

**REL 102: World Religions- Online**  
Summer 2011 (6/6-7/15)

Instructor: Wynter Miller, M. Res.-Religious Studies

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Contact: You may e-mail me with issues regarding class. If you would like to speak live, we may schedule a skype interview.

**Course Description:**

Students will be introduced to the academic field of Religious Studies through a brief overview of various religious traditions of the world. Students will explore these religions from a variety of perspectives including historical, philosophical, ethnographic and literary methods. In addition, throughout the course, students will be asked to participate in tasks that will actively engage them in various elements of the religious traditions. Topics to be covered are: Methods of Studying Religion, Indigenous Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Daoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This course meets the requirement of a course with a non-Western focus in the "Cultural Diversity and Global Interdependence" context of Tier II of the New Foundations curriculum.

**Course Text:**

Mary Pat Fischer. Living Religions. 8th edition

**Description of Major Assignments:**

**Living Religion Activities-** Students will be given small tasks asking them to actively engage with some element of a tradition being covered that week. Living Religion Activities will be due on Saturday at midnight of each week.

**Weekly Discussion Threads-** Two discussion prompts will be posted for each chapter. Students will be required respond to both the original prompt and to one another. A minimum of three critical posts will be required per discussion thread. Initial responses for all threads will be due on Thursday at midnight of each week. Further responses will be due on Saturday at midnight.

**Essays-** Students will be required to compose 2 essays of 3-5 pages in length. They will be comparative in nature requiring that students synthesize knowledge from multiple traditions. Essays will be due on Sundays at midnight.

**Quizzes-** These must be completed by Saturday at midnight each week and will cover material from readings and presentations.

**Assessment:**

Living Religion Activities (10 pts Weekly) 60 points

Discussion Threads (10 pts/chapter) 100 points

2 papers (30 pts each) 60 points

6 Quizzes (4@10 pts 2@5pts) 50 points

**TOTAL: 270 points**

**Make-up and late work:** Essays will be accepted with a 3% deduction for each day that passes from the original due date. They will not be accepted more than one week late unless specific permission is granted in advance. Responses to discussion threads, LRA activities and quizzes will NOT be accepted late!!!

**Extra-credit work:** Up to 10 points of extra credit will be allowed for each student. At various points opportunities will arise for EC, but in general students are responsible for proposing extra credit assignments. EC will be discussed on an individual basis.

**Class Netiquette:** Your course instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Our differences will add richness to this learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued in online interactions and generate unintended disruptions.

Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course ambience.

### **Semester Schedule:**

Week Topic / Readings Assignments

Week 1- Intro- Ch 1 Quiz, LR

Indigenous Religions- Ch 2

Week 2-

Hinduism- Ch 3 Quiz, LR

Jainism- Ch 4

Week 3- Buddhism - Ch 5 Quiz, LR

Essay 1

Week 4-

Daoism/Confucianism- Ch 6 Quiz, LR

Zoroastrianism- Ch 8

Week 5- Judaism- Ch 9 Quiz, LR

Christianity- Ch 10

Week 6- Islam- Ch 11 Quiz, LR

Essay 2

### **Weekly Schedule:**

Monday- Weekly content available

Thursday- Initial discussion thread responses due.

Saturday- Subsequent discussion thread responses due, Quizzes due and LRA assignments due by midnight

Sunday- Essays due by midnight during weeks 3 and 6

**Notes:**

Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to arrange an appointment at his/her earliest convenience. At that time, we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore possible accommodations.

Westminster's ADA policy can be found at the College's website.

The Westminster Honour Code applies to all work in the course.