PHIL 1304: Major World Religions  
Fall 2012

All Onground Sections  
Professor: John Wadhams  
Office/Hrs: N 207; 10:00-11:00am MW, 8:30-9:30, TR  
972.860.7072  
JWadhams@dcccd.edu

Description

This course surveys the major world religions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity are included. The history of these religions is covered, but the major emphasis is on current beliefs. Other topics may also be included, such as the nature of religion, tribal religion, and alternatives to religion. We accomplish this by means of a textbook, media, and Internet-based resources. (http://ecampus.dcccd.edu)

Texts

Required:  

Goals

(1) Introduce the content and concepts of the academic study of religions.  
(2) Develop conceptual and written analytical skills.  
(3) Encourage a lifelong appreciation for the academic study of religions.

As a result of successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

(1) Distinguish between academic and theological approaches to religions.  
(2) Identify, describe, and assess the central beliefs, practices, and figures of the major world religions.  
(3) Engage in critical self-analysis with respect to their encounter with other religious traditions.

Structure

The course will follow the chapter order of the textbook. In addition to the text, there will be a series of Practice Quizzes available on eCampus, from which the quiz/exam questions will be drawn.

Requirements

10 of 11 Chapter Quizzes (Scantron; 36 pts each; ‘weekly’) 360pts  
2 Unit Exams (100 pts each) 200pts  
Comprehensive Course Exam (Scantron) 150pts  
One 5-7 page reflection paper 180pts  
Discussion Board Posts/Participation (2pts/post) 110pts  
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mesquite-TX/WuWeiProf/178169398467

[Optional Extra Opportunity Exam (Net scoring; 100 pts max.)]

The course calendar/schedule is also available on our eCampus site under the Syllabus Tab.
Academic Integrity

There are number of ways to talk about what I have in mind. Usually, we speak of academic integrity in terms of certain behavioral expectations – what to do and/or what not to do. In part, that’s what I’ll do here. However, this approach often misses a more fundamental consideration – character. So, this section presents the sorts of character traits which are required in order to be successful in this class.

Engagement
Religious Studies is as much a matter of process as product. An engaged student will be present in class and will consistently participate in its conversation.

Responsibility
There are a number of assignments with associated due dates, as well as a number of opportunities to enhance your experience of PHIL 1304 on our eCampus site. A responsible student will be aware of, and will honor, those assignments and dates, in addition to doing as much as they can to develop their capacities to the fullest.

Honesty
Academic honesty is perhaps the most crucial characteristic of all. An honest student will not attempt to receive credit for work and/or ideas which are not their own. Beyond this, an honest student will see to it that credit is given where credit is due. To this end, all written assignments must include a written and signed Honor Pledge: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work.”

Grading

Course:

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<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>800-899pts</td>
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<tr>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 600pts</td>
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Unexcused absences will have the following effect on your final grade:

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<th>TR Absences</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6+</td>
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[2 tardies will count as an absence]

Any instance of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and may result in a course grade of F. Additional academic dishonesty will result in a course grade of F. Plagiarism on the Reflection Paper will result in a course grade of F.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, see the Reflection Paper Guidelines on our eCampus site, the Student Handbook at www.dcccd.edu, and/or ask me for clarification.

This syllabus is a working document and the professor reserves the right to revise it at any time.
Protocol

Absences are of two sorts: those you can foresee and those you can’t. Within these sorts, there are two kinds: excused and unexcused. Unforeseeable absences, beyond those already anticipated in the grading policy, will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, only with timely consultation with the professor. Foreseeable absences may be excused on a case-by-case basis only by prior consent of the professor and, again, only with timely consultation. Foreseeable absences will require additional work outside class in order to be considered excused. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their attendance status.

No make-ups are offered. Students who miss quizzes and/or Exams will need to take the Extra Opportunity Exam at the end of the semester in order to ‘make-up’ lost points. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their quiz/test/assignment grade status.

The last date to withdraw from this course and receive a grade of W is November 15, 2012. All students on the course roll after this date will receive a performance grade. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their enrollment status.

While it should go without saying, I will say it anyway: texts relevant to each class session must be brought with you to that class. I will be spot-checking throughout the semester – if you don’t have your text, you will be marked tardy for that class.

All written work must be computer/typewriter generated in Times New Roman 11-12pt font, double-spaced, with 1” margins, in black ink on white 8½” x 11” paper.

Cell phones, pagers, and other devices which might interfere with the class must be silenced or turned off before entering the classroom.

Students requesting accommodations due to the presence of a disability must identify themselves in a timely fashion and demonstrate/document the need for accommodation through the Disability Services Office (DSO). For information regarding the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities, contact DSO at 972/860-8348 voice/TDD.

Please note that grade reports are no longer mailed. Convenient access is available online (http://econnect.dcccd.edu) or by telephone (972.613.1818).

Students who are receiving any form of financial aid should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to provide guidelines for the educational environment of the Dallas County Community College System. Such an environment presupposes both rights and responsibilities. Disciplinary regulations at the college are set forth in writing in order to give students general notice of prohibited conduct. Students should be aware of disciplinary actions for all forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and collusion. The Eastfield College Catalog and the DCCC Catalog contain the entire Student Code of Conduct, which is also on the internet at http://www/dcccd.edu.

In case of emergency or inclement weather conditions, Eastfield students should listen to KEOM-FM Radio (88.5FM) as the primary media source. In partnership with the Mesquite Independent School
District, Eastfield College Administration will notify KEOM immediately after a decision is made to cancel classes on any given day of inclement weather or for emergency purposes. Students may also monitor other local radio and television stations. The earliest an announcement may be broadcast on KEOM Radio is 6 a.m. Students may also refer to the Eastfield college web page www.eastfieldcollege.com for the Inclement Weather announcement under the Features area of the front page. **The announcement will be posted immediately following the decision to close the college.**

Pending legislative action and DCCCD Board approval, effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in higher tuition charges. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 semester. For complete information and updates, go to: [http://www.dcccd.edu/ThirdCourseAttempt/](http://www.dcccd.edu/ThirdCourseAttempt/).

For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions. Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access: [https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops](https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops)

Legal privacy issues prevent your instructor from discussing your work or your grades on commercial e-mail accounts. If you wish to send your papers as attachments to an e-mail (and the instructor permits it), or if you have a questions about your grade, you must open a student e-mail account. The account is free. You may set it up by going to [www.dcccd.edu](http://www.dcccd.edu) and clicking on Student Services, OnLine Services, and Student NetMail. All students receiving financial aid must open a NetMail account.

Students who will be absent from class for the observance of a religious holiday must notify the instructor in advance. Please refer to the college catalog section on **Student Responsibilities.**

Eastfield College has a zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment. All students shall report complaints of sexual harassment informally to the college Human Resources Director or formally to the Vice Chancellor of Educational Affairs.
PHIL 1304 is a part of the Core Curriculum and addresses the following Exemplary Educational Objectives and Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies as set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

**Exemplary Educational Objectives in Religion**

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
4. To articulate and informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

**Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies**

1. Reading – the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials – books, documents, and articles – above 12th grade level.
2. Writing – the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience – above 12th grade level.
3. Speaking – the ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience – above 12th grade level.
4. Listening – analyze and interpret various forms of spoken communication, possess sufficient literacy skills of writing, reading – above 12th grade level.
5. Critical Thinking – think and analyze at a critical level.
What have you gotten yourselves into? The world of PHIL 1304

Unit I. RELIGIOUS STUDIES: What Is It and How Is It Done?

‘Major’ ‘World’ ‘Religions’
“What about…?”
Methodology
Quiz 1

Early and Eastern Traditions

Animism  
Quiz 2  
MPMF Chapter 2

Hinduism  
Quiz 3  
MPMF Chapter 3

Buddhism  
Quiz 4  
MPMF Chapter 4

Taoism  
Confucianism & Shinto  
Quiz 5  
MPMF Chapter 5

Review
Unit I Exam

Unit II. Western Traditions

Intro to the West  
Quiz 6  
Grade Unit I Exam, MPMF Chapter 6

Judaism  
Quiz 7  
MPMF Chapter 7

Christianity  
Quiz 8  
MPMF Chapter 8

Islam  
Quiz 9  
MPMF Chapter 9

Review
Unit II Exam

Looking Ahead  
Grade Unit II Exam; MPMF Chapter 10 & Chapter 11

Quiz 10
Quiz 11

Reflection Paper – November 30, 2012 submitted through eCampus by 6:00pm CST

Comprehensive Course Exam – December 5 (MWF); December 6 (TR)

Wadhams


Finals Week Schedule

TBD

Information for Sections 4001, 4002, 4003

Due to the class schedule of these sections, there are online assignments which must be completed IN ADDITION TO the Requirements listed on the first page of this syllabus. These additional assignments will be treated as attendance items – which means that each non-completed assignment will count as an absence, with its associated consequences.
Reflection Paper Guidelines
PHIL 1304

Select two religions from those presented in our textbook (and listed below), one from the Eastern traditions and one from the Western. Reflect on, and respond to, the following questions in no less than 5 full pages - double-spaced, 11-12pt Times New Roman font, 1” margins all-around:

(1) What are the most significant/distinctive aspects of the Eastern religion you have chosen to reflect upon? (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, or Shinto)

(2) What are the most significant/distinctive aspects of the Western religion you have chosen to reflect upon? (Judaism, Christianity, or Islam)

(3) In what way(s) are these religions similar?

(4) In what way(s) are these religions dissimilar?

(5) In what way(s), if any, might learning about this religion influence your perspective toward your own religion? [This question should be answered in one very short paragraph.]

In addition to matters of spelling and grammar, your paper will be evaluated in terms of its specificity, examples, and insight. Be sure to include significant theoretical/doctrinal information about each religion you’ve selected. Practical and sociological elements are important and should be included – but the main emphasis here is on your grasp of the theoretical/doctrinal ‘unique-ness’ of these religions (in other words, ‘what makes it what it is’ – for example, what it is that makes Islam, Islam; or Buddhism, Buddhism; or Christianity, Christianity). The boldface words in your textbook can provide some initial sense of what’s important/significant – but understand that not all boldface words are equal. Part of your assignment involves determining which concepts are most significant/distinctive, so choose wisely and insightfully. Many students have found that focusing on the unique beliefs/worldviews/concepts of each religion is a very helpful means to ‘weigh’ concepts.

In terms of form and style, there is no need for either a cover or works cited page. In addition, you can dispense with customary essay style – there’s no need for an introduction or conclusion. Just answer the questions in order, using a transitional sentence to introduce your response to each question. For example, “Buddhism teaches that…” or “Taoism’s Three Pure Ones resemble the Christian Trinity but are actually very different…” or “Another similarity involves…” Do NOT write out the questions!

Remember that your paper is to be written in your own words and is to reflect your own thoughts about what you learned from the textbook. Accordingly, including any material other than your own work or cited quotes/paraphrases from the text (by page number) will constitute academic dishonesty and will result in a grade of F for the course. In other words – no outside sources…period. Here’s an example of an adequate citation: “Islam has five pillars…” (987). Using material from the text which isn’t in quotation marks and isn’t cited is plagiarism – and will result in your receiving an F in this course.

The minimum length for this paper is 5 FULL pages – half and three-quarter pages do not count as full pages. Papers under this minimum length will NOT receive any credit whatsoever, so be very sure that you have formatted your paper as required – no extra lines between paragraphs, no extra spacing after paragraphs, 1” margins on the top, bottom, and both sides…do NOT waste space! Put your name and class information in the upper right hand corner of the Header – for example: John Wadhams, Spring 2011 (all on one line!). In order to be sure that you have fulfilled the educational goals of this course, I am VERY strict about your actually producing 5 FULL pages – so be VERY careful not to lose credit for this paper because you didn’t follow my formatting requirements to the letter!

Save your work as an .rtf or .doc file and submit it through the link on the Reflection Paper page.
### PHIL 1304: Major World Religions
#### Grade Worksheet

#### Quizzes

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*Quiz Total: _____*

#### Unit Exams

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*Unit Exam Total: _____*

#### Paper

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#### Course Exam

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*Total Points: _____*

#### Absences

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*Total Absences: _____*