



IS 510 Christian Perspectives of World Religions and New Religious Movements
Fall, 2022

Professor: Dr. Malcolm Hartnell, ThM., PhD.
Contact Information: 602 850 8000 mhartnell@ps.edu
Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the major world religions and New Religious Movements by examining their principal doctrines and practices. Special emphasis is given to Folk Religion (Animism), Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, New Age, and Neopagan Religions. Various approaches and strategies for witness to these religious groups from an evangelical Christian perspective are also studied.

COURSE OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, the student will:

1. Explain the key doctrines and practices of key non-Christian religions and New Religious Movements.
2. Compare and contrast the teachings of world religions and New Religious Movements with orthodox evangelical Christian beliefs.
3. Formulate a Christian approach and apologetic to these world religions and New Religious Movements that will result in an effective witness for Jesus Christ.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

Halverson, Dean. *The Compact Guide to World Religions*, Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556617046.

Hiebert, Paul, Tite Tienou and Daniel Shaw. *Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. ISBN 0-810-2219-3.

Metzger, Paul L. *Connecting Christ: Discussing Jesus in a World of Diverse Paths*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012. ISBN 978-0-8499-4724-7/

Rhodes, Ron, *The Challenge of the Cults and New Religions*, Zondervan, 2001
ISBN 978-0310232179

Rowe, David, *I Love Mormons: A New Way to Share Christ with Latter-day Saints*, Baker Books, 2005, ISBN 978-0801065224

Singer, Margaret T., *Cults in Our Midst*, revised ed. Jossey-Bass, 2003
ISBN 978-0787967413

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<p>1. Reading and Reading Interactions [33%] [Outcomes 1-3]</p>	<p>The reading assignments for this course are drawn from the six course texts. The specific chapters to be read for each week will be posted on the course web site. Please complete the reading prior to class time as the reading material forms the basis for understanding the lectures and class discussions. At the end of the course, students will be asked to verify that they have completed all of the assigned reading. <u>Failure to read all of the assigned material will result in the loss of one grade for the entire course.</u> There are also written interactions based on the reading that are due on specific dates. Both the reading interactions and their due dates will be posted on the course web site. Written interactions should be approximately one page (300 words) in length.</p>
<p>2. Final Exam [33%] [Outcomes 1-3]</p>	<p>Final Exam: A take-home final exam will be handed out on the last class session (Sept. 24th). The final exam is due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 10th. A study guide for the final exam will be posted on the course website.</p>
<p>3. Course Paper [33%] [Outcomes 1-3]</p>	<p>Students will write a 10-12 page paper that develops a Christian response to a major doctrine of a non-Christian religion or New Religious Movement (NRM). The religion or NRM may be one of those studied in the course or one of the student's own choosing. This paper will develop the response by applying material derived from course content. The topic must be approved by the instructor. Please submit your proposed topic on a full-size sheet of paper by Sept. 17th. A course paper grading rubric will be posted on the course website and provides details regarding the paper's content. It is essential to follow the rubric in order to maximize one's score. The paper is due by 5:00 p.m. Monday, Oct. 24th. More detail regarding this assignment is given in this syllabus under "Assignment Policies" p. 3.</p>

GRADING INFORMATION

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Description
A+	100–97	4.0	
A	96–93	4.0	Excellent; superior achievement.
A-	92–90	3.7	
B+	89–87	3.3	
B	86–83	3.0	Good; commendable achievement.
B-	82–80	2.7	

C+	79–77	2.3	
C	76–73	2.0	Satisfactory; acceptable achievement.
C-	72–70	1.7	
D+	69–67	1.3	
D	66–63	1.0	Poor; marginal achievement.
D-	62–60	0.7	
F	59–0	0.0	Failure to advance in the course. No credit earned. Computed in GPA.

SEMINARY ACADEMIC POLICIES

All Seminary policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Academic Catalog or Student Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

Assignment Policies

- All assignments (Reading Interactions, Final Exam, Course Paper) must be typed and must have a title page. Papers without a title page and/or are not typed will not be accepted.
- Papers must be typed, use a 12 pt. font, and be double-spaced.
- **Course Paper:** The bulk of the grade for the paper (85%) will be based on how well the student integrates material from the course to their paper topic. Course material should reflect both reading and class lecture and discussion and should be properly footnoted. 15% of the grade will be based on organization, clarity of expression and the proper use of grammar. The course paper grading rubric will provide details regarding the paper's content. **It is essential to follow the rubric in order to maximize one's score.** Papers may be longer than 12 pages, but no extra credit will be given for longer papers. Papers should conform to the instruction outlined in [Guidelines for Course Papers](http://www.ps.edu/download/Guidelines_for_Course_Papers.pdf) (see www.ps.edu/download/Guidelines_for_Course_Papers.pdf).
- Reading Interactions are to be submitted as hard copies. The final exam and course paper are to be submitted electronically.
- Except under extraordinary circumstances, late assignments will not be accepted. Should a student require an extension, the make-up date must be approved by the instructor.

Courteous Use of Technology in the Classroom (phone, tablet, laptop)

Phoenix Seminary considers a student's character to be evidenced in part by their respect for their classmates, professors, and their valuable time in class. Please consider *how not to be rude* in the use of your technology by bearing in mind the following:

- Laptops and tablets are welcome in class to take notes and to access readings we're discussing. Using them for anything else (social networking, accessing non-course related websites, checking email) is discourteous and distracting to others.
- Phones must be silenced in class and stowed. That includes turning off the vibrate function. (We can hear it buzzing.) Is texting ok? No. If an emergency situation exists out of which you feel you must use your phone you should quietly step out of class to do so.

COURSE SCHEDULE

August 19 – Session 1

1. Introduction to Course
2. Introduction to Religion/Ideology

August 20 – Session 2

1. Folk Religion
2. Judaism

August 27 – Session 3

1. Islam
2. Reading Interaction #1 due

September 3 – Labor Day Weekend

September 10 – Session 4

1. Hinduism
2. New Age
3. Buddhism
4. Reading Interaction #2 due

September 17 – Session 5

1. Introduction to Cults
2. Mormonism
3. Reading Interaction #3 due
4. Course Paper Topic is due

September 24 – Session 6

1. Jehovah's Witness
2. Neopagan Revivals
3. Reading Interaction #4 due
4. Final Exam distributed via email

October 10 – Final Exam due

October 24 – Course Paper due