1-1-2009

MS 674 Introduction to World Religions

Terry C. Muck

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation

http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/2456

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.
Course: MS674 W1 (SP 2009)
Title: Introduction to World Religions
Hours: 3.00
Published: Yes, on 02/05/2009
Prerequisites:

IS501

Department: Christian Mission
Faculty: Dr. Terry Muck

Email: terry.muck@asburyseminary.edu
Office: MC
SPO: 949

Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00a to 9:15a in SH231.

Maximum Registration: 50
Catalog Description: An introduction to the origin, history, and basic tenets of each of the major religious traditions of the world—Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism. Students learn basic religious study skills, and engage in research projects in one or more of these religions. Meets with MW708 on the Kentucky Campus.

Objectives:
In this course, students study the origin, history, and basic tenets of each of the major religious traditions of the world—Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism. Students learn basic religious study skills, and engage in research projects in one or more of these religions.

II. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS
Terry C. Muck. *How To Study Religion*.

III. ASSIGNMENTS
1. Attendance, participation, quiz (10 percent)
2. Four written exercises (10 percent each)
3. Read the texts
4. Two exams (25 percent each)

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE
Feb. 10 - What is religion? Why study religion? Noss, Chap. 1. Muck, Chap. 1
Feb. 12 - Three Views of Religion (*Exercise #1* - A Three View Visit - Due March 5)
The Religious Studies Attitude; Quiz; Muck, Chaps. 2, 3
Feb. 17 - Hinduism: History
Noss, Chap. 3
Feb. 19 - Hinduism: Beliefs
Noss, Chap. 4
Feb. 24 - Buddhism: History
Noss, Chap. 6
Feb. 26 - Buddhism: Beliefs
Noss, Chap. 7
March 3 - Determining a Religious Studies Event
Muck, Chap. 4 (*Exercise #2* - Isolate An Event - Due April 9)
March 5 - Jainism
Noss, Chap. 5
March 10 - Sikhism
Noss, Chap. 8
March 12 - Taoism
Noss, Chap. 9
March 17 - Confucianism
Noss, Chap. 10

March 19 - How To Talk To Someone About Religion
Muck, Chap. 5 (Exercise #3 - Interview - Due April 16)

March 24 - EXAM #1

March 26 - No Class

March 30 – April 3 - Reading Week

April 7 - How to Compare and Contrast Religions
Muck, Chap. 7 (Exercise #4 - Compare/Contrast - Due April 28)

April 9 - Roots of Western Religions: A Different View; Zoroastrianism
Noss, Chaps. 2, 12; Muck, Chap. 6 EXERCISE #2 DUE

April 14 - Judaism: History
Noss, Chap. 13

April 16 - Judaism: Beliefs and Practices EXERCISE #3 DUE
Noss, Chap. 14

April 21 - Christianity
Noss, Chaps. 15, 16

April 23 - The Question of Truth
Muck, Chap. 8

April 28 - Islam: History EXERCISE #4 DUE
Noss, Chap. 17

April 30 - Islam: Beliefs
Noss, Chap. 18

May 5 - How to Continue Studying Religion Muck, Chap. 9

May 7 - Christianity and the Other Religions

May 12 - EXAM #2

V. EXERCISES

Exercise #1 - A Three View Visit. Write three, one page (typewritten, double spaced) descriptions of a religious service you have attended recently. 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, or the philosopher). See Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 27-37. Due March 5.

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. Four to five typewritten, double spaced pages. See Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 51-59. Due April 9.

Exercise #3 - Interview. Interview a non-Christian person about a religious topic. Plan on a twenty minute interview, and then write up the results in a five page paper. Include in the paper a statement of the interview time, location, and subject, and a description both physical and biographical 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:

What are your main spiritual and theological images? (For example, if the subject is a Buddhist, you might ask her or him to consider the Buddha: Is your mental image of Buddha sitting in a meditative posture? In India? Teaching? etc.)

How do these key images apply to your life?

How do your images apply to your religious community’s life?

What parts of your religious tradition are most important to your spiritual life? Give examples.

What parts of your tradition are not so important to your spiritual life? Example?

Feel free to try some different approach to the interview.

See Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 61-70. Due April 16.

Exercise #4 - Compare and Contrast. Do a religious studies comparison along the lines described in Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 83-92. Four to five typewritten, double spaced pages. Due April 28.

VI. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to do field research into a religion’s worship practice and behavior.
2. Students will be able to interview people about their religious beliefs.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast discrete elements of religious belief systems other than their own.
4. Students will understand the basic history, beliefs and practices of eight world religions.