

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE
WORLD RELIGIONS – ICS 2015
Spring 2009

Professor: David Fenrick
Tuesday, Thursday: 11:20 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Classroom: Riley 2114

Office: Naz. 4116
Hours: T, TR: 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Email: defenrick@nwc.edu

*The best students of religion usually believe that
their religion is the right and true one.*

~ Dr. Terry Muck

*“Men hate each other because they fear each other;
they fear each other because they do not know each other;
they do not know each other because they do not communicate;
they do not communicate because they are separate.”*

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*“Go to the people, live among them,
learn from them, love them.
Start with what they know,
build on what they have.”*

~ Old Chinese Proverb

I. Course Description:

In this course, we undertake a critical study of present-day non-Christian religions concentrating on traditional religions (native & folk), Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. A study of the origin, history, and basic tenets of each of these religious traditions of the world are explored. Basic religious study skills are learned and research projects are undertaken on one or more of these religions so that we will learn to interact appropriately, build relationships, and share our faith effectively with the followers of the major non-Christian religions and belief systems. Particular attention is given to the presence and impact of these and other religions in North America and what this means for the Church of Jesus Christ. Consequently, relationships to Christianity and questions of missionary approach are explored.

II. Course Objectives:

1. We will be able to prepare summaries of each of the religions studied during the semester, demonstrating knowledge of the history, core beliefs, and practices of each religious tradition.
2. We will be able to do field research into a religion's worship practice and behavior.
3. We will learn to interview people about their religious beliefs, and engage in vulnerable dialogue and witness with our neighbors of other faiths.

4. We will be able to compare and contrast discrete elements of religious belief systems.
5. We will gain an understanding of the presence, impact and future of non-Christian religions in the world today and how this relates to the life and ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ.
6. We will begin learning how to perceive where the Holy Spirit is at work in people of other faiths in order to be effective Christian witnesses in words and actions in a religiously pluralistic world.
7. We will learn how to share what is learned in this course with other adult Christians so as to enable them to live as part of a community of Christian witness in the world.

III. Required Textbooks:

Corduan, Winfried

1998 Neighboring Faiths: A Christian Introduction to World Religions. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Dawood, N.J., trans.

2002 The Koran. New York: Penguin Classics.

Hirji-Walji, Hassanain

1993 Bittersweet Freedom. Eden Prairie, MN: Bind-A-Book, Inc.

Miller, Barbara Stoller, trans.

1986 The Bhagavad-Gita. New York: Bantam Books.

Muck, Terry C.

2005 How to Study Religion: A Beginning Guide to Method. Wilmore, KY: Wood Hill Books.

Radice, Betty, ed.

1973 The Dhammapada. London: Penguin Classics.

IV. Additional Required Readings: (Handouts in class & on Moodle site)

Eck, Diana L.

2001 "Introduction to a New America." In A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation. San Francisco: Harper.

Zahniser, A. H. Mathais

1994 "Close Encounters of the Vulnerable Kind: Christian Dialogical Proclamation Among Muslims." The Asbury Theological Journal. 49(1):71-77.

2002 "Christian Witness in a Marketplace of Cultured Alternatives." Missiology: An International Review. 30(2):147-153.

V. **Structure of Course:**

My basic educational philosophy is that greater understanding takes place through **active** rather than passive learning. This is especially true at the college level where you must take greater responsibility for your learning. In other words, YOU are responsible for what you learn in this course. MY responsibility is to facilitate that learning. Therefore, **active participation** will be expected and rewarded. Our learning experience will make use of lectures, videos, guest presenters, classroom and small group discussions, and team projects involving experiential research - - service-learning, observant participation, interviews, etc. This course will focus on experiential learning, that is, a community learning process involving both our “hearts and heads.” We will learn from one another and be in “conversation” with Scripture, authors, researchers, people from other cultures, and missionaries in our community and world. Since we are all co-learners (yes, me too!) and, therefore, dependent on one another, **your active participation is essential** for an effective learning community and environment!

VII. **Course Requirements:**

1. Interaction Papers – submitted at the beginning of class	25%
2. Class Participation - reflection on readings, research, films, guest speakers, field trips, and in-class assignments/activities, etc.	10%
3. Exercises	25%
4. Moodle reflections on visits to world religious centers	15%
5. Final Research Paper	25%
TOTAL	100%

VIII. **Guidelines for Assignments:**

1. *Interaction Papers* on the assigned readings are due at the beginning of class on the first class period of the week – usually on Tuesdays. They will be graded “√+, √, √-” (4,3,2 points). They should reflect your “conversation” with the author - expressing new insights and how those insights will be applied to your life and Christian witness. Interaction papers must be type-written. (See Interaction Form at end of syllabus.)
2. *Class participation* is very important for the learning of everyone. Discussion is a major part of our learning process. Everyone is expected to complete the assigned readings and come to class prepared for discussion. There will also be in-class activities that are important for our learning process.
3. *Exercises* are submitted on the days noted in the class schedule below. See page 8 at the end of the syllabus for directions to the exercises. Come to class prepared to present your research on the day exercises are due.
4. Small groups will be organized during the 2nd week of class. Small groups will provide a support community for prayer, sharing, and research discussion.

5. *Visits to Religious Centers:* Throughout the semester we will visit several non-Christian “houses of worship” or religious study centers, such as, a Jewish synagogue, an Islamic Center, etc. Every effort will be made for these visits to take place *during the chapel hour and our scheduled class period*, but there may be exceptions due the availability of our hosts. ***Dates on the schedule are tentative.***

The most effective way to learn is to improve listening and dialogue skills through interaction with people of other religions. The purpose of the visits to other “houses of worship” and religious study centers is to learn experientially what is being studied in class and the readings. **These experiences are mandatory!** A virtual discussion will take place on Moodle following each field trip. Due to the large size of our class, discussions will take place in our small groups. Everyone is required to participate and respond to the comments of at least three group members. The virtual discussions of other groups will also be visible for consideration in your particular group. I will post questions in our Moodle Forum to begin our discussion. The following are other questions that could be considered for discussion:

- a) What did you learn about the religion from the experience?
- b) How do the followers of this religion see and interpret the world?
- c) What did you observe about the place of worship/sacred space, religious practices, dress, etc.?
- d) What personal stories did you hear?
- e) What challenges did you encounter in communicating? Were there misunderstandings specifically due to culture and religious worldview? How did you work through the cultural and communication challenges?
- f) What new things did you learn?
- g) Did you learn and/or experience anything that was different than what you expected or learned from the our readings?
- h) How will this experience impact your life and ministry?

6. ***Final Research Paper: Compare and Contrast.*** Do a religious studies comparison along the lines described in class and in Muck, Chapter 7. Final papers must be double-spaced, 7-8 pages (plus bibliography), and in the accepted style and form of Northwestern College.

MANDATORY STATEMENT ON DISABILITY OFFICE OF SUPPORT SERVICES (DOSS/CAPSS):

NWC students requiring accommodations for academic support or support for other reasons in association with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are directed to notify the Disabilities Office of Support Services (DOSS) immediately. Accommodations must receive prior approval. Confidentiality is respected! ADA accommodations are processed through the DOSS office, which is under the direction of The Center of Academic Programs for Support Services (CAPSS).

*Contact Mr. David Golias, DOSS Coordinator
651-286-7446, dpgolias@nwc.edu*

or

*Dr. Yvonne RB-Banks, Director of CAPSS
651-631-5221, yrbanks@nwc.edu*

IX. Class Schedule and Assigned Readings

Completed readings and assignments must be turned in by the due dates.

CLASS SESSIONS	DAY	TOPICS	READING & ASSIGNMENTS
Week One 1/13 1/15	T TR	Other Religions In Our Neighborhoods 1. Introduction to the Course & Each Other 2. A New Religious America - The World Comes to Our Own Backyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eck Article • Muck: Intro & Chap. 1 • Corduan: Intro & Chap. 1 • Interaction Paper (1/20)
Week Two 1/20 1/22	T TR	How to Study Religion I 1. Why Study Religions? 2. Three Views of Religion 3. The Religious Studies Attitude 4. The Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muck: Chapters 2 & 3 • Start Exercise #1 – Due 2/3
Week Three 1/27 1/29 1/30	T TR F	Judaism 1. Video: “Judaism: The Chosen People” 2. Judaism: History 3. Judaism: Beliefs & Practices 4. Evening Field Trip to Synagogue – Sabbath Service Depart NWC at 6:30 pm – Sharp!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corduan: Chapter 2 • Read: Genesis & Exodus (Bible) • Interaction Paper • Begin Reading the Qu’ran
Week Four 2/3 2/5	T TR	How to Study Religion II 1. Reflection & Analysis of Field Trip 2. The Role of Worldview and Culture 3. Religious Elements of Culture 4. Determining a Religious Study Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise #1 – Due 2/3 • Field Trip Reflection on Moodle • Muck: Chapter 4 • Start Exercise #2 – Due 3/3
Week Five 2/10 2/12 2/14	T TR F	Islam 1. Video: “Muhammad – Prophet of Islam” 2. Islam: History 3. Islam: Beliefs and Practices Video Clips: “Friday Prayers at the Mosque” 4. Field Trip to Islamic Center (Depart XXX Sharp!)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corduan: Chapter 3 • Read Qu’ran • Interaction Paper

CLASS SESSIONS	DAY	TOPICS	READING & ASSIGNMENTS
Week Six 2/17	T	5. Reflection & Analysis of Field Trip 6. Islam: Beliefs & Discussion of Qu'ran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Reading Qu'ran Field Trip Reflection on Moodle
2/19	TR	<p style="text-align: center;">Hinduism</p> 1. Video: "India – The Empire of the Spirit" 2. Hinduism: History	
Week Seven 2/24	T	3. Hinduism: Beliefs – 330 Millions Gods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corduan: Chapter 7 Bhagavad-Gita Interaction Paper
2/26	TR	4. Field Trip to Hindu Temple (Depart at 10:25 am)	
Week Eight 3/3	T	5. Reflection and Analysis of Field Trip 6. Discussion on Exercise #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise #2 – Due 3/3
3/5	TR	No Class – Spring Break	
Week Nine 3/10	T	No Class – Spring Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin Reading "Bittersweet Freedom" Begin Reading the Dhammapada
3/12	TR		
Week Ten 3/17	T	<p style="text-align: center;">Buddhism</p> 1. Video: "The Life of the Buddha"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corduan: Chapter 8 & 11 Finish Dhammapada Interaction Paper
3/19	TR	2. Buddhism: History & Beliefs	
Week Eleven 3/24	T	3. Field Trip to Buddhist Center (Depart at 10:25 am)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Trip Reflection on Moodle
3/26	TR	4. Reflection & Analysis of Field Trip Video Clips: "Land of the Disappearing Buddha"	
Week Twelve 3/31	T	<p style="text-align: center;">How to Study Religion III</p> 1. How to Talk to Someone About Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muck: Chapter 5 & 6 Finish "Bittersweet Freedom" Start Exercise #3 – Due 4/9
4/2	TR	2. How to Talk to Someone About Religion Guest Speaker: Hassanain Hirji-Walji Author of "Bittersweet Freedom"	

CLASS SESSIONS	DAY	TOPICS	READING & ASSIGNMENTS
Week Thirteen 4/7 4/9	T TR	Chinese Popular Religions Taoism & Confucianism 1. Video: "A Question of Balance" 2. Taoism: History & Beliefs 3. Taoism & Confucianism: History & Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corduan: Chapter 10 • Interaction Paper • Exercise #3 – Due 4/9
Week Fourteen 4/14 4/16	T TR	Traditional Religions 1. Video Clips: "Animist Religions" 2. Traditional Religions: Beliefs & Practices No Class – Study Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corduan: Chapter 5, 6, 9 • Interaction Paper
Week Fifteen 4/21 4/23	T TR	Sharing The Gospel in a Religiously Pluralistic World 1. Inter-Faith/Religious Dialogue & Witness 2. Sharing the Gospel Through Deep Friendships Guest Speaker: John Spaulding, Missionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zahniser Articles • Interaction Paper
Week Sixteen 4/28 4/30	T TR	No Class: Day of Prayer and Service 3. The Twin Cities: Religious Cross-Roads Guest Speaker: John Mayer, City Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muck: Chapters 7, 8, 9
Week Seventeen 5/5 5/7	T TR	How to Study Religion IV 1. Comparing and Contrasting Religious Traditions 2. How to Go On Studying Religions No Class: Work on Final Research Papers Due Wednesday, 5/13, 12 Noon!!!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Exercise #4 – Due 5/13
Finals Week 5/13	W	Final Research Papers Due – 12 Noon!!!	

X. Exercises

Exercise #1 - A Three View Church Visit. Write three, one-page (typewritten, double-spaced) descriptions of a religious service you have attended. (See page 9 for a list of churches.) One of the descriptions should be from the insider's stance, one from a reporter's stance, and one from a specialist's stance (for the latter, choose the viewpoint of the psychologist, the sociologist, the anthropologist, or the philosopher). Read Muck, Chapter 2.

Due February 3.

Exercise #2 - Isolate a Religious Event. Choose a religious subject of interest to you. Using the library, write a description of the time period of the subject (its beginnings and history, and what time period your study focuses on), the context of the subject (the role it played or plays in its culture), and the function and importance of the subject in its particular religious system. Write a four-page (typewritten, double-spaced) paper. Read Muck, Chapter 4.

Due March 3.

Exercise #3 - Interview. Interview a classmate or friend about a religious topic. Plan on a twenty-minute interview, and then write up the results in a 4-5 paged paper (typewritten, double-spaced). Include in the paper a statement of the interview time, location, and subject, and both a physical and biographical description of the interviewee. End with a transcript or summary of the interview itself, in question and answer format.

The topic of the interview could be one of many different things. Consider the following set of questions, based on issues raised in James McClendon's book, Biography As Theology (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1990), as one possibility:

5. What are your main spiritual and theological images? (For example, if the subject is a Christian, you might ask her or him to consider Jesus: Is your mental image of Jesus on the cross? In Gethsemane? Preaching? Caring for the sick? etc.)
6. How do these key images apply to your life?
7. How do your images apply to your religious community's life?
8. What parts of your religious tradition are most important to your spiritual life? Give examples.
9. What parts of your tradition are not so important to your spiritual life? Example?

Feel free to try some different approaches to the interview. Read Muck, Chapter 5.

Due April 9.

FINAL EXAM: Exercise #4 - Compare and Contrast. Do a religious studies comparison along the lines described in class and in Muck, Chapter 7. Write 4-5 typewritten, double-spaced pages.

Due May 13 at 12 Noon.

XI. Churches for Visitation and Study

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Father Jonathan Proctor
956 Forest Street
St. Paul 55106
651-771-5614
www.htoc.us

Solomon's Porch

Rev. Doug Pagitt
100 W. 46th Street
Minneapolis 55419
612-874-6555
www.solomonsporch.com

St. Paul's Roman Catholic Cathedral

Bishop John Nienstedt
226 Summit Avenue
St. Paul 55102
651-291-4400
www.archspm.org

Seed of Abraham Messianic Church

Rabbi Ed Rothman
9500 Minnetonka Blvd.
St. Louis Park 55426
952-926-6226
www.seedofabraham.org

St. Mary's Basilica

Father Michael O'Connell
Corner of N. 17 Street and Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis
612-333-1381
www.mary.org

Kehilat Sar Shalom

Rabbi Stanley Farr
225 Cleveland Avenue South
St. Paul 55417
651-690-2941
www.rabbiyechua.com

Free At Last Church of God in Christ

Pastors Joseph and Adrea' Webb
200 W. 7th Street
St. Paul 55101
651-290-9433
www.freeatlastchurch.org

Bethel Christian Fellowship

Pastors – Jim Olson & Harrison Williams
1466 Portland Avenue
St. Paul 55104
651-645-1534
www.bcfnations.org

St. Katherine Ukrainian Orthodox Church

Rev. Peter Siwko
1600 Hwy. 96 West
Arden Hills 55112
651-697-1995
www.siwko.tripod.com

Upper Room at Christ Presbyterian

Pastor Kurt Vickman
6901 Normandale Road
Minneapolis 55435
952-920-8515
www.upperroomcommunity.org

Bibliography

(* = Highly Recommended)

- *Armstrong, Karen
1996 Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bourdillon, M.F.C.
1990 Religion and Society: A Text for Africa. Harare, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press.
- *Bussell, Harold
1994 By Hook or By Crook: How Cults Lure Christians. New York: McCracken Press.
- *Corduan, Winfried
2002 A Tapestry of Faiths: The Common Threads Between Christianity and World Religions. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- *Crim, Keith, editor
1981 The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions. San Francisco: Harper.
- Demant, Peter R.
2006 Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- *Eck, Diana L.
2002 A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation. San Francisco: Harper.
- Ellwood, Robert S. and Barbara A. McGraw
1999 Many Peoples, Many Faiths: Women and Men in World Religions. 6th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Fisher, Mary Pat
2008 Living Religions. Seventh Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson
- Griffiths, Paul J.
1990 Christianity Through Non-Christian Eyes. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Halverson, Dean C., editor
1995 The Compact Guide to World Religions. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers.
- Hexham, Irving and Karla Poewe
1997 New religions as Global Cultures. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- *Hiebert, Paul G., R. Daniel Shaw and Tite Tienou
 1999 Understanding Folk Religion. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark ed.
 2006 The Oxford handbook of Global Religions. Oxford: University Press.
- Karabell, Zachary
 2007 Peace Be Upon You: The Story of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Coexistence. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- *Knitter, Paul F.
 1985 No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Leaman, Oliver
 2004 The Qur'an: The Basics. London: Routledge.
- Martinson, Paul Varo, ed.
 1994 Islam: An Introduction for Christians. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- *Miller, Roland E.
 1996 Muslim Friends: Their Faith and Feelings. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House.
- *Muck, Terry C.
 1991 Alien Gods on American Turf: How World Religions are Evangelizing Your Neighborhood. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
 1992 Those Other Religions in Your Neighborhood: Loving Your Neighbor When You Don't Know How. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.
- *Muck, Terry C. and Frances S. Adeney
 2009 Christianity Encountering World Religions: The Practice of Mission in the 21st Century. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Nacos, Brigitte L. and Oscar Torres-Reyna
 2006 Fueling Our fears: Stereotyping, Media Coverage, and Public Opinion of Muslim Americans. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- *Nida, Eugene A.
 1990 Message and Mission: The Communication of the Christian Faith. Revised Edition. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Neusner, Jacob
 2006 Judaism: The Basics. London: Routledge.
- O'Donnell, Kevin
 2007 Inside World Religions. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

- Oxtoby, Willard G. and Alan F. Segal, ed.
 2007 A Concise History of World Religions. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.
- Peters, F.E.
 2007 The Voice, The Word, The Books: The Sacred Scripture of the Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- *Pillai, Rajendra K.
 2003 Reaching the World in Our Own Backyard: A Guide to Building Relationships with People of Other Faiths and Cultures. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press.
- Ramadan, Tariq
 2007 In The Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad. Oxford: University Press.
- Rausch, David A. and Carl Hermann Voss
 1989 World Religions: Our Quest for Meaning. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- *Reitenbach, Gail
 2006 How My Neighbor Worships: A Grand Tour of Faith Communities. Santa Fe, NM: Right Hand Communications.
- Rogerson, Barnaby
 2006 The Heirs of Muhammad: Islam's First Century and the Origins of the Sunni-Shia Split. New York: The Overlook Press.
- Turner, Colin
 2006 Islam: The Basics. London: Routledge.
- Wessels, Anton
 2000 Understanding the Qur'an. London: SCM Press.
- Wouk, Herman
 1988 [1959] This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life. Boston: Back Bay Books.
- Zacharias, Ravi
 2001 Jesus Among Other Gods. Nashville: Word Publishing.
- *Zahniser, A.H. Mathias
 1997 Symbol and Ceremony: Making Disciples Across Cultures. Monrovia, CA: MARC.
 2008 Mission and Death of Jesus in Islam and Christianity: Faith Meets Faith. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

INTERACTION FORM

World Religions – ICS 2015

Spring 2009

Name: _____

MC#: _____

Title of Reading: _____

Section/Pages: _____

Author: _____

Date: _____

Your Evaluation [1-10] _____ (10 = high)

Brief Summary (paragraph):

What new insights have you gained from this reading? (Do as many as fit you.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How can these insights be applied to your own life in relation to nurturing relationships and Christian witness with people of other religions?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Are there problems or questions that have been raised for which you would like help and/or discussion in class?