 2: Hinduism  
 Lesson 3: Buddhism | The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 2 (pages 16-57)  
 The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 3 (pages 58-97) | Due on Wednesday at 11:55 pm  
  - Assignment 2  
  - First post to discussion forum  
  - Read and respond to the discussion forum  
  - Due on Friday at 5:00 pm  
  - Assignment 3  
  - Read and respond to the discussion forum |
| Week 3: June 21 - June 26 | Lesson 4: Confucianism  
 Lesson 5: Taoism | The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 4 (pages 98-121)  
 The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 5 (pages 122-143) | Due on Wednesday at 11:55 pm  
  - Assignment 4  
  - First post to the discussion forum  
  - Due on Friday at 5:00 pm  
  - Assignment 5  
  - Read and respond to the discussion forum  
  - Sacred Text Assignment 1  
  - Project: Part A |
| Week 4: June 28 - July 3 | | | Read and respond to the discussion forum  
  - Journal 1 |
| Week 5: July 5 - July 10 | Lesson 6: Islam  
 Lesson 7: Judaism | The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 6 (pages 144-177)  
 The Illustrated World’s Religions Chapter 7 (pages 178-203) | Due on Wednesday at 11:55 pm  
  - Assignment 6  
  - First post to the discussion forum  
  - Due on Friday at 5:00 pm  
  - Assignment 7  
  - Read and respond to the discussion forum  
  - Project: Part B |
| Week 6: | Lesson 8: Christianity | The Illustrated World’s Religions | Due on Wednesday at 11:55 pm |
Moral Issues in World Religion  Syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Module(s)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<td>Chapter 8 (pages 204-229)</td>
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<td>• First post to the discussion forum</td>
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<td>July 17</td>
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<td>Due on Friday at 5:00 pm</td>
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<td>• Assignment 8</td>
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<td>Week 7:</td>
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<td>• Read and respond to the discussion forum</td>
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<td>July 19 -</td>
<td>Articles and Written Reports</td>
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<td>• Watch the Movie</td>
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<td>July 24</td>
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<td>Week 8:</td>
<td>Article and Written Reports</td>
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<td>Due on Wednesday at 11:55 pm</td>
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<td>July 26 -</td>
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<td>• First post to the discussion forum</td>
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<td>July 31</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Place of Worship Visit Report</td>
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<td>• Read and Respond to the discussion forum</td>
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<td>• Sacred Text Assignment 2</td>
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<td>• Project: Part C</td>
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Semester Exam

Part 4: Grading Policy

Graded Course Activities

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<tr>
<th>Percent %</th>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
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<td>Worksheets</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Journals</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Movie Reflection</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sacred Texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Project (A: 5, B: 10, C: 15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Exams</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>Total Percent Possible</td>
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Viewing Grades in Moodle

- Click into the course.
- Click on the Grades link in Administration Block to the left of the main course page.

Letter Grade Assignment

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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<td>88-89%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-77%</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>Letter Grade</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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**Part 5: Course Policies**

**Withdrawal and Incomplete Policies**
The current withdrawal policy can be found online at [http://www.andrews.edu/distance/students/withdrawal.html](http://www.andrews.edu/distance/students/withdrawal.html). The incomplete policy is found online at [http://www.andrews.edu/weblmsc/moodle/public/incompletes.html](http://www.andrews.edu/weblmsc/moodle/public/incompletes.html).

**Late Work**
Late work will not be accepted. Timely completion of all assignments is an absolute necessity due to the nature of the online course. Unless a reasonable excuse is provided, all assignments are required to be turned in on the date indicated.

**Maintain Professional Conduct Both in the Classroom and Online**
The classroom is a professional environment where academic debate and learning take place. Your instructor will make every effort to make this environment safe for you to share your opinions, ideas, and beliefs. In return, you are expected to respect the opinions, ideas, and beliefs of other students—both in the face-to-face classroom and online communication. Students have the right and privilege to learn in the class, free from harassment and disruption.

**Netiquette**
In this course you will communicate with your classmates and instructor primarily in writing through the discussion forum and e-mail.

"Online manners" are generally known as "netiquette." As a general rule, you should adhere to the same classroom conduct that you would "off-line" in a face-to-face course. Some examples of proper netiquette are:

1. Avoid writing messages in all capital letters. THIS IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD AS SHOUTING.
2. Be careful what you put in writing. Even if you are writing an e-mail message to one person, assume that anyone could read it. Though you may send an e-mail to a single person, it is very easy to forward your message to hundreds or thousands of people.
3. Grammar and spelling matter. Online courses demand the same standard of academic communication and use of grammar as face-to-face courses.
4. Never use profanity in any area of an online course. The transcripts of online course discussion forums, e-mail, and chat sessions are savable.
5. When responding to messages, only use "Reply to All" when you really intend to reply to all.
6. Avoid unkindly public criticism of others. Publicly criticizing others in an inappropriate way is known as "flaming." Consider this course a practice forum for selecting your verbiage thoughtfully and professionally.
7. Use sarcasm cautiously. In the absence of nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and voice inflections, the context for your sarcasm may be lost, and your message may thus be misinterpreted.
8. In a face-to-face setting, our tone of voice and facial expressions may convey as much of our meaning as the words we use. In a written message, the subtext of your meaning may be confused or misinterpreted. Write clearly. Use active verbs.  
(Source: University of Maryland, Communications Department)

Academic Accommodations

Students who require accommodations may request an academic adjustment as follows:

1. Read the Andrews University Disability Accommodation information at [https://www.andrews.edu/services/sscenter/disability/](https://www.andrews.edu/services/sscenter/disability/)

2. Download and fill in the disability form at [http://www.andrews.edu/services/sscenter/disability/accommodationsreqform.pdf](http://www.andrews.edu/services/sscenter/disability/accommodationsreqform.pdf). Preferably type answers. To save a digital copy, 1) print to file and save or 2) print and scan. Email the completed form and disability documentation (if any) to [success@andrews.edu](mailto:success@andrews.edu) or fax it to 269-471-8407.

3. Email [sdestudents@andrews.edu](mailto:sdestudents@andrews.edu) to inform the School of Distance Education that a disability has been reported to Student Success.

Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

Commit to Excellence

You deserve a standing ovation based on your decision to enroll in, and effectively complete this course. Along with your pledge of “commitment to Integrity” you are expected to adhere to a “Commitment to excellence.” Andrews University has established high academic standards that will truly enhance your writing and communication skills across the disciplines and in diverse milieu with many discourse communities in the workplace.

Honesty

Using the work of another student or allowing work to be used by another student jeopardizes not only the teacher-student relationship but also the student’s academic standing. Lessons may be discussed with other students, tutors may help to guide a student’s work, and textbooks, encyclopedias and other resource materials may be used for additional assistance, but the actual response must be the student’s own work. A student who gives information to another student to be used in a dishonest way is equally guilty of dishonesty.

Any violation of this policy will be taken before the Higher Education Academic and Curriculum Committee for appropriate punitive action.