



ENCOUNTERING WORLD RELIGIONS

PHIL & MISS 6309

Intensive Classroom + NOLA2U Live Section
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

T&H Division

May 24-28, 2021

Monday: 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Tuesday-Friday: 8:30-11:30 p.m.

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary prepares servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

In this course, students examine the major world religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, as well as other faiths such as Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, and Sikhism, from the perspective of underlying world view, history, tradition, sacred literature, doctrines, and practices. Emphasis is placed on the use of primary sources and personal contact with practitioners. Attention is given to particular barriers to the Gospel, as well as to promising avenues for sharing the gospel associated with each religion.

Student Learning Outcomes

The desired student outcomes for this course are:

- to have an increased sensitivity to persons from different faiths.
- to achieve a working knowledge of the worldview and major beliefs (theology, revelation, anthropology, soteriology, and eschatology) of each religion studied, and how it compares with the Christian worldview and beliefs.
- to be familiar with the key leaders and movements within each religion studied.
- to be able to defend Christian exclusivism against pluralism, universalism, syncretism, and inclusivism.
- to have increased ability and desire to present a credible Christian witness to adherents of these religions.
- to be able to teach others about the belief systems of other religions.

Textbooks

Lewis, James. F., and William G. Travis. *Religious Traditions of the World*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1999 (see inexpensive used copies at amazon.com)

Lemke, Steve. *A Light to the Nations: Christianity and World Religions*. New Orleans: NOBTS, 2009 (downloadable free).

Your choice of one of the following five for a focused topic text (others in the bibliography are possible if the student is interested in a particular faith tradition):

- Corduan, Winfried. *Neighboring Faiths: A Christian Introduction to World Religions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.
- Okholm, Dennis L., and Timothy R. Phillips. *Four Views of Salvation in a Pluralistic World*.

Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. (This overlaps with the subject matter of the complementary over/under course taught by Dr. Stewart).

- Parshall, Phil. *New Paths in Muslim Evangelism: Evangelical Approaches to Contextualization*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.
- Richardson, Donald. *Eternity in Their Hearts*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1984.
- Woodberry, J. Dudley, ed. *Christians and Muslims on the Emmaus Road: Crucial Issues among Muslims*. Monrovia: MARC, 1989.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies:

The course involves readings and lectures in various world religions, plus the opportunity to research deeper in one religion. The student will also interview someone from a different religion to hear and record their beliefs. It involves mastering facts about each religion, approaches to witness for these religions, and determination of one's own theological beliefs as they pertain to world religions.

Course Requirements

Understanding World Religions Assignment 100 points. *Preferably done before the class, but due by June 10, 2021.* Read the *Religious Traditions of the World* text by James F. Lewis and William G. Travis (it is helpful but not necessary to read the chapter on Christianity). Answer the questions below under "Reading Questions from the Lewis & Travis Text" (typed single spaced, double spaced between paragraphs).

Focused Reading Assignment, 100 points. *Due June 20, 2021*

Read one of the five books (which you have not previously read) in the textbook list of choices. Write an 8-10 page paper (single spaced, double-spacing paragraphs) summarizing and evaluating the book.

- (a) *Briefly summarize* (in no more than 4 pages) summarize the material presented in the book, and the views it presents.
- (b) Then *provide your evaluation and critique* of the positions presented in the book, affirming the position you support in the light of Scripture (in not less than 4 nor more than 6 pages).

Personal Visit Critique, 50 points. *Due July 1, 2021*

Each student should visit with a practitioner of one of the religions discussed in class (Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shinto, Ba'hai, Zoroastrian, etc.) preferably at the site of their worship activities. The critique (about 6-8 pages, single spaced, with double spacing between paragraphs) should include the following:

- * Describe the place of worship and the subset represented (Hasidic Jew, Shi'a Muslim).
- * Summarize the conversation, especially regarding issues of doctrine (theology, anthropology, soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology).
- * Identify insights gained through this experience.

Reading Questions from the Lewis and Travis Text -- Answer all the following questions from the text. All the questions are intended to be answered briefly, most in no more than a sentence or two, particularly the terms to know. Discussion questions should take no more than a short paragraph.

Chapter 1

1. Do you agree with the statement on p. 16 that we cannot witness effectively to people of other faiths unless we understand something of their faith? Why or why not?
2. Briefly respond to Emilio Castro's statement on p. 17.

Chapter 2

1. Answer "Discussion" questions 2, 5, and 6 on p. 47 of Lewis.

Chapter 5

1. Identify the three pilgrimage feasts.
2. Describe the three kinds of materials in the Talmud.
3. How many commandments do Jews identify in the Mosaic law?
4. Outline the religious year in Judaism.
5. Briefly define the following terms:

Shema

Jew

Hanukkah

Zealots

Mishnah

Palestinian Talmud

Babylonian Talmud

Guide for the Perplexed

Kabbalah

Sephardim

Ashkenazim

Ghetto

Hasidim

Chapter 7

1. What pattern is used to organize the Suras or chapters of the Qur'an?
2. In what way or ways are Muslims offended by the title "Son of God"?
3. How is the Islamic concept of the oneness of God different from Jewish and Christian views of the oneness of God?
4. Do Muslims have assurance of salvation?
5. What is Jesus called in the Qur'an?
6. Identify the five pillars of Islam.
7. Contrast "revivalist" and "modernist" Muslims.
8. In the testimony of the former Muslim who became a Christian, what does he say led him to Christ? What is the major difference he notes between the teachings of Christianity and Islam?
9. Answer briefly questions 1-5 in "Discussion," p. 220.
10. Define the following terms:

Islam

anno Hegira

hajj

jinn

Dome of the Rock

Qur'an

The Rightly Guided Caliphs

Ramadan

Sunni

Shia

Sufi

imam

Chapter 8

1. Identify the four major castes in Hinduism.
2. How do women in Jainism achieve the afterlife?
3. Contrast the three divisions of Jainism.
4. Distinguish reincarnation from transmigration of the soul.
5. Answer question 2 in "Discussion," p. 292.
6. Briefly define the following terms:

Veda

Brahma

Brahmanas

Brahman

Brahmin

karma

maya

henotheism

atman

moksha

samsara

Advaita Vedanta

Mahavira
jiva and ajiva
ahimsa
Siddhattha Gotama
Buddha
Tipitaka
anicca
dukkha
anatta
nirvana
sangha
bodhisattva
bhakti
Tantric

Vishnu
avatar
Shiva
Krishna
Bhagavad Gita
Rama
Shakti
Sikh
Nanak
Granth Sahib
Ahura Mazda
Angra Mainyu
Avesta

Chapter 9

1. Briefly describe the five main ethical principles in Confucianism.
2. Answer question 2 in "Discussion," p. 326 of Lewis.
3. Define the following terms:

yang

yin

Dao

Analects

Meng-zi

Lao-zi

Tian-Tai

Pure Land

Dalai Lama

Chapter 10

1. Answer questions 2 and 4 in "Discussion," pp. 351-352 of Lewis.
2. Define the following terms:

Shinto

kami

Jodo

Amida Buddha

Zen

Soka Gakkai

mandala

Seicho No Ie

Chapter 11

1. What does Hick mean by "Son of God"?
2. What is the "axial period" of religion as defined by Karl Jaspers?
3. What does Hick mean by the "Copernican Revolution" in religion?
4. What term does Hick prefer instead of "God"?
5. What does Hick mean by "salvation"?
6. Answer questions 2 and 4 in "Discussion," p. 366 of Lewis.

Chapter 12

1. What does Rahner mean by "explicit Christianity" and "anonymous Christianity"?
2. How does Rahner describe salvation?
3. What biblical texts does Rahner appeal to in support of his view?
4. Answer questions 2 and 4 in "Discussion," p. 380 of Lewis.

Chapter 13

1. What challenge does Newbiggin raise to the claim that there is no absolute truth?
2. Answer questions 1, 4, and 5 in "Discussion," pp. 394-395 of Lewis.

Chapter 14

Answer questions 2 and 3 in "Discussion," p. 403 of Lewis.

Evaluation of Grades

Grades will be determined on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale--

A for 93-100, B for 85-92, C for 77-84, D for 70-76, and F for 69 or below.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Live student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. The course on the New Orleans campus will be connected synchronously via Web conferencing with Internet students. These courses will require weekly attendance at the stated class meeting times.
2. Students are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in the graduate catalog. (See "Absences" category in the website catalog at: <https://catalog.nobts.edu/generalinfo/academicpolicies>.)
3. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a class session.

Class Policies

Absences are limited in workshop classes (see catalog).

Late Work will be penalized. All late work will be assessed a proportional penalty.

Borderline Grades will be determined by the numerical grade received, unless the student's promptness and faithfulness in class attendance, positive attitude and contribution in class discussions, and preparedness and attentiveness in class warrants special consideration. These factors only apply when the student is within a few points of the next higher grade.

Appropriate Conduct in Class is especially important in an academic workshop class, in order that all students can have a chance to hear and participate in class discussions. Personal student conversations during class time disrupt the learning experience of other class members, as does internet surfing and phone texting, and will not be tolerated.

Help for Writing Papers at "The Write Stuff"

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Course Schedule

The class meets at the times noted (CST) each day of the workshop. Dr. Stewart's complementary class meets after our class each day. Please be on time & do not plan on missing any class sessions.

Date	Topic	Assignment
5/24 1-2 pm	Chapel	
5/24 2-5 pm	Studying World Religions Encountering Judaism	Understanding World Religions Assignment (preferably)
5/25 8:30- 11:30 am	Encountering Hinduism	
5/26 8:30- 11:30 am	Encountering Buddhism Encountering Eastern Syncretistic & Dualistic World Religions (Part A)	
5/27 8:30- 11:30 am	Encountering Eastern Syncretistic & Dualistic World Religions (Part B)	
5/28 8:30- 11:30 am	Joint Session with Destiny of the Unevangelized class	
6/10		Understanding World Religions assignment due
6/20		Focused Reading assignment due
7/1		Personal visit critique due

Selected Bibliography

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