

York College of Pennsylvania
World Religions, REL 265
Course Syllabus: Fall 2020

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Class Times and Location

Section 265.101 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM MWF HUM 144

Catalog description: An introduction to the world’s Living Religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The role of primitive religions and the confrontation of religions in our contemporary world will also be studied.

GenNext courses: This course is designed to fulfill the **Disciplinary Perspectives Humanities Outcomes** of Generation Next General Education.

Descriptive Purpose of the Disciplinary Perspectives Element:

Generation Next Disciplinary Perspective courses demonstrate the ways that knowledge is constructed in various academic disciplines. The courses taken within Disciplinary Perspectives introduce students to concepts and methodologies of that particular broad disciplinary realm. These courses use the content to expose the methodologies that disciplines use to arrive at that knowledge, as well as to help students acquire general education student learning outcomes appropriate for the disciplinary area. These courses provide students with the genuine basis for integrative learning in the Constellations and in the majors. Provided with such an understanding, students are better prepared to take on more in-depth work in a variety of disciplines, and apply other disciplinary approaches to their own major-specific work. Faculty teach these courses from their own area of knowledge and expertise, while situating that area within the broader disciplinary categories, thus helping students to see shared approaches among the particular disciplines within a given category.

REL 265: World Religions introduces students to the academic study of religion by examining a range of world religions. Because the world is increasingly multicultural and globalized, future professionals should be familiar with a range of human cultures and religions. so that they can interact with others who may have radically different beliefs and practices, in a thoughtful and respectful way.

Course Prerequisites: None

Required Materials

Textbooks:

“World Religions in a Thematic Perspective: With Supplementary Readings from World Scriptures” (*a custom text available from the book store*)

Course Resources

The primary resource for this class is the instructor's website:

<http://www.davidwaynelaymanphd.com/york-college.html>.

The student will be able to find the following resources: Syllabus, Lecture Notes, links to required videos, Grading Rubrics for Essays, "Grading Grid," and a list of Extra Credit Events.

Student learning outcomes

The set of Disciplinary Perspectives courses will FOCUS upon facilitating the student's ability to:

- 1) Describe discipline-specific knowledge, including vocabulary, concepts, principles, terminology, and major theories.
- 2) Recognize methods by which the discipline a) creates, b) evaluates, and c) communicates knowledge and/or products.
- 3) Interpret evidence appropriate for the line of inquiry and hypothesis.
- 4) Examine social, political, economic, and/or cultural issues in a disciplinary context.
- 5) Discuss how humanity has reacted to and been shaped by historical and/or contemporary social, political, economic, and cultural issues.

Evaluation Criteria

Grades will be based on four types of assignments:

1. **Four** Quizzes;
2. **Three Essays** (of differing styles and lengths):
 - a. A "reflection essay," between 400 and 600 words;
 - b. The "Signature Assignment," 4-5 page essay, for Generation Next gen-ed requirements
 - c. An "exploratory essay," 2-3 pages.
3. A **Worship/Ritual Report**. See details below.

Quizzes

1. Probable dates of the quizzes are indicated in the course calendar by bold print.
2. The Quizzes will be primarily multiple choice, with a few True/False, and 2-3 Short-answer. A Study Guide for each Quiz is available at the end of the syllabus.
3. Each quiz will be 30 points, will be posted on either Canvas or Moodle (TBD). (The grade is converted to a 100-point scale for purposes of final percentage calculation.)
4. The cumulative calculation for quizzes will be based on the **3** highest grades (the lowest quiz grade will be dropped).

General Formatting Requirements for all Written Assignments

1. One inch margins on all sides (= "Normal" Margins on most versions of MS Word)
2. Double-spaced.
3. Must use a 12-pt. size font, preferably a standard "serif" font such as Times New Roman. (If you use Cambria, you can make it 11 points.)
4. Each paragraph must have first line indentation (in MS Word, this is Paragraph>Special> First Line);
5. Do *not* be format with fully justified margins; do *not* include extra space between paragraphs. (The instructor will illustrate this in class.)
6. Do *not* enclose in a folder or holder.
7. Must have a *separate cover page*, to include the following information:

- a. Name, REL 265.101, “Essay # ...” (correct number).
- b. Essays ## 1 & 2 must include the “Grading Grid #1” posted on the instructor’s website. Failure do so will result in a deduction of -5 points.
- c. Essay #3 will use a different Grid that the instructor will provide.

Essays

1. “Reflection Essay” due **Sept. 4**: “Is the “god”/“spirit” experienced in the Huichol peyote ritual “real” or simply “in one’s head?” Is there a difference between those two states? (Can one argue that an experience “in one’s head” *is* real?) Write between 400 and 600 words double-spaced ($\approx 1\frac{1}{2} - 2$ pages).
2. “Signature Assignment” **October 5**.
 - a. This essay is a “thesis-supporting” essay. I.e. you will answer the following question:
 - b. **Is the God of the Bible the same deity (divinity) as the “Allah” of the Qur’an?**
 - c. A complete “Study Guide and Readings for the Signature Assignment” is posted on the instructor’s web site. It includes a detailed list of reserve resources in the library.
 - d. The essay should be **4-5 pages long**, $\approx 1500 - 1750$ words.
 - e. **Citation requirements**
 - Citations: **Two types of material must be cited**: direct quotes from some source consulted by the student (enclosed in quotation marks) and paraphrases (material based upon some source, but reworded in the student’s own language).
 - **Documentation Style**: The preferred form of documentation is “MLA.” If the student is not familiar with that form, simply follow this form for a direct quotation: “...togerato mento examina (Smith, 111).” For paraphrases from a range of pages of some source(s), the student can summarize the sources **at the end of the paragraph** in the following manner: ...togerato mento examina (Smith, 111-114, 120).
 - For websites, use the following form: <author> [if it can be determined], <title>, accessed <date>. If in doubt, there are a number of citation generators: I recommend, <http://www.easybib.com/mla7-format/website-citation>.
 - Works Cited Page
 - (1) The form for the Works Cited should follow the form of documentation style. If the student uses the documentation style suggested above, then the basic style for a cited work should be: “Novak, Philip, ed. *The World’s Wisdom*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.”
 - (2) Web sites are documented as follows: Author. Title of web page. Title of Web Site [if different from page]. Publisher [if known—look for Copyright date], publication or copyright date. Web. Date of access, date/month/year.
 - (3) You only need to give the full web site if it cannot be easily located from author or title. (The student is advised to test this before deleting the web site address.)
3. Essay #3 **November 16** (“Exploratory Essay”)
 - a. **Is the COVID-9 (“corona virus”) pandemic evil?** (You get to define what you think “evil” means.) What, if anything, is the “solution” to the suffering people are experiencing in this pandemic—illness, death, isolation, unemployment, etc.
 - b. Use at least ONE of the religions we studied (Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism), although you are free to compare TWO of the religions.
 - c. *Length: 2-3 pages*. This will be graded in accordance with the Rubric for Essays ##1 & 2. Please attach the Grading Grid to the essay.

Ritual/Worship Report: General Guidelines and Grading Rubric

1. This assignment is a study of ritual and/or worship in a religion. It is a research assignment.
 - a. The instructor understands that most students will not be able to use the physical facilities of a library. While the student may use sources like “Wikipedia,” he or she must *not* rely on such sources *exclusively*.
 - b. The student is responsible to use a variety of expert on-line resources. If the student has any questions about whether of his/her sources meets that criteria, he/she should check with the instructor.
2. This assignment is due by **Dec. 1, 8:00 am** in the instructor’s email. *Use the following address: dwlaman@icloud.com.*
 - a. In the subject line of the email, write “REL 265 Ritual Report”
 - b. Your *name* must appear at the *beginning* of the *title* of the report, *last name first*: for example: “Smith, Joanna REL 265 Ritual Report F2020” (or something similar).
3. Formats: the student will *either* write an essay *or* create a presentation (**not both**)
 - a. A paper must be a MS Word document, or saved in that format
 - c. A presentation can be either Powerpoint or (Apple) Keynote. It will *not* be presented to the class.
4. The student is free to select *any* religion, including one that we did not study in this class.
 - a. If the student is religious, then he or she must report on a religion *different from what he/she is familiar with*.
 - b. If a student is a Protestant or evangelical Christian, and wants to report on Christianity, then he or she must report on either Roman Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy.
 - c. If a student is a Catholic or Orthodox Christianity, and wants to report on Christianity, then he or she must report on some form of Evangelical Christianity, or “generic” Protestant.
 - d. If the student is uncertain about this requirement, then he or she should contact the instructor.
5. The student will apply the instructor’s discussion of the Five “**Primary Patterns of Worship**” (Lectures Part 2, slide #28 in the lecture notes).
 - a. In the following questions, “god or gods” refers to whatever or however the religion understands “ultimate reality” or “the sacred” to be ; e.g., in Buddhism it might be “nirvana,” or in Hinduism it might be “Brahman,” or one or more avatars of Brahman).
 - b. Sacred **presence**: what does the religion you are studying do to make god or gods present?
 - c. Sacred **power**: in what ways does the religion you are studying manifest the god’s or gods’ power (are their miracles? Magical objects?);
 - d. Sacred **community**: how does the religion you are studying use or create community? What is the role of community in that religion (e.g., in Christianity you would discuss “the church,” both the building and the people meeting in the building)?
 - e. Sacred **places**: Are there places that are especially sacred for the religion you are studying? This may include places that people in that religion go on pilgrimage. It may be a specific location (e.g., Mecca), or a generic class of locations (e.g., mountains or rivers).
 - f. Sacred **time**: Does the religion have particular days or a calendar (e.g., for Christians: Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter; we’ll discuss the religious calendar of Judaism).x

6. Grading
 - a. The discussion of *each* “pattern” is worth **16** points. This includes:
 1. *factual accuracy*;
 2. *insight* into “how the religion works”—what makes those practices “do that”?
 - b. Style and clarity (Design in the case of presentations): **10** points.
 - c. Grammar, spelling, punctuation: **10** points.
7. The total points possible are **100**: (16×5)+10+10.

Emailing Documents

1. The document must be saved as a **Word document** (.doc or .docx). *Google Docs will not be accepted*. If the essay is written in Google Docs, the students must export the essay: File/Download/Microsoft Word (.docx). This exported essay will be saved on the student’s computer. *That file* must then be attached to the email sent to the instructor.
 - a. The email should be addressed to dwlayman@icloud.com.
 - b. The *subject line* in the email must read as follows: “REL 265 [essay number or name] attached”.
 - c. The *title* of the essay (which will be attached to the email) must read as follows: “[last name], [first name], [essay number or name]”.
 - d. Emails/essays that fail to follow the above guidelines will be refused and returned to sender for correction and resubmission.
2. Please wait for a return receipt. If the instructor does not send you one within 6 hours, or within 3 hours the next morning if you sent it after 9 pm, assume he did not receive the document.
3. The student is responsible for ensuring that the professor receives the document. The professor is not responsible for failure to attach a document, incorrect email addressing, or any technical errors in the internet delivery system.

Final Grade Calculation and Criteria

The assignments are weighted as follows:

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----|
| Quizzes..... | 11% each..... | 33% |
| Essay #1 | | 10% |
| Signature Essay | | 24% |
| Essay #3 | | 16% |
| Visit Report..... | | 17% |

(See p. 11 for extra credit opportunities.)

Final Grade Criteria

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 90.0% and above | 4 (Excellent): Denotes accomplishment that is truly distinctive and decidedly outstanding |
| 85.0-89.9% | 3.5 (Very Good): Denotes mastery of the subject matter |
| 80.0-84.9% | 3 (Good): Denotes considerable understanding of the subject matter |
| 75.0-79.9% | 2.5 (Above Average): Denotes above average understanding of the subject matter |
| 69.5-74.9% | 2 (Average): Denotes average understanding of the subject matter |
| 59.5-69.4% | 1 (Below Average): Denotes below average understanding of the subject matter |
| 59.4% and below | 0 (Failure): Denotes inadequate understanding of the subject matter |

Any changes upward in this scale (e.g, changing an 84.9% to 85.0%) are made purely at the instructor's discretion. The instructor *will not consider any appeal* from students who do not receive the benefit of such a change.

Late Submission of Essays

Late Essays will be penalized with a **5-point deduction per day**.

1. Weekends will count as 1 day. E.g., if a paper is due on Friday, and is turned in on the following Monday, a 85% paper would be reduced to 75% (Sat/S, Mon.= -10 pts.).
2. Since the instructor is only on campus Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, in order to minimize the deduction the student can turn in a late essay in two possible ways:
 - a. Hand in the essay to the Administrative Assistant of the Department of Arts and the Humanities in WOLF HALL, ROOM 206, Ms. Allison Altland. She will stamp the essay with the date/time of submission.
 - i. *Never* place in the essay in the black wall file outside the instructor's office. This violates student confidentiality laws. The date of submission will be the date the instructor picks up the document and the essay will be penalized by an *additional 10* points.
 - b. The student can send the late essay *via email*. The rules stated above for emailing documents must be followed. Documents that fail to follow the above guidelines will be refused and returned to sender for correction and resubmission.
3. The following is a *partial* list of excuses that will *not* be accepted:
 - "I was sick."
 - "I had to work last night."
 - "My computer broke."
 - "The printer was out of toner/paper."
 - "Email didn't work."
 - "I thought I sent it."
 - "I put it in your [faculty] mailbox yesterday."
 - "I sent you a version earlier" [if the student failed to follow the above guidelines]

Institutional Policies

Tutoring and Study Skills Coaching: Students are encouraged to enhance their learning by meeting with the tutors and the study skills coaches in the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and in the Writing Center. The CTL and Writing Center offers one-on-one sessions with peer and professional tutors who will provide feedback and suggestions for assignments in every course. Contact the CTL to make an appointment by calling 815-1216 or stopping by HUM Room 01. The web site for CTL is <https://my.ycp.edu/web/center-for-teaching-and-learning/home> .

Communication Standards

York College recognizes the importance of effective communication in all disciplines and careers. Therefore, students are expected to competently analyze, synthesize, organize, and articulate course material in papers, examinations and presentations. In addition, students should know and use communication skills current to their field of study, recognize the need for revision as part of their writing process, and employ standard conventions of English usage in both writing and speaking. Students may be asked to further revise assignments that do not demonstrate effective use of these communication skills.

Use of Personal Technology in the Classroom

While York College recognizes students' need for educational and emergency-related technological devices such as laptops, mobile devices, cellular phones, etc., using them unethically or recreationally during class time is never appropriate. The college recognizes and supports faculty members' authority to regulate in their classrooms student use of all electronic devices.

Disability Support Services (adopted 2015)

In accordance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, York College and its faculty are obliged to make reasonable classroom and physical accommodations for students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability in need of classroom accommodations and have not already registered with Linda Miller, Director of Disability Support Services, please contact her at 815-1785 or lmille18@ycp.edu to discuss policies and procedures related to disability services and to establish the accommodations for which you are eligible.

Academic Integrity Policy (adopted 2015)

York College of Pennsylvania, as an institution of higher education, serves to promote and sustain the creation, acquisition, and dissemination of knowledge. In order to fulfill this purpose, an environment of integrity, dependability and honesty must be maintained by all members of the York College community. Without a foundation based on intellectual honesty and integrity, the very ability to uphold the academic endeavors that York College strives to pursue is inhibited.

The Spartan Oath embodies the expectation that all members of the York College community foster an environment of integrity and responsibility. Recognize that adhering to an ethical standard of honesty leads to professional, mature and responsible citizens, and enables society at large to trust our scholarship, research, and conferred degrees. Thus, each member of the York College community must be truthful, honest, personally and professionally responsible, and respect the intellectual contributions of others.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Engaging in academic dishonesty is a violation of the school's academic integrity policy and is not tolerated at York College. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarism (i.e. passing someone else's words or ideas off as one's own without proper attribution), improper paraphrasing, fabricating research, falsifying academic documents, handing in material completed for another course, and submitting work not done independently (unless part of an explicitly collaborative project). Procedures for Academic Integrity Reporting and Appeals may be found in the College Catalog at: http://catalog.ycp.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=760#Academic_Integrity

This syllabus—including the Course Schedule and Study Guides that follow— is subject to revision by the instructor.

Course Schedule (next page)

Each date is followed by an "A" or "B" in parentheses. The A/B represents the "rotation" for attendance. Every student should have been assigned a "rotation" before school began. If you do not have a rotation please contact the instructor immediately. "A" students must only attend on "A" days; "B" students attend only on "B" days. There is also a "rotation calendar" on the final page of the syllabus.

AUGUST

26(A) *Syllabus* Numerals after the topic are page numbers in the custom textbook.

What are divine beings like?

28(B), 31(A) Shamanism4–6

SEPTEMBER

2(B), 4(A), 7(B) **Essay #1 Due Sept. 4**

Hinduism 7–10

9(A), 11(B), 14(A) Judaism.....11–25

16(B), 18(A) **Quiz #1** (Due Sept. 18 on Canvas/Moodle, arrangements TBA)

Islam26–28

21(B), 23(A), 25(B) Christianity29-39

28(A), 30(B) Preview of
“Signature Assignment” ..40–52

OCTOBER**How do we organize society?**

2(A), 5(B), 7(A) Hinduism54–65

Signature Assignment Due October 5

9(B), 12(A) Judaism.....66–74

14(B), 16(A) **Quiz #2** (Due Oct. 16, arrangements TBA)

Islam: 5 Pillars.....75–78

How should humans live (morality & ethics)?

19(B), 21(A) The Buddha80–87

23(B), 26(A) Buddhist Morality88–93

Quiz #3 (Oct. 25 arrangements TBA)

28(B), 30(A) Two Ways94–99

NOVEMBER

2(B), 4(A), 6(B) Confucianism100–109

9(A), 11(B) Taoism.....110–116

Primary Patterns of Worship

13(A), 16(B) **Essay #3** Due Nov. 16th; Primary Patterns of Worship

18(A), 20(B), 23(A) Primary Patterns (continued)

30 **Final Quiz** Due

December 1 Ritual Report Due via Email

Study Guides for Quizzes

Quiz #1

- Animism
- Shaman
- Ecstasy
- “charismatic”
- séance
- Hallucinogen(ic)
- Huichol
- Pilgrimage (Huichol)
- Peyote
- Divination
- Brahman
- Aryans
- Vedic Hinduism
- Indra
- Varuna
- Agni
- Soma
- Purus(h)a
- Avatars
- Saktas
- Vishnu
- Shiva
- Kali/Durga/Parvati
- Rama
- Krishna (Gopala)
- Ganesh
- Puja (room)
- Israelites
- Hebrew (language/scriptures)
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- Jacob/Israel
- Eponym
- Exodus
- Moses
- Yhwh
- “the LORD God”
- religion of the Israelites
- David, Solomon
- Nature of Israelite temple
- Israel/Judah
- Babylonian Exile
- Monotheism (origins/nature)
- Ethical monotheism
- “set-apartness”
- sanctification
- **the covenant (3 “kinds”)**
- Torah
- “creation,” “evil”
- “moral justice”
- prophets

Quiz #2

- Jesus
 - Kingdom of God
 - The Beatitudes
 - “the Son of man”
 - what happened to Jesus?
 - Lord
 - Christ/Messiah
 - Son of God
 - Logos
 - Incarnation
 - Trinity
 - **4 Hindu classes**
 - Dalit
 - Castes (diff. from classes)
 - Karma
 - Samsara
 - Moksha
 - Asceticism
 - “Atman is Brahman”
 - “(non-)dualism”
 - yogi
- **3 “ways of salvation”**
 - Laws of Manu
 - **3 “debts”**
 - **4 stages of life**
 - sannyasin
 - purity (concept)
 - sanctification
 - kashrut
 - “family purity”
 - halal
 - halakhah
 - rabbis
 - Dual (written and oral) Torah
 - **Tanak** (know 3 parts in English)
 - “no transparency of meaning”
 - The Mishnah
 - Judah the Patriarch
 - The Talmud, Gemara
 - “Independence of Halakhic Judgment”
 - “Fencing the Torah”

Quiz #3

- Islam (incl. meaning)
 - Qur’an
 - surah
 - Muhammad
 - Jibril
 - Abraham in Islam
 - Sunna
 - Umma
 - Hadith
 - Shari’a
 - “success” & shirk
 - **Five Pillars of Islam:**
 - Tawhid
 - Ramadan
 - Feast of Fast-Breaking
 - Ihram
 - Ka’bah
 - Feast of Sacrifice
 - Outline of reenactment of Abraham stories
- Jihad (greater/lesser)
 - jizrah
 - The Buddha
 - “4 sights”
 - “the great going forth”
 - Mara
 - Middle Way
 - **Four Noble Truths**
 - nirvana
 - Tathagata
 - **Eightfold Path**
 - Mindfulness
 - **Triple Gem**
 - **Ten Precepts**
 - Impermanence
 - Anatta
 - Dependent Origination (general idea)
 - Wheel of Becoming (general idea)

Quiz #4

- **Theravada and Mahayana** Buddhism
- Self-power vs. other-power
- Arhant vs. bodhisattva
- Buddha nature
- Sunyata
- Confucius
- “the Great Way” (general idea)
- Li
- Filial piety
- Shu
- Jen
- Chun-tzu
- Daoism
- The “Dao”
- Dao De Jing
- Wu-nian
- Wu-wei
- Be able to summarize rituals in “pre-modern religions”
- (True) Pure Land Buddhism
- Amitabha Buddha
- Salat, basic pattern
- Muezzin
- Minaret
- wudu
- Ra’ka (concept)
- Observance Days (Buddhism)
- Eucharist
- Al-Jumu`ah
- Ganges/Benares
- “pattern of pilgrimage”
- Kumbh(a) Mela
- Stupa
- Shabbat
- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Days of Awe
- Sukkot(h)
- Hanukkah
- Purim
- Pesah (Pesach/Passover)
- Seder
- Haggadah
- Matzah

Cultural Enrichment Events

Students enrolled in Department of English and Humanities courses are expected to attend various cultural enrichment events throughout the academic year. **The instructor will provide a schedule of these events when it becomes available.**

To receive credit for attendance, the student is to submit a one page report (the report itself must be at least 1/2 page long) on each event attended. Each successful report will receive *up to 0.5 points added to the final percentage of the student’s grade*. The instructor reserves the right to reduce the extra credit received for poorly prepared reports. The student can submit up to a total of **three** (3) reports, for a total extra credit of **1.5** point.

Rotation Calendar

SEPTEMBER

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | (A) | 01 | 02 B | 03 | 04 A | 05 |
| 06 | 07 B | 08 | 09 A | 10 | 11 B | 12 |
| 13 | 14 A | 15 | 16 B | 17 | 18 A | 19 |
| 20 | 21 B | 22 | 23 A | 24 | 25 B | 26 |
| 27 | 28 A | 29 | 30 B | | | |

OCT

| | | | | | | |
|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|
| | | | | 01 | 02 A | 03 |
| 04 | 05 B | 06 | 07 A | 08 | 09 B | 10 |
| 11 | 12 A | 13 | 14 B | 15 | 16 A | 17 |
| 18 | 19 B | 20 | 21 A | 22 | 23 B | 24 |
| 25 | 26 A | 27 | 28 B | 29 | 30 A | 31 |

NOVEMBER

| | | | | | | |
|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|
| 01 | 02 B | 03 | 04 A | 05 | 06 B | 07 |
| 08 | 09 A | 10 | 11 B | 12 | 13 A | 14 |
| 15 | 16 B | 17 | 18 A | 19 | 20 B | 21 |
| 22 | 23 A | | | | | |