

Religious Studies 3310: Major World Religions

The University of Texas at El Paso

Spring 2023, online

Office Hours: Mon. 4:30-5:30pm & by appointment

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This course will offer students an overview of major religious traditions and practices of the world, using the basic terms/concepts, history, and theories of interdisciplinary Religious Studies. Students will discuss and explore: humanity's use of myth and the divine to explain the natural world; the diverse ways religious and spiritual practices contribute to communities and epistemologies; and the complex ways religion informs historical and contemporary problems and solutions. Emphasis will be on analysis of primary and secondary sources, academic writing and discussion, and critical thinking.

Important DatesAcademic Calendar

Quiz 1:

Quiz 2:

Final Paper:

Evaluation

Short Papers

Final Paper

Quizzes

Discussions & Crosswords

25% (5SP*5%)

20%

20% (2Q*10%)

35%

Required Materials

Novak, Philip. *The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions*. HarperOne, 1994. (\$9.99 on Kindle, ~\$15 paperback)

One video requires a Hulu subscription or virtual rental (~\$3.99). All other required readings and videos will be available free online and/or through the UTEP library online. Please see the course calendar for a complete list of readings and required videos.

Student Responsibilities

Students are required to acquire and read the textbook. Students should complete assigned readings and learning activities on time, ask questions, participate in online discussions, and take ownership of their success in the course. Participation and engagement are required and essential. Students who "disappear" (that is, fail to complete assignments, discuss, and answer emails) may be dropped. Importantly, this course comes with the expectation that students can read and write at a college level, use educational technology tools, and have the discipline to read and work independently. Learning outcomes and grades will vary; students who fulfill these responsibilities will usually learn more and earn a better grade. Please note that the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) has resources related to academic writing and citing sources properly, and the UTEP Writing Center offers in-person and online consultations. Contact the instructor if you need help.

§ ***Discussions & Crosswords:*** Students will complete crosswords and participate in weekly discussion boards based on the readings and videos. For full credit, students must post twice, reference and comment on the course content for the week, and interact with their peers.

§ ***Short Papers:*** Students will complete five short papers (300-500 words each) analyzing primary source documents and connecting them to the themes of the course. Students will base these papers on primary source readings from assigned portions of *The World's Wisdom*. Students may choose which of the Novak readings to analyze for the SPs, which should be submitted by time the week's discussion board opens.

§ **Final Paper:** Students will complete a final reflective paper between 1250 and 1700 words in length (not including footnotes) following Turabian/Chicago formatting style. This paper includes a process component (ie. peer review, feedback meeting). Depending on the student's choice for the paper, it may also require research, an extracurricular experience, or other activity.

§ **Quizzes:** Two quizzes will include a variety of questions related to class readings and activities. Late completion is permitted only on a case-by-case basis with proof of extreme circumstances. Students may consult the course materials but must work independently. The instructor reserves the right to add check-for-understanding quizzes without prior notice

Online Modality

This class is classified asynchronous online with the understanding that students will work independently and collaboratively and participate online. The frequent, capable use of an internet-equipped computer is required. Occasional synchronous meetings are required, but students will have great flexibility in scheduling. Students will use Blackboard Ultra to access and submit class assignments and participate in virtual discussion. Students needing technology support should contact the UTEP Helpdesk where assistance is available via chat, email, or phone. Due to the frequent use of media provided by the UTEP Library, students are encouraged to connect through the UTEP Virtual Private Network (VPN). Students should report dead links the instructor. In the event that Blackboard is malfunctioning and an assignment is due, please email the assignment to jawaggoner@utep.edu by the deadline.

Other Policies

§ The instructor will make every effort to respond to emails (jawaggoner@utep.edu) within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

§ The instructor will provide rubrics for major assignments. Unless otherwise specified, assignments will be submitted and graded via Blackboard. Students should monitor their grades and report any problems, confusions, or challenges immediately.

§ Students should exercise academic integrity. Students who cheat or plagiarize will be reported to the Office of Student Conflict & Conflict Resolution. Don't cheat. Ask for help.

§ Please complete papers in academic English. Exceptions may be made for students majoring in Spanish or for certain academic projects. If you need help with writing or English, contact the instructor. Si requieres apoyo adicional, no dudes en ponerte en contacto con el instructor.

§ The instructor will make reasonable accommodations to foster the success of all students. The Assistive Technology Lab offers support for anyone needing assistive technology. Students with disabilities may contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services on the first floor of the student union (915-747-5148 Voice/TTY). It is the student's responsibility to register for and schedule services and communicate their needs to the instructor.

§ The instructor aims to create an inclusive, respectful, supportive, and rigorous learning environment. Students should report behavior that undermines that goal to the instructor immediately. Students may also access counseling services on campus.

§ The instructor retains the right to make changes to this document and/or to the class schedule. Exceptions to these class policies are rare and made on a case-by-case basis.