

MSSN 561  
CHRISTIAN WITNESS &  
WORLD RELIGIONS  
*Spring 2018*

*Gorden R. Doss, PhD*

# Andrews University

MSSN 561  
CHRISTIAN WITNESS & WORLD RELIGIONS  
SPRING 2018

## MA In Pastoral Ministry

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### GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION

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Course acronym: MSSN 561-031  
Course name: Christian Witness & World Religions  
Semester & year: Spring 2018; February 4-8  
Location: Andrews University  
Class time/day: 6:00 pm-8:30 pm; Sunday  
8:00 am-12:30 am; 1:30 pm-5:30 pm; Monday-Thursday  
Credits offered: 3 Credits  
Course Webpage: <http://learninghub.andrews.edu>

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### INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

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Instructor: Gordon R. Doss, Professor of World Mission, DMin, PhD  
Telephone: 269-471-3392  
Email: [dossg@andrews.edu](mailto:dossg@andrews.edu)  
Office location: Seminary Hall, S212

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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Study of the history, writings, beliefs and practices in world religions such as Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism and the development of effective strategies for Christian witness.

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### SYLLABUS REVISION STATEMENT

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The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus for the benefit of the learning process with appropriate notification to the students.

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### MAPM PROGRAM OUTCOMES

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1. Delivers effective biblically based sermons.
2. Demonstrates proper biblical interpretation skills.
3. Understands the historical–theological development of the Adventist Church.
4. Capable of training church members for evangelism.
5. Demonstrates an understanding of how to empower church members for leadership.
6. Capable of reaching specific social groups.

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## COURSE OBJECTIVES

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1. To think theologically about the task of mission among the world religions.
2. To understand and feel the scale and scope of the unfinished task of mission among the world religions.
3. To understand the basic attitudes needed for mission among the world religions.
4. To grasp how profoundly different mission among the non-Christian world religions is from mission among Christians.
5. To have an introductory knowledge of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and animism.
6. To experience an increased level of comfort and ease when relating to adherents of the world religions.
7. To see a vision for mission among the world religions in one's ministry location.
8. To develop a multi-focal mission vision that includes the world religions everywhere.

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## COURSE MATERIALS

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### Required Reading

Doss, Gordon R.

*Animism, the Occult, and Mission*

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol11/iss2/9/>

*The Challenges of Adventist Discipleship*

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol12/iss2/13/>

*Faithful Contextualization: Where Biblical Faithfulness Can Meet Cultural Appropriateness.*

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1031&context=world-mission-pubs>

*Maximizing the Missional Value of Short-Term Mission*

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=world-mission-pubs>

*Viewpoint: Reforming Christians or Converting Non-Christians?*

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol6/iss2/10/>

Elmer, Duane. 2006. *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*. Downers' Grove, IL: IVP.

Halverson, Dean C. 1996. *The Compact Guide to World Religions*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers.

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## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

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### A. Pre-Intensive Assignments: **Due February 4**

1. Write a 300-500 word summary and response for each of Halverson's chapters on Animism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, New Age, and Secularism (6 chapters). Submit interactions with all 6 chapters in a single Word file.
2. Write a 300-500 word summary and response to each of the 5 articles by Gordon Doss. Submit interactions with all 5 articles in a single Word file.
3. Write a 1,500-2,000 word book review of Elmer's book. Use the "Book Review Rubric" as a guide.

**B. During Intensive Assignment: Due February 9**

Write a daily journal (4 total) of 300-500 words of your responses to the class discussion. What was valuable or what raised questions? What was potentially helpful for your ministry? Submit all 4 journals in a single Word file.

**C. Post-Intensive Assignments: Due April 23**

1. Watch the following YouTube videos and submit all the interactions in a single Word file.

a) Video on Islam, submit 300-500 word interaction

Inside Islam - National Geographic Documentary (92 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt54m3aY2\\_Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt54m3aY2_Q)

b) Video on Buddhism, submit 300-500 word interaction

The Life Of The Buddha Full BBC Documentary (50 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEe8hI6G0GY>

c) Videos on Hinduism, submit one 300-500 word interaction covering all 3 videos

The History of Hindu India, Part One: From Ancient Times (23 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBZRTzXARWM&t=36s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBZRTzXARWM&t=36s)

The History of Hindu India, Part Two: 300-1000 (18 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0kLX2aPgo8>

The History of Hindu India, Part Three: 1000-1850 (20 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr8Qx0SyrYI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr8Qx0SyrYI)

2. Using online and other available resources, make a research of the non-Christian world religions in your city or district or state/province. Write a 500-1,000 word report of your findings. Include a selection of relevant materials from the internet. Submit in a Word file.

3. Visit a Muslim mosque, or Hindu, or Buddhist temple for a worship service. Meet the clergy or lay leaders. Write a 500-1,000 word report of the visit and impressions. Submit in a Word file.

4. Write and preach a sermon on mission among the non-Christian world religions using material from the course and research about your city or district. Submit the sermon. Submit in a Word file.

All assignments will be submitted via Andrews University Learning Hub

<https://www.andrews.edu/web/moodle/public/moodle/lhloginpage/altlogin.html>

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**SCHEDULE AND SUMMARY OF HOURS**

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		<b>Daily</b>	<b>Total</b>
Sunday	6:00 pm-8:30 pm	2.5	2.5
Monday-Thursday	8:00 am-12:30 pm	4.5	22.5
	1:30 pm-5:30 pm	4.0	20.0
Assignments			90.0
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>			<b>135.0</b>

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**GRADING AND ASSESSMENT**

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**Letter Grade Assignment**

	B+ =87-90	C+ = 75-78		
A = 95-100	B = 83-86	C = 71-74	D 61-66	F 0-60
A- = 91-94	B- = 79-82	C- = 67-70		

**Grading and Time Distribution**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>	<b>Time Estimate</b>	<b>Pages</b>
Class attendance		45	
Halverson	15	15	95
Doss	10	10	39
Elmer	25	20	198
Journals	10	10	
Mosque/temple visit	10	5	
YouTube Videos	10	10	
Local research and report	10	10	
Sermon	10	10	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>332</b>

Time formula: 3 credits = 45 hours in class + 90 hours out of class = 135 hours

**Late Submission**

The following penalties will be applied for late assignments:

- Delay up to 60 days: (no better than an A- grade)
- Delay up to 90 days: (no better than a B+ grade)
- Delay up to 120 days: (no better than a B grade)
- Delay up to 150 days: (no better than a C grade)

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## OUTLINE OF TOPICS

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Introduction to the study of missions  
The current context of missions  
The current state and location of the SDA church  
The theology of religions  
Introductions to the study of religions  
Basic principles for mission among the religions  
Contextualization  
Discipleship  
Online resources  
Allah and God  
Islam  
Hinduism  
Buddhism  
Animism  
New Religions

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## TEACHER PROFILE

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Gorden R. Doss was born into a missionary family. His maternal grandparents served in Trinidad when his mother was a teen. He went to Malawi with his parents when he was three years old. Since then he has called Malawi home for 31 years, fifteen growing up and sixteen in mission service. He met his wife, Cheryl Brown, at Helderberg College when they were both academy students and Cheryl's parents were serving there as missionaries. Cheryl and Gorden have two adult children and four grandchildren.

Kristin and Adam, Zachary and Julie Kiš have served in Guinea, Sao-Tome and Principe, Madagascar, the Philippines, and now live at Burman University, Canada. Richard and Hadassah, Zivah, and Zahra Doss have served in Kenya and Egypt and now live in Kentucky, where they attend Asbury Theological Seminary.

Gorden graduated from Andrews University in 1972 with a BA in 1975, with a Master of Divinity, and in 1987 with a Doctor of Ministry. He also completed a PhD/Intercultural Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 2006. His Stateside service includes a ministerial internship in Kansas Conference and a pastorate in Florida Conference. In Malawi he spent most of his years as principal of Lakeview Seminary, a junior seminary that trains pastors for Malawi. Areas that are of particular interest to him are cultural anthropology, Christian spirituality, and family ministry. For hobbies he does carpentry, auto mechanics, and mountain climbing. Gorden joined the Department of World Mission in the SDA Theological Seminary in 1998.

**MSSN 561 Christian Witness and World Religions  
Book Review Rubric**

Name:

Scores: Excellent 4; Good 3; Average 2; Poor 1	Score	Weight	Total
<b>A. Introduction</b>			
1. Introduction of the book including a brief introduction of the author (s). (Approx. 50-100 word)		1	
<b>B. Discussion of and Interaction with Major Themes</b>			
1. The thesis or main emphasis.		1	
2. Summary and discussion of major points and concepts.		15	
3. Application and interaction; SDA church and personal ministry.		5	
4. Major strengths and weaknesses. (Approx. 1,500-2,000 words)		1	
<b>C. Format</b>		1	
1. Heading			
<i>Student name</i>			
MSSN 561 Christian Witness and World Religions			
Facts of publication			
Assignment date			
2. Single space			
3. 1" margins all around			
4. Pagination centered, on bottom of page			
5. 11 or 12 point font.			
<b>D. Grammar and Spelling</b>		1	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>25</b>	

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**CLASS POLICIES**

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**Final Requirements and Changes**

The online course outline may be adjusted until the first class period of the course. After the course starts, the teacher reserves the right to make minor adjustments, assuming that timely and adequate notification is given.

**All Assignments Required**

To receive a passing grade on this course all assignments must be completed.

### **Class Attendance**

“Regular attendance at all classes, laboratories and other academic appointments is required for each student. Faculty members are expected to keep regular attendance records. Whenever the number of absences exceeds 10% of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension, and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.”

*Andrews University Bulletin.*

Attendance is recorded on sign-in sheets mounted on clipboards and placed near the door. Students are responsible to see that their attendance is recorded. Points are awarded for daily attendance as follows: On-time—3 points; Late—2 points.

### **Disability Accommodations**

If you qualify for accommodation under the American Disabilities Act, please see contact Student Success in Nethery Hall 100 ([disabilities@andrews.edu](mailto:disabilities@andrews.edu) or 269-471-6096) as soon as possible so that accommodations can be arranged.

### **Eating and Drinking**

Because eating and drinking can distract oneself and others, in-class consumption must be limited to water. The “culture” of Seminary classes-in-session excludes food.

### **Use of Computers and Other Devices**

Computers are not to be used in class except for taking notes or if web searches are part of the class. “Multi-tasking” in class (doing email, surfing the web, etc.) diminishes participation and learning. Please keep cell phones off or on the silent setting.

### **Special Circumstances**

Students with special situations should inform the instructor before the event or as soon as possible after the event. The teacher values verbal explanations but a written request will ensure consideration at grading time.

### **Examinations**

“Credit is not granted in courses unless the required examinations are completed by the student. 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.” *Andrews University Bulletin.*

### **Excused Absence**

“Excuses for absences due to illness are granted by the teacher. Proof of illness is required. Residence hall students are required to see a nurse on the first day of any illness which interferes with class attendance. Non-residence hall students should show written verification of illness obtained from their own physician. Excuses for absences not due to illness are issued directly to 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.” *Andrews University Bulletin.*

### **Teacher Tardiness**

“Teachers have the responsibility of getting to class on time. If a teacher is detained and will be late, the teacher must send a message to the class with directions. If after 10 minutes no message has been received, students may leave without penalty. If teacher tardiness persists, students have the right to notify the department chair, or if the teacher is the department chair, to notify the dean.” *Andrews University Bulletin.*

### **Academic Integrity**

“In harmony with the mission statement (p.18), Andrews University expects that students will demonstrate the ability to think clearly for themselves and exhibit personal and moral integrity in every sphere of life. Thus, students are expected to display honesty in all academic matters.



“Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following acts: falsifying official documents; plagiarizing, which includes copying others’ published work, and/or failing to give credit properly to other authors and creators; misusing copyrighted material and/or violating licensing agreements (actions that may result in legal action in addition to disciplinary action taken by the University); using media from any source or medium, including the Internet (e.g., print, visual images, music) with the intent to mislead, deceive or defraud; presenting another’s work as one’s own (e.g. placement exams, homework, assignments); using material during a quiz or examination other than those specifically allowed by the teacher or program; stealing, accepting, or studying from stolen quizzes or examination materials; copying from another student during a regular or take-home test or quiz; assisting another in acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., falsifying attendance records, providing unauthorized course materials).”

“Andrews University takes seriously all acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts as described above are subject to incremental discipline for multiple offenses and severe penalties for some offenses. These acts are tracked in the office of the Provost. Repeated and/or flagrant offenses will be referred to the Committee for Academic Integrity for recommendations on further penalties. Consequences may include denial of admission, revocation of admission, warning from a teacher with or without formal documentation, warning from a chair or academic dean with formal documentation, receipt of a reduced or failing grade with or without notation of the reason on the transcript, suspension or dismissal from the course, suspension or dismissal from the program, expulsion from the university, or degree cancellation. Disciplinary action may be retroactive if academic dishonesty becomes apparent after the student leaves the course, program or university. Departments or faculty members may publish additional, perhaps more stringent, penalties for academic dishonesty in specific programs or courses.” *Andrews University Bulletin*.

### **Emergency Protocol**

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.

### **Incomplete Policy**

“I—Incomplete. An Incomplete (I) indicates that the student’s work is incomplete because of illness or unavoidable circumstances and not because of negligence or inferior performance. Students will be charged an incomplete fee for each incomplete grade issued. An I may be given when the instructor and the student agree to terms stated in an Incomplete Contract. The I is given to a student when the major portion of the work for the course has been completed. The contract states (1) the remaining work to be completed, (2) a plan with timelines for completion of the work, (3) the time limit, and (4) the grade the student will receive if the work is not completed by the agreed-upon time. Ordinarily, an I shall be removed during the following semester. However, an I contracted in the spring semester may be extended to the autumn semester. Any request for an extension of time beyond the contracted time shall be made in writing before the end of the contracted date and approved by the dean of the college/school in which the course is offered. The number of I’s on a student’s record affects the student’s class and workload.” *Andrews University Bulletin*.

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## **INSTRUCTOR PROFILE**

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Gorden R. Doss was born into a missionary family. His maternal grandparents served in Trinidad when his mother was a teen. He went to Malawi with his parents when he was three years old. Since then he has called Malawi home for 31 years, fifteen when growing up and sixteen in mission service.

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His Stateside service includes a ministerial internship in Kansas Conference and a pastorate in Florida Conference. In Malawi he spent most of his years as principal of Lakeview Seminary, a junior seminary that trains pastors for Malawi.

Areas that are of particular interest to him are cultural anthropology, Christian spirituality, and family ministry. For hobbies he does carpentry, auto mechanics, and mountain climbing.

## Appendix Example Criteria for Assessment Guidelines

### **THE B GRADE**

We start with the B grade for a very specific reason. It is because a B grade is a sign that you have competently fulfilled all of the requirements stipulated for an assessment or competency evaluation. It is an excellent grade and demonstrates a high level of knowledge, insight, critique competence and professional written presentation standards essential for an individual wishing to pursue a career as a professional pastor.

### **THE A GRADE**

An A grade is only given when a student not only fulfils the criteria stipulated above for a B grade, but in doing so demonstrates an advanced academic aptitude for content knowledge, critique, synthesis and independent insight, while exhibiting highly developed communication skills and professional publication standards that would allow them to pursue a highly competitive academic career.

### **THE C GRADE**

The C grade differs only from a B grade in that the traits outlined in the B grade above are not consistently applied. However, with diligence and applying feedback from your lecturer, the academic process can provide a perfect opportunity for a student to improve their consistency, and hence, their grade.

### **THE D GRADE**

The D grade exhibits a limited level of knowledge, insight and critique and poor written presentation standards. This may be because of a lack of time management on the part of the student, they may have difficulty grasping the concepts being taught, English may be their second language, or they may be experiencing a personal issue that is affecting their concentration and motivation levels. Again, with diligence, applying feedback from your lecturer, and seeking services offered by the University like the writing lab or the counseling centre, the academic process can provide an opportunity for a student to significantly improve their performance.

### **FAIL**

The Fail grade is given when very limited or no demonstratable competency has been observed.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

- You cannot be graded on the type of paper you could have turned in if you had had more time.
- You cannot be graded or given credit in this class on extra-curricular activities you may be involved in.
- It is unreasonable to expect a better grade because you are a nice person or are friends with the lecturer.
- It is unreasonable to demand a good grade because you believe you have been called by God, and thus, should automatically be given good grades despite poor performance.

Your assessments have been specifically designed to measure and provide evidence of your competency with relation to the subject matter. This is to meet University accreditation standards. Thus, you will only be graded on the content of the assessments you submit. If it is not in your assessments, your lecturer will not have adequate evidence of your competency and will have to grade you accordingly.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Replicating writing, cutting and pasting or moderately paraphrasing text from publications, internet sources, books, friends papers or publications, family members papers or publications, ghost writers papers or publications with the intent of passing it off as your own work, is strictly prohibited and unacceptable. Students found to be plagiarizing the work of others will receive an immediate Failing grade. Your actions will be reported to the University and your sponsor (if sponsored). You may even face expulsion from the University. Your lecturer will randomly sample

sentences, phrases and paragraphs from your paper and compare them with papers from past students and with content on the internet. Your lecturer is also familiar with a lot of the publications and sources you will be using for your assessment and will also be able to identify any potential plagiarism.

### **LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR**

There is an expectation that a person who holds a Master's qualification will have advanced written language skills, particularly in the language in which their Masters was taught. Thus, no special consideration will be given to students who speak English as a second language or native-English speakers who struggle with written English. Such students are advised to seek the assistance of the campus writing lab or seek the services of a professional academic editor prior to the submission of their assessment.

Students are encouraged to have someone else read their assessments aloud to them prior to submission. This practice will provide you with immediate feedback as to how your written assessments sounds/reads to another person. You may even want to have a friend or a professional academic editor look over your assessments to identify any typing, spelling or punctuation errors too.