SYLLABUS

DATE OF LAST REVIEW: 02/2013
CIP CODE: 24.0101
SEMESTER: Departmental Syllabus
COURSE TITLE: Comparative World Religions
COURSE NUMBER: HUMN0207
CREDIT HOURS: 3
INSTRUCTOR: Departmental Syllabus
OFFICE LOCATION: Departmental Syllabus
OFFICE HOURS: Departmental Syllabus
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KCKCC issued email accounts are the official means for electronically communicating with our students.

PREREQUISITES: None

REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS: Please check with the KCKCC bookstore, http://www.kckccbookstore.com/, for the required texts for your particular class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course examines the six dimensions of religion: experiential, mythic, ritual, doctrinal, ethical, and social. The focus is on the inter-relatedness among the six dimensions and how people live their lives in a religiously pluralistic society. The major world religions studied are Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:
A variety of instructional methods may be used depending on content area. These include but are not limited to: lecture, multimedia, cooperative/collaborative learning, labs and demonstrations, projects and presentations, speeches, debates, and panels, conferencing, performances, and learning experiences outside the classroom. Methodology will be selected to best meet student needs.

COURSE OUTLINE:
I. The Nature of Religion
A. Psychological and emotional functions
B. Philosophical and intellectual functions
C. Cultural and social functions

II. The Role of Religious Studies in an Educational Environment
   A. Religious pluralism
   B. Recent Supreme Court rulings pertaining to the educational role of studying about religion
   C. Albanese: ordinary and extraordinary functions

III. Six dimensions of studying world religions: Experiential, Mythic, Ritual, Doctrinal, Ethical, and Social

IV. Experiential Dimensions
   A. Types of religious experiences
   B. Descriptions/interpretations of religious experiences
   C. Religious experiences for a Hare Krishna devotee
   D. Religious experience for a traditional Hindu
      1. Differences/similarities between Christian and Hindu groups
      2. Differences/similarities between Hare Krishna and Hindu groups
   E. Religious experiences for a Buddhist devotee
      1. The life of the Buddha
      2. The four Noble Truths
      3. The noble Eight-Fold Path
   F. The Religious Quest/Path of the Seeker
      1. Religion inside and outside religious organizations
      2. Three styles of religion
         a. Belief style-aligned with organized religion
         b. Communal style
         c. Seeker style-both in/out of organized religion

V. Mythic Dimensions
   A. Myths and Truth
      1. Functions of myths
      2. Myths of alienation/loss of paradise
      3. Eschatological myths
   B. The Mythic Dimension of Judaism
      1. Myth and rites of passage
      2. Myth and covenant
      3. Creation, liberation and giving of the law
   C. The Mythic Dimension of Civil Religion
      1. Its functions in American society
      2. Principal features of rituals
      3. Types/roles of symbols

VI. Ritual Dimension
   A. Primal Religions
      1. Characteristics of primal religions
      2. Features of primal religion
         a. Mana
         b. Animism
c. Fetishism

3. Ritual Techniques
   a. Magic
   b. Shamanism
   c. Purification
   d. Sacrifice

B. Difference between the monist and dualist perceptions of reality

C. Ritual in neo-pagan practices

D. Mind/body split in Western Culture
   a. Christianity
      1. Key Christian beliefs/branches
      2. Roles of ritual within the Christian Community of faith
         a. Roman Catholic
         b. Eastern Orthodox
         c. Protestantism

VII. Doctrinal Dimension
   A. Protestantism
      1. Doctrines and “boundary” questions
      2. Faith, authority and doctrines
      3. Functions of doctrine
      4. Doctrines: static or dynamic in culture
   B. Conservative Christianity
      1. Fundamentalism in U.S. history
      2. Racism and religion
      3. Sexism and religion
      4. Religion, politics, and the Nation of Islam

VIII. Ethical Dimension
   A. The Ethical Process
      1. Ethical laws: law, customs, minds
      2. Ethics as patterns of action
      3. Difference between religious and secular ethics
   B. Human and Environmental Rights
      1. The gospel of ecology and its ethical impact
      2. Religious overtones in the environmental Movement
   C. Christian Science and the ethical dimension

IX. Social Dimension
   A. Dilemmas of Institutionalization
      1. The secularization process
      2. Religious ecology and the Institutional Church
   B. New Religious Movements
      1. Secularization and religious organizations
      2. Types of religious organizations: church, denominations, sect, cult
      3. Baha’i World Faith
      4. New Age Religious
   C. Far Eastern Religions
      1. Confucianism
a. Confucian values: Jen, Chun, Tzu, Li, Te, Wen
b. Relationships: East and West
c. Taoism and balance in life

D. New Visions
   1. Conventional and non-conventional religions
   2. Religious pluralism

E. Unitarian – Universalists as an inclusive world view

X. Summary of course:
   A. Review of major themes in course
   B. Ninian Smart’s six dimensions
   C. Benefits/rewards for the course

EXPECTED LEARNER OUTCOMES:
A. The learner will be able to identify the six dimensions of religion.
B. The learner will be able to discuss the importance of each of the six dimensions either orally or in writing.
C. The learner will be able to compare/contrast the six dimensions in two or more of the religions studied in the class.
D. The learner will be able to define religion as a part of human culture.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

The learner will be able to identify the six dimensions of religion.

1. The learner will be able to identify and describe the seven major world religions studied in the class according to the six dimensions listed above.
2. The learner will discuss the Dimensional Triangle.

The learner will be able to discuss the importance of each of the six dimensions either orally or in writing.

3. The learner will be able to discuss gained personal insights into the nature of religion.

The learner will be able to compare/contrast the six dimensions in two or more of the religions studied in the class.

4. The learner will be able to identify and describe the distinguishing characteristics of each of the seven major world religions studies in the class.
5. The learner will describe similarities and differences among the beliefs, traditions, and practices of major world religions.
6. The learner will describe the practices and beliefs of Hinduism and the historical impact on Indian society.
7. The learner will describe the principles and practices of Buddhism and the historical impact on Buddhist society.
8. The learner will describe the roles of ethics and religious beliefs in Confucianism and its historical impact on Chinese society.
9. The learner will describe the practices and beliefs of Taoism and the historical impact on Chinese society.
10. The learner will describe Islamic theology and practices and the historical impact in the Middle East.
11. The learner will describe Judaic doctrine and theology and how it has influenced Jewish traditions and practices.
12. The learner will describe Christian theology and its variations, especially in Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and in Protestantism.
13. The learner will state the beliefs of the Christian Fundamentalists.
14. The Learner will describe the theology of Native American primal religion.
15. The learner will be able to describe the primal religious community of Diana’s Grove.
16. The learner will distinguish the differences between Monist and Dualist religious perspectives.
17. The learner will examine the changing theology of African-American Islam.
18. The learner will examine the Ramtha School of Enlightenment.
19. The learner will describe the unique features of Old Order Amish religious beliefs.
20. The learner will describe the history and theology of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.
21. The learner will discuss the ethical conflicts among the dominant religions of the Middle East.
22. The learner will discuss the concept of “rites of passage” among organized religion.

*The learner will be able to define religion as a part of human culture.*

23. The learner will be able to understand the nature of religion and the role of religious studies in an educational environment.
24. The learner will be able to comment on the new directions in religious studies in higher education.
25. The learner will be better informed about the place of religion in a pluralistic society.
26. The learner will be tolerant of religious beliefs different from your own.
27. The learner will understand the role of civil religion in American life.
28. The learner will understand the multicultural characteristics of religion in American Life.
29. The learner will describe the influence of world religions on social, economic, and political developments.
30. The learner will describe the historical impact of Christianity on the western world.

**ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER OUTCOMES:**
Short answer assignments, examinations, attendance and class participation.

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Material included is intended to provide an outline of the course and rules that the instructor will adhere to in evaluating the student’s progress. However, this syllabus is not intended to be a legal contract. Questions regarding the syllabus are welcome any time.
Kansas City Kansas Community College is committed to an appreciation of diversity with respect for the differences among the diverse groups comprising our students, faculty, and staff that is free of bigotry and discrimination. Kansas City Kansas Community College is committed to providing a multicultural education and environment that reflects and respects diversity and that seeks to increase understanding.

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