

HRS 140
GE AREA C3
WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE
SPRING 2009
TR 3:00-4:15
MENDOCINO 1020
DR. NYSTROM

COURSE TITLE: “Exploring World Religions”

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Comparative inquiry into the nature of global religions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will be studied. Material and social aspects of these religions will be considered along with primary beliefs and practices. The common yearning to experience the divine and the numinous will be emphasized.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students who complete this course will understand the essential beliefs, practices, and institutions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. They will also be able to explain in detail the most important similarities and differences between these religious system.

ASSIGNMENTS: Four quizzes and two papers. See below for descriptions and point values.

TEXTS:

D. Noss, *A History of the World's Religions*
B. Stoler Miller, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita*
E.A. Burt, ed., *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*
Dawood, trans., *The Qur'an*

The Hebrew Bible (= Old Testament)
New Testament

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS:

Week 1:	Introduction, Primitive Religions, Hinduism
Weeks 2-3:	Hinduism
Weeks 4-5:	Buddhism
Week 6:	Buddhism, Confucianism
Week 7:	Confucianism, Daoism
Week 8:	Daoism, Judaism
Weeks 9-10:	Judaism
Weeks 11-12:	Christianity
Week 13:	Christianity, Islam
Weeks 14-15:	Islam

GRADES:

Your course grade will be based on your scores on the quizzes and papers. Grades will be assigned according to the following scheme:

A	93-100% of the 350 points possible for the course	C	73-77%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	88-89%	D+	68-69%
B	83-87%	D	63-67%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	78-79%	F	59% and below

Participation may be a factor in determining your course grade. Attending class regularly and making constructive contributions to class discussions may raise your grade by one-half (e.g., from a B to a B+). Conversely, irregular attendance and disruptive behavior (talking out of turn, allowing cell phone to ring, text messaging, etc.) may lower your course grade by one-half.

There are no make-up quizzes. However, you can miss one quiz without penalty since only your three best quiz scores will be considered in the calculation of your course grade.

Please do not tell me at any point during the semester what grade you might need.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS, EXAMS AND PAPERS:

- February 17: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures; Noss, chapters 3 and 4, *Bhagavad Gita*
- March 19: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since last quiz; Noss, chapters 6, 7, 9, 10; and the following selections from Burt:
- "The Sermon at Benares"
 - "Questions Not Tending to Edification"
 - "The Parable of the Mustard Seed"
 - "The Buddha's Farewell Address"
 - "The Way of Truth"
 - "What is Nirvana?" (Theravada View)
 - "The Bodhisattva's Vow of Universal Redemption"
 - "The Eternal Buddha of Countless Worlds"
 - "What is Nirvana?" (Mahayana View)
- March 19: PAPER #1 (100 points) DUE
- April 30: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since the last quiz; Noss, chapters 13, 14, 15, 16; Genesis 1-3, Exodus 1-20, and Psalms 19, 23, 66, 81 (in the Hebrew Bible/ Old Testament); Gospel of John (in the New Testament)

April 30: PAPER #2 Rewrites (optional) DUE

May 19: PAPER #2 (100 points) DUE

QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since the last quiz; Noss, chapters 17 and 18; *Qur'an*, 2, 4, 13, 16, 23, 24, 35, 37, 47, 67, 112.

PAPERS:

The course requirements include two papers. Paper assignments will be distributed at the beginning and midpoints of the semester.

General Grading Criteria for Papers:

“A” papers clearly state their topic and how it will be addressed. They make good points and support them with appropriate examples. “A” papers are logical and correct in their grammar and word usage. Although “B” papers possess these strengths to a lesser degree, their arguments are generally clear and reasonably well supported. “B” papers make few mistakes in grammar and word usage. “C” papers are weak in stating and supporting their theses and in their grammar and word usage. These deficiencies can make passages in a “C” paper difficult to understand and the argument as a whole ineffective. “D” papers possess the same weaknesses as “C” papers but to a greater degree. As a result, “D” papers can be difficult to understand and usually give the impression that the author has little understanding of his/her subject.

PAPER #1 REWRITES:

You may rewrite Paper #1 for additional credit of up to 10 points (i.e., a paper that receives an initial grade of 78 points might receive a final grade as high as 88 points. Rewrites must be submitted at any time before the end of class on the date indicated above. No rewrites will be accepted after this time. Rewrites must be stapled to the original paper (no photocopies or re-printings).

SAC-CT

Every student should be prepared to make use of SacCT, the CSUS online course management system. On SacCT you will find your grades, the course syllabus, and paper assignments. To log into SacCT, go to the CSUS website and take the WebCT/SacCT link to the login page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES:

HRS 140 is a lecture/discussion course. It has no prerequisites other than a passing score on the WPE exam. It is a required course for Humanities and Religious Studies majors. It also satisfies the 3-unit General Education Category C3 requirement and the Writing Intensive Course requirement.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. See the campus policy on academic dishonesty at www.csus.edu/admbus/um anual/UMA00150.htm.

No electronic devices, including laptop computers, are to be used in class.

In fairness to others, students who leave the room during a quiz or exam will not be allowed to return. If this policy creates a documentable difficulty for you, please make necessary arrangements with the Testing Center.

I will consider requests for a grade of “Incomplete” when, in the words of the University catalog, “required coursework has not been completed and evaluated during the course due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons.”

Students with disabilities who require special arrangements of any kind should contact me during the first week of the semester.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office hours: Mendocino 2024

TR 2-3 and 8:20-8:50

Office phone: 278-5334

E-mail: nystromb@csus.edu