

RLST A151: EARLY AND WESTERN RELIGIONS

Item	Value
Curriculum Committee Approval Date	12/02/2020
Top Code	151000 - Religious Studies
Units	3 Total Units
Hours	54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54)
Total Outside of Class Hours	0
Course Credit Status	Credit: Degree Applicable (D)
Material Fee	No
Basic Skills	Not Basic Skills (N)
Repeatable	No
Grading Policy	Standard Letter (S)
Associate Arts Local General Education (GE)	• OC Humanities - AA (OC1)
Associate Science Local General Education (GE)	• OCC Humanities - AS (OSC2)
California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)	• Cal-GETC 3B Humanities (3B)
Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)	• IGETC 3B Humanities (3B)
California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth)	• CSU C2 Humanities (C2)

Course Description

Surveys religion in western history from paleolithic beginnings through development of the western monotheisms: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Major figures and historical periods in the evolution of Western faiths, and impact of these worldviews globally today. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC.

Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Apply dimensional analysis to the development of modern monotheism.
2. Trace the religious impulse from the earliest religions through western monotheisms

Course Objectives

- 1. Explain early human religious activities
- 2. Identify what is considered as religious activity.
- 3. Explain the dimensions of religion generally.
- 4. Describe the historical development and inter-relatedness of the three major Western monotheisms.
- 5. Articulate a description of the modern manifestations of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.
- 6. Analyze the influence of the various monotheistic religions on societies and the globe today
- 7. Analyze the three major monotheisms in relation to the dimensions of religion
- 8. Compare and contrast rituals in the major monotheisms

Lecture Content

1. Introduction to the nature of religion Dimensions of religion: Ritual, mythic, experiential, social, ethical, doctrinal, What counts as religious activity Earliest human religious activity Aboriginals of Australia, 40,000 years ago Dreamtime and expressions in rock art Uluru (Ayers Rock) as ancient sacred space; (resacralization in 2019) Cave art in Europe Nature, purpose, presumed religious motivation for creation of art Cave art in Africa, similarities to European and Aboriginal art 2. Foundations of monotheism Hammurabi, political milieu of ancient Middle Eastern religion, rulers as gods Manicheism Zoroastrianism Influence of these on early Judaism Dualistic nature of world, development of ideas of Satan and hell Fire veneration and rituals Egyptian religion: Multiplicity of nature gods, elaborate burials Akhenatons early attempt at monotheism 3. Greece Polytheism, civic nature of religious rites and rituals 4. Judaism Historical early figures: Abraham, Moses, David Historical timeline of stages (PreMosaic, Mosaic, post Exilic, Rabbinic) Mythic element/stories about acceptance of monotheism, concept of covenant Holy Days (Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, Sukkot, Hannukah) Ritual and so cial (Sabbath, mikvah, circumcision, kosher food preparation) Sacred writings including Torah, Tanakh, Talmud Mystical elements, Isaac Luria, Kabbalah, sefirot Divisions including: Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox, Hassidim, Reform, Conservative Sephardic, Ashkenazic, Ethiopian Holocaust, Zionism and the modern Jewish state of Israel 5. Christianity Sacred stories of birth/life/death of Jesus, grounding in Judaism, Jewishness of Jesus Similarities with pagan and Greek mythologies and rituals Influences of earlier monotheisms upon development of theology Gnosticism; Marcion, love as central element, salvation is of spirit not body Development of ideas of Heaven and Hell, Satan Historical and political milieu in which Christianity began and spread Paul and the spread of the Gospel; need for secrecy in response to persecution Kingdom of God, notion of clergy, role of male and female Development of convents and monasteries Emperor Constantines conversion; Council of Nicea Theological questions: nature of Christ, the Trinity, who can be baptized (Jews, or others.) Sacred literature: Bible, Old and New Testaments, role of prophecy Early Middle Ages and power/primacy of Church in European life Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor; papacy over time, modern use of papal pronouncements Medieval world Great Schism; development and difference between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Mystical figures (St. Theresa of Avila, Hildegard, Julian of Norwich, etc) Martin Luther: disgust with selling of indulgences, hammering of 95 theses Reformation and development of Protestant Christianities Puritans, Baptists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Seventh Day Adventists, Latter-Day Saints, Unitarian Universalists, Quakers, Latter-Day Saints, Apocalyptic versions (Doomsday preppers, Book of Revelations, etc) Influence in exploration and settlement of Americas Modern Protestant groups today; use of political power, influence, expression in civil life New Religious Movements: popularity in U.S., spread through evangelicism 6. Islam Life of Mohammed Unification of tribes Sacred literature: Dictation of Quran, development of Hadith Unification of tribes, emphasis on societal behaviors Sharia law, as formulated in time of Mohammed Roles of male and female; modern interpretations, use of Hijab, Abaya Economic strictures, proscription against usury or paying of interest Five Pillars of Islam Mystical Sufis and poetry of Hafez and Rumi Mythic element: stories of Mohammed in Quran Split after Mohammeds death: Sunni and Shia (Twelvers, Ismaili) Islam today: Rise of fundamentalists, global spread, military involvements, oil wealth 7. Global interaction: Religious and cultural pluralism in modern world 21st century problems and religious responses from the Western worldviews Resources and fossil fuels Men, women, and others Health rights and human rights Freedom

Economic systems/ taxation as reflection of religious worldviews
Climate responsibility Science and religions: Education as religious training or empirical knowledge. Modern interpretations of foundational myths History of perceived conflicts between science and monotheistic religions: Galileo, Copernicus, Francis Darwin and evolution, Crick and DNA, test-tube babies, evolution, Creation Museum in Kentucky

Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)
- DE Live Online Lecture (02S)

Instructional Techniques

Lecture, group work, discussion, video/audio

Reading Assignments

Students will spend 2-3 hours per week on textbooks and primary sources

Writing Assignments

Students will spend 2-3 hours on visitation paper, interview paper, analytical paper on a topic in western religion

Out-of-class Assignments

Visit to church, temple or mosque (2 hours) Interview of prominent religious practitioner or leader (1 hour)

Demonstration of Critical Thinking

Writing assignments will require critical analysis of the dimensions of religion. Exams will require comparison and contrast of religious traditions.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration

Writing assignments will require critical analysis of the dimensions of religion. Exams will require comparison and contrast of religious traditions.

Eligible Disciplines

Religious studies: Masters degree in religious studies, theology, or philosophy OR bachelors degree in any of the above AND masters degree in humanities OR the equivalent. Masters degree required.

Textbooks Resources

1. Required Armstrong, Karen. A History of God, ed. New York: Random House, 1993 Rationale: Classic introduction to monotheisms 2. Required Brodd, Jeffrey. Invitation to Western Religions, ed. London: Oxford, 2015 3. Required Hopfe, L., Woodward, M.. Religions of the World, ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2012 Rationale: Standard Introductory text 4. Required Hussain, Amir. World Religions, Western Traditions, ed. London: Oxford, 2018