

Abilene Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approve I = Information Item R = Respond in Writing

Course Number BMIS 371 or Degree Plan(s) _____

State the requested change and reason. A memo may be attached if more space is necessary.

BMIS 371 has previously functioned for cultural literacy, and it is ideally suited to continue on the menu. It involves a focused semester-long study of religion, a domain that plays a significant role in the formation and persistence of global cultures. This course alerts students to the extraordinarily different cultic and worldview differences that emanate directly from religious texts, traditions, and practices. In class we not only study the origin and historical differences of various religious traditions but describe how these inhere in cultural differences and conflicts. Indeed, it is correct to state that it is impossible to have any depth of cultural literacy without a basic understanding of the various religions that adhere within various cultural traditions. The anthropology of religion (the approach of this course) is essential to becoming culturally aware students.

Indicate the requested change.

	Change to a Course	Dept./School ¹	College	Dean	TEC	UGEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost	President
1.	Title (description unchanged)	A	A	A	I	-	I	I	I
2.	Description (not affecting content)	A	A	A	I	-	I	I	I
3.	Course term(s)	A	I	A	I	-	I	I	I
4.	Content (change of course outcomes)	A	A	A	I	-	I	A	I
5.	Number of hours (lecture, lab, contact)	A	A	A	A	-	A	A	I
6.	Course number within the hundred	A	A	I	I	-	I	I	I

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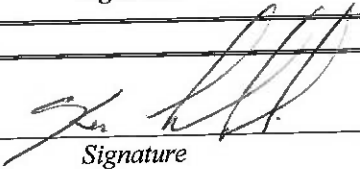
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7.	Course number beyond the hundred	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I
8.	Prerequisites	A	A	A	I	–	I	I	I
9.	Course fee(s)	A	–	A	–	–	–	A	I
10.	From U to G or G to U	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I
11.	Cross-list course	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I
12.	Department of record	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I
13.	Close a course	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I
14.	New course (includes combining or splitting courses)	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	I

	Change to the University Requirements (All Campuses)	Dept./School ¹	College	Dean	TEC	UGEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost	Faculty	President	Trustees
1.	University Requirements — Change course outcomes of an included course ²	A	A	A	–	A	–	A	–	A	–
2.	University Requirements — Add or drop a required course from the University Requirements ²	A	A	A	–	A	–	A	A	A	–
[3.]	University Requirements — Add or drop a course from a menu within the University Requirements ²	A	–	–	–	A	–	A	–	A	–
4.	University Requirements — Change hours within a menu in the University Requirements ²	A	A	A	–	A	–	A	A	A	–
	Change to Catalog Information (for Campus)										
1.	General Requirements for Bachelor's Degrees and Associate's Degrees	–	–	–	–	–	A	A	A	A	–
2.	Policies governing academic probation and suspension	–	–	–	–	–	A	A	A	A	–
3.	Requirements for graduating with honors	–	–	–	–	–	A	A	A	A	–
	Change to a Degree Plan Proposed by Faculty or College										
5.	Educational Program — Revise ³	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
6.	Educational Program — Adopt/change admission requirements	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
7.	Educational Program — Add ³	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	A	A	I
8.	Educational Program — Discontinue	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	A	A	I
9.	GPA — Revise program-required GPAs	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
10.	Minor — Revise	A	A	A	I	–	I	I	–	I	–
11.	Minor — Add	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
12.	Minor — Discontinue	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
13.	Degree — Add	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	A	A	I
14.	Degree — Discontinue	A	A	A	A	–	A	A	A	A	I
	Change to a Degree Plan Proposed By Provost										
15.	Educational Program — Discontinue	R	–	R	A	–	A	A	A	A	I
16.	Minor — Discontinue	R	–	R	A	–	A	A	–	A	–
17.	Degree — Discontinue	R	–	R	A	–	A	A	A	A	I

Department/School Chair(s)	
 Signature	9-15-22 Approval date
_____ Signature	_____ Approval date

College Academic Council(s)	
 Signature	9-15-22 Approval date
_____ Signature	_____ Approval date

Dean(s)	
 Signature	9-15-22 Approval date
_____ Signature	_____ Approval date

Teacher Education Council	
_____ Chair's signature	_____ Approval date

University General Education Council	
_____ Chair's signature	_____ Approval date

Abilene Undergraduate Academic Council	
_____ Chair's signature	_____ Approval date

Graduate Council	
_____ Chair's signature	_____ Approval date

Provost	
_____ Signature	_____ Approval date

Faculty	
_____ Chair of Faculty Senate	_____ Approval date

President	
_____ Signature	_____ Approval date

Application for Cultural Literacy Menu

Guidelines For All General Education Courses

1. All general education courses must be 100-level or above.
2. General education courses should present a breadth of knowledge, not focusing on skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.
3. Individual courses will fulfill only a single general education requirement.
4. Courses free of prerequisites are preferred. Applications to add courses with prerequisites must provide additional evidence that the course contributes to a student's breadth of knowledge and is not specific to a particular occupation or profession.
5. Each course may appear on a maximum of two menus that accept applications (arts and humanities, cultural literacy, life and physical sciences, and social and behavioral sciences).

Cultural Literacy Description

Courses within this domain provide students opportunity to develop informed discourse and understand the interconnectedness of diverse peoples. Additionally, students will courageously interrogate their own internal processes about diversity and equity. Courses satisfying this menu will assist students to 1) explore global, historical, and cultural experiences of diverse populations, and 2) interrogate one's internal and external views and values for greater self-awareness.

Instructions

Complete this form and submit it with a course syllabus and approval chart to the University General Education Council. Faculty submitting an application should be prepared to perform annual assessment for their course. The assessment will be conducted with the rubric included in this course application.

Subject code, course number, and title of course:	BMIS 371 Religion in Global Contexts
Terms offered:	Fall, Spring
Catalog description:	This course explores the changing significance of religion in the world. The course familiarizes students with the major anthropological and sociological debates on religion, secularism, and global modernity; acquaints students with methodological approaches to the study of religion; and equips students to address thoughtfully and faithfully various religious practices from a Christian perspective.

Course prerequisites:	BIBL 101, 102 (or 103), and BIBL 211
Cross-listed courses: *Note: Many gen ed courses are cross-listed between the Abilene and Dallas campuses.	None
Other general education menus on which the course appears or you are applying for:	None

Description of Menu Fit

Please describe how your class fits into the Cultural Literacy Menu (200 words or less). The course description, this statement, and the course syllabus together should demonstrate that a substantial portion of the course content (about half) is dedicated to issues involving the three relevant outcomes listed below.

Religion plays a significant role in the formation and persistence of global cultures. This course alerts students to the extraordinarily different cultic and worldview differences that emanate directly from religious texts, traditions, and practices. In class we not only study the origin and historical differences of various religious traditions but describe how these inhere in cultural differences and conflicts. Indeed, it is correct to state that it is impossible to have any depth of cultural literacy without a basic understanding of the various religions that adhere within various cultural traditions. The anthropology of religion (the approach of this course) is essential to becoming culturally aware students.

Prerequisites

If the course has prerequisites, provide evidence that the course contributes to a student's breadth of knowledge. Also provide evidence that the course content is not specific to a particular occupation or profession (200 words or less).

Course prerequisites are BIBL 101, 102 (or 103), and BIBL 211. That is, one must have completed the general education Bible course sequence. This course expands on the phenomena of religion, dipping into Biblical religion (the section on Judaism) but dealing primarily with the various non-Christian religious traditions, the history of these traditions, and their role in the contemporary world. Studying such expands a student's bread of knowledge in a significant way, providing them depth and bread of understanding to connect with those religious ideas and practices that they have and will continue to encounter in their lives. As such, this course does not admit to any particular occupation or profession. It opens a student up to the breadth of human religiosity that is evident the world over.

Relevant Outcomes

At a minimum, a course applying to the Cultural Literacy menu must use at least one topic or activity listed below each of the mapped outcomes:

- B1: Demonstrate competent discourse in global, historical, and cultural experiences of diverse populations.
 - Account for and explain divergent perspectives on cultural phenomenon (e.g., female face-coverings in Islamic communities, “nepotism” in collectivistic contexts, aesthetic values in a certain historical period, etc.).
 - Demonstrate how social and historical contexts shape a community’s worldview or cultural commitments.
 - Study or write a case study of inculturation, ritual, or morality that emerges from a specific cultural context.
 - Identify underlying values, ideologies, perspectives, and attitudes that account for external cultural practices and products of a specific culture, particularly as these are expressed through its language.
 - Through measurable assessments, compare the cultural perspectives of another culture with those of a student’s own culture and reflect through adequate speech (oral or written) on how this knowledge prepares them to be culturally sensitive professionals.
- B2: Understand the interconnectedness of human experience with a posture of humility while celebrating difference.
 - Reflect on a specific issue(s) considering the notion of cultural humility or ethnorelativity.
 - Evaluate appreciatively the music, ritual, art, theatre, or religious expression of a different culture.
 - Engage in and reflect upon a special event or celebration that highlights a different cultural background.
 - Requires students to attend and actively participate in an event honoring or presenting one or more aspects of a racial/cultural group that they do not identify with and respond to that event by a writing assignment or another medium.
 - Study and evaluate an accepted institutional or association statement on culture, race, or diversity (e.g., [UN Declaration on Cultural Diversity](#), [American Anthropological Association Declaration on Anthropology and Human Rights](#), etc.) and reflect upon it from a discipline-specific and/or faith perspective.
 - Require students to both recognize and demonstrate their respect for differences along at least two of the following axes of difference: gender, class, religion, sexuality, disability, age, or a major cultural difference (e.g., race, ethnicity, individualism-collectivism, high-low power distance orientation, high-low uncertainty avoidance, etc.).
 - Analyze attitudes and practices of working with those of differing cultural perspectives (at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels) with a presence of

- humility while learning, communicating, offering help, and making decisions in professional practice and settings.
- Create a rationale (moral, ethical, religious) for maintaining an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to a person or persons of a different cultural perspective.
 - Reflect upon the cultural dimensions of complex challenges of human interconnections (e.g., changing relations within and between human communities, changing relations with ecological and climatic conditions, shifts in technology, migration, environmental degradation, new technologies, etc.).
 - B3: Interrogate one's internal and external views and values for greater self-awareness.
 - Reflect upon one's social location regarding race and at least two of the following: gender, class, sexuality, disability, age.
 - Create a framework to discuss and demonstrate critical reflection up cultural differences in the workplace
 - Feature personal reflections which involves diverse cultural perspectives not typical of mainstream North American culture.
 - Feature personal reflections on the intersection of biography (identifying the origins of the content of their reflections) and social inequality/injustice on race, gender, sexuality, social class, disability, and/or age
 - Require students to read/listen/view content created by one or more persons whose work connects social inequality with personal experience.
 - Examine systems of privilege and oppression that shape students' perspectives, values, and behavior, with a focus on race, gender, sexuality, social class, disability, and/or age.
 - Require students to examine critically their social location regarding race as a system of inequality and at least two of the following: gender, sexuality, disability, age as systems of inequality.
 - No less than 50% of course content focuses on one or more of the following: cultural difference, power, privilege, structural and institutional inequality.
 - No less than 40% of course content features diverse sources of knowledge integrated throughout the semester, including but not limited to indigenous, spiritual, community-centered, or otherwise marginalized knowledges.
 - No less than 40% of the course content focuses on structural and institutional social change in one or more of the following contexts: campus, community, state, nation, global region, or global system.
 - Provide an account of why it is important not be neutral regarding power relations and cultural hegemony, especially white supremacy, and all forms of racism.

From the lists above, indicate which topic or activity fulfills this course's connection to each learning outcome.

Outcome	Topic or Activity
Outcome B1	Write a 750-word essay that illustrates and explains the contemporary emic meaning for any one of the following practices: Female head coverings (Islam), Kosher laws (Judaism), Merit-making (Buddhism), Yoga (Hinduism), Tai-Chi (Taoism/Confucianism), Totemism (Primal Religions).
Outcome B2	BLOG #3: BUDDHISM/HINDUISM: Jesus and the Buddha get together for coffee at Starbucks (or, Jesus and a Hindu Rishi if you wish to discuss Hinduism). They begin to talk about their fundamental beliefs and differences. How does this conversation go? Be creative (<i>but faithful to the two religious figures' true beliefs</i>)! That is, illustrate through creative conversation the similarities and differences between the teachings of the Buddha (or Hinduism) and Jesus. One important part of this blog should be where Jesus affirms or appreciates important parts of the Buddha's teaching or worldview. You must note at least 2 specific instances of where Jesus would do this. Remember- this must be formatted as a conversation, not just ideas or a summary.
Outcome B3	Attend two worship experiences or religiously-based activities from two different religious traditions that are not your own religious tradition. After attending these religious activities, include each of the following points in a 1,500-word (total, not for each experience) written reflection for the experiences you attended: • Provide an overall summary of the experience (Where did you attend? What faith tradition did it represent? What happened? Who did what? Etc.) • How did this experience differ from my own experience of religion? • How did this experience conform to or differ from what I expected it to be? • Discuss your experience in terms of King's "Eight Characteristics of Religion" (Farhadian, p. 3). As much as possible, elaborate on each characteristic based upon what you experienced. • How did this experience conform to or differ from what I have learned about this religion in class. Use resources from class (lean heavily on Farhadian and Prothero), but you are free to use any of the other resources. • What questions did this experience raise for you?

	How did this experience help you clarify, strengthen, or otherwise impact your own religious thinking?
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Assessment

Ideally, assessment will occur within one or two exams/assignments. Please indicate which exams or assignments will be used for each outcome. These artifacts may be the same as the activities listed in the Relevant Outcomes section. Provide assignment prompts if available.

Area to Be Assessed	Assessment Artifact
Outcome B1	Cultural practices essay
Outcome B2	Blog post (details listed above)
Outcome B3	1 summative worship project (details listed above)

Please use the following rubric to perform assessment each year.

Student Learning Outcome B1

Students will be able to:	Shortcomings	Meets Expectations	Points of Excellence
Demonstrate competent discourse in global, historical, and cultural experiences of diverse populations.	Shows little to no understanding of two or more of the areas of different experiences of diverse populations.	Conversant in experiences of diverse populations.	Demonstrates exceptional depth of understanding in discourse in all three areas of different experiences of diverse populations.

Student Learning Outcome B2

Students will be able to:	Shortcomings	Meets Expectations	Points of Excellence
Understand the interconnectedness of the human experience with a posture of humility.	Shows little to no understanding about connections among people and/or expresses cultural superiority.	Able to express understanding about connections among people and express that one's own culture or experiences are not superior to others.	Clearly expresses understanding about a connected, shared human experience and clearly expresses humility of perspective on human experiences.
Celebrate difference among people.	Unable to express value in the differences among individuals and/or cultures.	Able to express value in the differences among individuals and/or cultures.	Expresses persuasive advocacy for valuing human difference.

Student Learning Outcome B3

Students will be able to:	Shortcomings	Meets Expectations	Points of Excellence
Interrogate one's internal and external views and values for greater self-awareness.	Unable to acknowledge having a unique cultural viewpoint and/or unable to analyze the factors that contribute to it.	Expresses self-examination of a cultural viewpoint and expresses a conclusion about any potential individual blind spots due to that perspective.	Clearly expresses a thorough self-examination of one or more cultural viewpoints, expresses a conclusion about any potential individual blind spots due to that perspective, and expresses a plan for growth.

BMIS 371 RELIGION IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Abilene Christian University

Fall 2022

Instructor, Dr. Chris Flanders Office
3742

Office: Bible Bldg. 302

Office hours: MW 9-10; 1-2; R 2-4; F 9-10

Virtually by appointment

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Mission: The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. The broad mission of the Graduate School of Theology is to provide Biblical training, Christian spiritual formation, and a Christian world-view for every student.

DBMM Mission Statement: The mission of the Department of Bible, Missions, and Ministry is twofold: 1) to equip all departmental majors with a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills, and experiences in preparation for further study or for engagement in ministry; and 2) to provide all ACU students with biblical and spiritual resources with which they may live as committed disciples.

Course Description

"This course explores the changing significance of religion in the world. The course familiarizes students with the major anthropological and sociological debates on religion, secularism, and global modernity; acquaints students with methodological approaches to the study of religion; and equips students to address thoughtfully and faithfully various religious practices from a Christian perspective. Prerequisites: BIBL 101, 102 (or 103), and BIBL 211. May be used to satisfy University Requirements." 2014-2015 ACU Catalog

Purpose: This course will provide students an introductory survey of important issues in the study of religion throughout the world. It will also engage students in critical reflection on their own awareness of world religions and Christian practice in the context of other faiths. In particular, this will be a critical study of present-day non-Christian religions concentrating on animism ("traditional religion"), Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam. We will give attention the presence and impact of other religions in North America and what this means for the Church of Jesus Christ.

Learning Outcomes: I intend this course to be a learning experience of how theology, faith, and practice intertwine into a coherent faithful, missional response. Theology is “faith seeking understanding.” Yet, this faith must lead to faithful living and this living is always missional in orientation. The specific course objectives include:

1. To gain a workable knowledge of selected world religions focusing on origins, core beliefs, and practices
2. To grapple with the differences between the Christian faith and other religions.
3. To prepare for living, witnessing, and offering Christian leadership in a religiously pluralistic world.
4. Develop skills in learning how to empathetically understand the religious and spiritual attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, decisions, and practices of others in their own contexts
5. To prepare to share what you learn in this course with other Christians to enable God’s people to live as faithful, witnessing Christians in the contemporary world

Competencies	Measurability
1. Learners will demonstrate understanding of basic information regarding world religions	1. Pass tests; final exam; resource assessments
2. Learners will reflect on contemporary experience of religion in light of Christian commitment	2. Analyze world religions and submit blog reflections; Worship Experience Final Project
3. Reflect critically and differentiate between the various dimensions of religion	3. Pass tests; final exam; blog posts

Required Texts:

- Prothero, *God is Not One*
- Farhadian, *Introducing World Religions*

Online Resources (links in Canvas)

Assignments and grades:

TRACK 1-NORMAL TRACK

1. **3 Tests** (3 tests of 100 points each, 300 points total)
2. **1 Final Exam** (100 points-the final is comprehensive. With perfect attendance, you may use any previous test to replace your Final Exam grade)
3. **8 Resource Assessments**
4. **5 Blogs** (5 500-word blog posts)
5. **Worship Experience Final Project** (100 points)

To earn a grade of "D" for this class you must:

- Do 3 Blogs
- Do 5 Resource Assessments
- Have a combined Worship Experience Final Project and test average (3 tests plus the final exam) of 60 or higher

To earn a grade of "C" for this class you must:

- Do 4 Blogs
- Do 6 Resource Assessments
- Have a combined Worship Experience Final Project and test average (3 tests plus the final exam) of 70 or higher

To earn a grade of "B" for this class you must:

- Do 4 Blogs
- Do 7 Resource Assessments
- Have a combined Worship Experience Final Project and test average (3 tests plus the final exam) of 80 or higher

To earn a grade of "A" for this class you must:

- Do 5 Blogs
- Do 8 Resource Assessments
- Have a combined Worship Experience Final Project and test average (3 tests plus the final exam) of 90 or higher

Failure to complete any single requirement drops you a letter grade

Course Schedule

IWR=Introducing World Religions (Farhadian)

The date is the date you should have the reading done to work with the material. So, e.g.: "Thurs. 8/29 WR Chpt. 1" means have Chpt. 1 of World Religions read **by** 8/29.

Week 1-Introductions; What is religion? The Bible and religions

Required Readings

- IWR
 - Chpt. 1
- **God is Not One**
 - Intro

Tues. 8/30

Thurs. 9/1

Week 2- Modernity and The New Atheism

Required Readings

- **God is Not One**
 - Chapter 9, A Brief Coda on Atheism

Resources

- Video: [Ricky Gervais And Stephen Go Head-To-Head On Religion](#)
- Video: [The Root of All Evil-The God Delusion](#)
- Video: [What's the New Atheism?](#)
- Website: [Did the New Atheists Rationally Lack Belief?](#)
- Website: [Gen Z is the Least Religious Generation](#)

Monday 9/5 **Modernity and The New Atheism Assessment due**

Tues. 9/6 **Blog 1 Due**

Thurs. 9/8

Week 3-Primal Religion

Required Readings

- **God is Not One**

○ **Chapter 6, Yoruba Religion**

Resources

- Video: [William Shatner Ponders Religion](#)
- Video: [The Power of Animism](#)
- Tylor, E. B. (2004). [Animism is the belief in spiritual beings](#). In J. Narby & F. Huxley (Ed.), *Shamans through time: 500 years on the path to knowledge*. Penguin. Page 41 & 42 Only

Monday 9/12 **Primal Religion Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 9/13

Thurs. 9/14

Fri. 9/16 Blog 2 due

TEST 1-TUES. 9/20

Week 4-Hinduism

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - **Chapter 2, Hinduism**
- **God is Not One**
 - **Chapter 4, Hinduism**

Resources

- Video: [What is Hinduism?](#)
- Video: [Four Paths of Yoga](#)
- Video: [Heaven on Earth-Hinduism](#)
- Video: [Indian Pantheons: Crash Course World Mythology #8](#)

Thurs. 9/22

Week 5- Hinduism & Buddhism

Mon. 9/26 **Hinduism Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 9/27

Thurs. 9/29

Week 6-Buddhism

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - **Chapter 3, Buddhism**

- **God is Not One**
 - Chapter 5, Buddhism

Resources

- Video: [The Life of the Buddha](#)
- Video: [Buddhist Beliefs-The 4 Noble Truths](#)
- Website: [The Parable of the Arrow](#)
- Video: [The Buddha](#)
- Video: [Zen Kōans: Unsolvable Enigmas Designed to Break Your Brain](#)
- Video: [Buddha-Birth](#)

Monday 10/3 **Buddhism Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 10/4

Thurs. 10/6

Fri. 10/7 Blog 3 Due

Week 7-Judaism

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - Chapter 7, Judaism
- **God is Not One**
 - Chapter 7, Judaism

Resources

- Video: [The Jewish Origin Story](#)
- Video: [The Story of Joseph](#)
- Video: [What is Judaism and What Do Jews Believe?](#)
- Video: [History of the Jews in 5 Minutes](#)
- Video: [Conflict in Israel and Palestine](#)
- Video: [Anti Semitism Today](#)

Monday 10/10 **Judaism Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 10/11

Thurs. 10/13

Fri. 10/14 Blog 4 due

Week 8-Judaism

Tues. 10/18

THURS. 10/20 TEST #2

Week 9-Islam

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - Chapter 9, Islam
- **God is Not One**
 - Chapter 1, Islam

Resources

- Video: [Islam Empire of Faith Part 1](#)
- Video: [Islam Empire of Faith Part 2](#)
- Video: [Inside Mecca](#)
- Video: [A Conversation with Imam Samer Malatabaa](#)

Monday 10/24 **Islam Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 10/25

Thurs. 10/27

Week 10-Islam

Tues. 11/1

Thurs. 11/3

Fri. 11/4 **Blog 5 due**

Week 11-Daoism, Confucianism

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - Chapter 6, Taoism and Confucianism
- **God is Not One**
 - Chapter 3, Confucianism
 - Chapter 8, Daoism

Resources

- Video: [Eastern Philosophy: Wu Wei](#)
- Video: [Eastern Philosophy: Confucius](#)
- Video: [The Hidden Meanings of Yin and Yang](#)
- Video: [The Story of the Real Confucius](#)
- Video: [Eastern Philosophy-Lao Tzu](#)

Monday 11/7 **Daoism/Confucianism Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 11/8

Thurs. 11/10

Week 12-New Religious Movements

Required Readings

- **IWR**
 - Chpt. 10, New Religious Movements

Resources

- Video: [NRM Part 1](#)
- Video: [NRM Part 2](#)
- Video: [Scientology](#)
- Video: [Jonestown 1](#)
- Video: [Jonestown 2](#)

Monday 11/14 **NRM Resource Assessment due**

Tues. 11/15

Thurs. 11/17

Week 13-New Religious Movements

Tues. 11/22

Thurs. 11/24 **THANKSGIVING BREAK!**

Week 14- Modernity, Globalization, and Contemporary Issues

Required Readings

- **God is Not One**
 - Chpt. 2, Christianity

Tues. 11/29

TEST 3-TUES. 12/1

Week 15- Religion, Truth, and Christian Witness

Tues. 12/6

Thurs. 12/8

Fri. 12/9 **Worship project due/Research Project due**

***All assignments and extra credit must be turned in by 5:00 p.m.
12/9...NO EXCEPTIONS***

FINAL EXAM

Thursday, December 15 at 12-1:45 am

ASSIGNMENTS

BLOGS: Blog assignments (all blog posts should be ***at least 500 words***). You should give evidence of thoughtful reflection and make reference, as appropriate, to specific ideas, people, texts, etc. from our readings or the assigned readings.

BLOG #1: RELIGION RESEARCH REPORT: Ask at least 5 people (Facebook, text, phone, personal interview, etc.) the following questions:

1. What words (3-5) come to mind when you hear the word "religion"?
2. In less than 20 words, how would you define "religion"?
3. When you think about "religion", do you have a positive or negative reaction? Why?
4. When you think about "spiritual", do you have a positive or negative reaction? Why?
5. Would you describe yourself as religious or spiritual? Why?

Summary: After analyzing the responses, what common themes emerge? What did you learn? Do you resonate with any responses?

BLOG #2: Choose 1 of the following 2 options for this blog.

Option 1: PRIMAL RELIGIONS/ANIMISM What, at its core, is animism/primal religion? Where do I see this in contemporary media/culture? In my hometown,

high school? At ACU (e.g., dorm life, friends, activities, etc.)? Give at least 3 specific examples. Elaborate on how each of these concrete examples exhibits the dynamics of what we have called "primal religion" or "animistic thinking." How are these examples viewed by mainstream culture? Christian culture?

Option 2: THE NEW ATHEISM Write a letter (at least 500 words) that you address to an imaginary person who claims the position of the New Atheism. In this letter, engage this imaginary person primarily with questions. That is, instead of *telling* them what they should believe (e.g., "The universe can't exist without a creator. Come on!") or trying to *show* them where you think they are wrong ("Atheists cannot have true morals because morality requires a God."), ask them penetrating and critical questions about what you might consider problems or deficiencies in their positions. That is, use lots of language like "why", "how is it", "would you think", "have you considered", "might it be possible that...", etc.

Draw upon the resources from this week to form the different questions you ask and the various queries you include. You should include at least 3 discrete ideas, positions, or commitments about which you ask questions. Be certain to engage in this letter writing with respect and a sincere desire *to understand their reasons*.

This type of rhetoric is not aimed at "winning" as much as it is opening up a conversation, based upon real ideas and real differences.

BLOG #3: BUDDHISM/HINDUISM: Jesus and the Buddha get together for coffee at Starbucks (or, Jesus and a Hindu Rishi if you wish to discuss Hinduism). They begin to talk about their fundamental beliefs and differences. How does this conversation go?

Be creative (***but faithful to the two religious figures' true beliefs***)! That is, illustrate through creative conversation the similarities and differences between the teachings of the Buddha (or Hinduism) and Jesus.

One important part of this blog should be where Jesus affirms or appreciates important parts of the Buddha's teaching or worldview. You must note at least 2 specific instances of where Jesus would do this.

Remember- this must be formatted as a conversation, not just ideas or a summary.

BLOG #4: JUDAISM

Option #1-Jewish prayer activity (you must do this **5 consecutive days** for full credit)

- Upon waking (before you look at your phone): *"I give thanks before You, Living and Eternal King, that You in your great compassion have returned within me my soul; how abundant is Your faithfulness!"*
- Immediately after bath or shower (or brushing your teeth): *"Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified and washed us clean with His commandments"*
- Upon getting dressed: *"Blessed are you, Lord, our God, sovereign of the universe, who has clothed us like the flowers of the field. You wrap us in your faithful love and care."*
- Upon leaving for your home or dorm: Shema
- Before eating each meal: *"Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe, Who creates every kind of food and drink."*
- Before sleep: *"Praised are You, Adonai, our God, Ruler of the universe, who closes my eyes in sleep, my eyelids in slumber. May it be Your will, Adonai, My God and the God of my ancestors, to lie me down in peace and then to raise me up in peace. Let no disturbing thoughts upset me, no evil dreams nor troubling fantasies. May my bed be complete and whole in Your sight. Grant me light so that I do not sleep the sleep of death, for it is You who illumines and enlightens. Praised are You, Adonai, whose majesty gives light to the universe."* Then speak the Shema

Blog question: Describe your 5 days of doing these prayers. What did this feel like? How did it contrast with your previous experience of prayers or prayerfulness? What were the challenges to doing this? How did it affect (positively, negatively) your day?

Option 2-"Living Biblically"

Read the Book of Leviticus completely

Then, if you are male:

First, watch this: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5MkpzMAOZM>

Then, listen to this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0N793E815Uo>

Or, if you are female:

First watch this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cad8gT9Y>

Then, watch this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vmbdPqPdUo>

Blog question: Reflect on the clips. What did you learn? List at least 5 things from Leviticus that strike you as odd or revolting (list verses and also why you feel or react as you do). List at least 5 things from Leviticus that strike you as practical or wise (list verses and describe how you think these are wise). How do you think following strictly such a religious code would affect your life today? What would be the personal and social challenges of living in such a way? Personal and social benefits?

BLOG #5: ISLAM: Watch this video of [John Azumah](#). Take your *First Day of Class Reflections* regarding Islam, together with class resources from our section on Islam and Dr. Azumah's video to evaluate what you said in your first day reflections. What do you think about Islam now compared to the first day? How do you *feel* about Islam and how those feelings changed (or remained the same)? What about The Qur'an? Muhammad? Overall, how has your mind changed or your opinions strengthened regarding the religion of Islam during this course? Note specifically where there has been any change and why that change has occurred (e.g., "Dr. Azumah's point about the prevalence of violent Islam made me shift my thinking. This was also something Faradian in our text mentioned as well.")

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Attendance/Engagement

The current pandemic requires a flexible and fair attendance policy that maintains an appropriate expectation for engagement with course material. Ideally, you will be able to engage the course material by attending class in-person. If you are ill or quarantined, however, I want you to be able to engage the course material in other meaningful ways without attending face-to-face class sessions. *If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 or required to quarantine, SOAR will contact me. If you believe you have been exposed, you should contact SOAR (soar@acu.edu). If you feel ill, you should contact the [MACCC](#).* With that in mind, I will measure class engagement in the following ways:

- If a student accrues more than **nine “absences”** (20% of the class), that student will receive an “F” as a final grade.
- If for an extended period of time a student becomes too ill to engage the course material in any of the three ways outlined above, the student and professor will work with SOAR to develop and plan that ensures the student’s academic and physical well-being.
- PERFECT ATTENDANCE BONUS: The university attendance policy stipulates the following: ***“If a student accrues more than nine ‘absences’ (20% of the class), that student will receive an ‘F’ as a final grade. ”***

Other than that, I will not penalize you for missing class.

However, there is a special bonus for any student that has perfect attendance. If you have perfect attendance, you do not need to take the Final Exam. Also, with perfect attendance you may replace the Final Exam grade with any one previous test grade.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE POLICY: Most now generally recognize that many women and men no longer find “man,” “men,” and “mankind” acceptable as generic terms. Such exclusive language, though once normative in our speaking and writing, now tends increasingly to alienate a substantial group of people. As Christians desiring to support human equality, we should avoid exclusive language, which might express or encourage discrimination within the

church or society. It is incumbent upon followers of Jesus to challenge harmful patterns of language even when such inflicts harm unconsciously and without intention. Therefore, all work you submit for this class must use non-discriminatory language.

LATE AND POOR QUALITY WORK: I expect you to perform as professionals. In the work place, work needs to be excellent and punctual. So, in this class failure to complete any assignment on time will result in an automatic 50% grade reduction. The habits you develop here will go a long way toward predicting your success in the “real world.” So always do a great job on your work!

MAKE-UP EXAMS: Make up exams will be given in the case of emergency (a *real* emergency).

WITHDRAWALS: You, the student, must initiate a withdrawal from the course by completing and signing a “Withdrawal from Class” form, and submitting it to your advisor. Notifying me or stopping attendance **does not** withdraw you.

CLASSROOM: Food and drinks are allowed as long as you bring enough for the instructor (especially espresso or ristretto). Please do not make a mess and clean up after yourself. I do allow electronic devices if these do not clearly become impediments to learning. Please do not game, watch videos, or do social media at all during our time together.

ANTI-HARRASMENT POLICY: As a professor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a professor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. When I am not able to keep your information confidential, I will only share it with responsible administrators on campus who can provide you with services and resources. I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator information regarding sexual misconduct or harassment, dating or domestic violence or stalking that you report to me. If you would prefer to share information in a confidential setting, I encourage you to speak with someone in the [ACU Counseling Center](#). All of your options are available for review by clicking on the link to ACU's [policy](#).

ADA POLICY: ACU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please feel free to contact the ACU Student Disability Services Office (a part of Alpha Scholars Program). In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. Call extension 2667 for an appointment with the Director of Disability Services. The link to that brochure is: <http://www.acu.edu/academics/trio/alpha/documents/Alpha%20Faculty%20Brochure%20Nov08.pdf>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:

1. Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU's Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the university enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature.
2. Every member of the faculty, staff and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship and research. The full Policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site (<http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost>) and the following offices: provost, college deans, dean of the first-year program, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residence life education and academic departments.