

CONSORTIUM
of Adventist Colleges & Universities

SYLLABUS



AU RELG 350 World Religions
Summer 2019

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Consortium of Adventist Colleges and Universities

Self-Paced Full Term Courses

This is a Self-Paced Full Term course which follows the Andrews semester schedule. Self-Paced Full Term courses have four important dates: 1) a start date, 2) a midterm completion date, 3) a final completion date, and 4) a course completion date. Please note that all module prior to the midterm must be completed BEFORE the midterm and all modules between the midterm and final must be completed BEFORE the final.

Instructor Contact

Please refer to course in LearningHub for the teacher contact information.

Communication with the Instructor

It is important to remember that while the Internet is available 24 hours a day, your instructor is not. You can expect that your instructor will respond to e-mail message to you within *2 business days* during the week and may not be available to respond on weekends.

Other Assistance

Username and password assistance	helpdesk@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6016
Enrollment and withdrawal questions	sderegister@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6323
Technical assistance with online courses	dlit@andrews.edu	(269) 471-3960
Exam requests and online proctoring	sdeexams@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6566
Distance Student Services - any other questions	sdestudents@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6566

Part 1: Course Information

Course Description

Explores major worldviews and religious traditions and their fundamental teachings, beliefs and practices. As students consider each major religion's analysis of basic human problems and the proposed solutions they learn to respect and understand diverse beliefs and practices. This course is taught from a Christian perspective, seeking to explore common ground and challenges between Christianity and other major world religions.

Course Learning Outcomes

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

Required Text/Material

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

NOTE: Purchase textbooks through any online bookstore, such as amazon.com, which can deliver within 2 days. If you need to use financial aid to purchase textbooks, email sdestudents@andrews.edu, cutting and pasting the textbook information from syllabi, including course title and section, your full name and student ID#.

Credit Hour and Commitment

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.

Part 2: Course Methods and Delivery

Methods of Instruction

Methods of instruction include assigned readings, writing responses to the readings, interaction with the teacher through blogs, a project that includes visiting a place of worship and two exams.

Course/Technical Requirements

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

LearningHub Access

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. If you need assistance, call or email us: (296) 471-6016 or helpdesk@andrews.edu.

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: Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each learning module. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.

Your Schedule

In LearningHub, you will access online lessons, course materials, and resources. This course is self-paced but with four specific dates: start date, midterm date, final date and completion date.

Assessment Descriptions

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

Blogs: There are eight blog questions for 20 points each that appear throughout the course. Blogs are a fundamental part of this course in which the students and the teacher will take part. These online interactions will allow participants to consider significant questions raised by the teacher and class content. Think of the blog as an opportunity to express yourself in class, a chance to share your thoughts and in the process have your perspective broadened. Blogs are worth 20% of the course. Blog answers should be approximately 250 words in length.

Reflective Book Journal: There are seven reflections that cover the textbook chapters. The reflection should be 1.5 to 2 pages long and double-spaced. It should be written according to the following criteria:

- Write a one-paragraph summary of the main ideas. This should not be longer than half a page.
- Critique and respond to 3-4 ideas from the chapter. These do not have to be the main ideas, it can be anything that caught your attention. You can agree or disagree with the author of the book. You can also express your opinion on the particular religion or compare it to your own life or your religion.
- Choose one positive principle from the religion you studied and show how it could be applied to your life.
- Each journal should include clear references to the book (page numbers included).
- Journals must use proper grammar.

Studies: There will be three studies in which you will think about religions and their influence on the world, society and you. Each study should be about one to two pages, double-spaced.

- Study #1: Find two recent articles (not more than one month old) that deal with some aspect of religion and its influence on the world. They can be positive or negative. You can choose any religion, even if it is not covered in the class. The two articles must cover two different religions. Each essay must include:
 - Full references
 - One-paragraph summary
 - Two to three paragraph response to each article. Questions you can ask but don't have to limit are:
 - What are the presuppositions of the author?
 - From the same religion?
 - Writing for a conservative or liberal magazine?
 - Supporting, defending or attacking in the article?
 - How does the article reflect the beliefs of this religion? This can include theological or practical/ethical questions.
 - Is the focus of the article on the majority? The liberal, conservative or extremist groups.
 - Is the contribution of this religion to our society, based on this article, positive or negative?
 - What can/did you learn about this religion? Be as objective as possible. Are there positive elements that could be applied to everyday life—negative or positive?
- Study #2: Think of ways that religion influences our world, these can include art, architecture, politics, ecology, education, philosophy, etc. Be creative in your thinking. Include three ways with clear examples from different aspects of life. You may include pictures. The point of this study is for you to see the importance of religion in everyday life and how it helped in shaping history.

- Study #3: What do you believe? This is the last study after recovering all the religions of this course. In one paragraph summarize what you believe in. Compare and contrast what you believe in with all the religions covered in this class. The point of this study is to make you think about what you believe. This is not to see if you understand what others believe—but to help you put in words what you believe. Try to avoid religious phrases and rather be honest with yourself.

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 slow 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, Tao Te Ching.
- Ancient Sacred Text 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: 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 teaching 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: Place of Worship Visit: In this course we examine six major religions. It is not possible to cover all of them in detail. In this project you will study one of these religions in greater detail and experience its worship. The project includes four steps:

STEP 1: Choose a religion, outside your own. For example, if you are Christian, perhaps you could visit a synagogue or mosque. Explore your community and find out which faiths outside of your own tradition are represented. Submit the location (physical address) of the place you will visit.

STEP 2: Make a research on the history, traditions and beliefs of this religion. This should include a minimum of 2 books and 2 articles. Write a two page, double spaced, summary of traditions and belief of this religion. Include a full bibliography. You may use any citation style you are used to.

STEP 3: Visit the place of worship for the religion you chose. Answer the questions below, but you do not have to limit your report to these questions.

- What are your 1st impressions?
 - Does the place give you a sense of reverence or awe?

- 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? *This section should be covered in at least one of the three required pages of this project.*
 - What are comparisons, contrasts and 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?

STEP 4: Think about the religion you studied. Write a short response (two pages, double spaced) about what you experienced and learned about this religion. This essay is not a summary of beliefs, as those were covered in STEP 2. This essay is your response and reaction to this religion. Some of the questions you could consider may include:

- What are the positives and negatives of this religion? This can include the theological, ethical, social questions. Are these problems clearly seen in the society? Are they reflected among the followers of this religion?
- How does this religion compare to my religion?
- Does it have any issues or problems? Are they being addressed? If yes, in what way? Are there similar issues in your religion? Are these problems being addressed in a similar way or are they being overlooked or solved in a different (better/worse) way?
- How does it affect your world? Does it reflect the beliefs and actions of a friend who claims to follow the same religious beliefs? Does it influence the society and the world around you or is its influence insufficient in my world?
- What impressed you about this religion? What were the positive aspects of this religion that you could learn from and apply in your life?

Exams

The midterm exam is worth 20% of your grade. You are allowed 120minutes to complete this exam. The final exam is worth 20% of your grade. You are allowed 120minutes to complete this exam.

All exams in this course require proctoring. Students living outside of the United States must schedule their exams to be proctored online through the Testing Center. Students living in the United States may choose online or local proctoring. Appointments for proctoring in or online through the Testing Center are set up online at calendly.com/sde-exams/online.

For local proctoring, complete the exam request form linked in the course space to enter proctor information. Please do so two weeks before each exam deadline to allow adequate time for proctor approval. Approved local proctors include university, college or school faculty and teachers, student service workers, advisors, counselors and librarians, as well as educational, military, and workplace testing centers. Have the proctor's full name, position/title, employer name, phone and email available to fill in on the exam request form.

Note that an exam code is never released to the student, and cannot be sent to a proctor who has the same address as the student unless the address is known to be that of a school or mission facility. All students must present photo identification at the start of each exam session.

If you cannot take your exam by the deadline date, email specific reasons and your recovery plan to your instructor before the deadline. Your exam cannot be proctored after the exam deadline without email or phone approval directly from the instructor to the Testing Center (sdeexams@andrews.edu or 269-471-6566). The Testing Center will then work with a local proctor if needed.

No exam is returned to the student. Instructor feedback on exams prior to the final exam will be provided to aid studying for future exams.

For more details on taking exams and how online proctoring works, please see www.andrews.edu/distance/students/exams.html

Schedule with start, midterm, final and completion dates in RED.

Modules	Lessons	Readings	Assignments
Intro	Introduction and Orientation	Orientation Writing Expectations	Tell About Me Academic Honesty
1 May 13-19	Lesson 1: What is Religion	Textbook pg.6-9	--Blog 1 --Reflective Journal 1
2	Lesson 2: Hinduism	Textbook pg. 18-43	--Blog 2 --Reflective Journal 2
3	Lesson 3: Buddhism	Textbook pg. 58-81	--Blog 3 --Reflective Journal 3
4	Lesson 4: Buddhism, cont.		--Study 1: World religions and media --Place of Worship Visit Part 1 (plan)
5	Lesson 5: Chinese Religions	Textbook pg. 96-109	--Blog 4 --Reflective Journal 4--
6 & 7	Lesson 6: Chinese Religions, cont.		--Blog 5 --Sacred Text 1
Review for Midterm			
8 June 17-20	Midterm Exam (needs to be completed by Thursday June 20, 11:59 PM)		
9			--Blog 6
10	Lesson 10: Judaism	Textbook pg. 122-147	--Reflective Journal 5 --Blog 7
11	Lesson 11: Judaism, cont.		--Study 2: World religions and their influence --Place of Worship Visit Part 2 (research)
12	Lesson 12: Islam	Textbook pg. 174-195	--Reflective Journal 6 --Blog 8
13	Lesson 13: Islam, cont.		--Place of Worship Visit Part 3 (visit report) --Blog 9 (video)
14	Lesson 14: Christianity	Textbook pg. 148-173	--Blog 10 --Reflective Journal 7
Review for Semester Exam			
15	Lesson 15: Christianity, cont.		--Study 3: World religions and me --Sacred Text 2 --Place of Worship Visit Part 4 (essay response)
16 Jul. 29 – Aug. 1	Semester Exam (needs to be completed by Thursday, August 1, 11:59 PM)		

Completing Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through LearningHub unless otherwise instructed.

Part 4: Grading Policy

Graded Course Activities

Percent %	Description
10	Journals 1-7
6	Studies 1-3
4	Sacred Text 1-2
10	Blogs 1-10
30	Project
	Part A – 2 points
	Part B – 10 points
	Part C – 12 points
	Part D – 6 points
40	Exams
	Midterm Exam – 20 points
	Semester Exam – 20points
100	Total Percent Possible

Viewing Grades in LearningHub

- Click into the course.
- Click on the **Grades** link in the Settings Box to the left of the main course page.

Letter Grade Assignment

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	88-89%
B	83-87%
B-	80-82%
C+	78-79%
C	73-77%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Part 5: Course Policies

Withdrawal and Incomplete Policies

The current withdrawal policy can be found online at <https://www.andrews.edu/distance/students/gradplus/withdrawal.html>. The incomplete policy is found online at <http://www.andrews.edu/web/msc/moodle/public/incompletes.html>.

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.

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/>
2. Download and fill in the disability form at <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 or fax it to (269) 471-8407.
3. Email sdestudents@andrews.edu to inform the School of Distance Education that a disability has been reported to Student Success.

Commitment 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 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.

Exams must be completed in the presence of an approved supervisor without the assistance of books, notes, devices or outside help unless otherwise specified in the exam directions. The student should have no access to the exam either before or after it is taken. 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.

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