TH/WM 659: EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY & WORLD RELIGIONS  
Fall Term 2010-2011  
Thursdays, 1:15-4:15 p.m.  
Dr. Jack Davis, Instructor

Course Description:

A study of the history, rituals, doctrines and sacred scriptures of five major religious traditions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese religions. This course is designed to equip the student to understand these world religions and to develop skills and insights for sharing the Christian message with those who practice these non-Christian faiths. The course will include lecture, discussion, video, and study of sacred texts.

Textbooks:

The following books are required:

Mascaro, The Bhagavad Gita  
Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught  
Confucius, The Analects  
Dawood, tr., The Koran  
Hinnells, A New Handbook of Living Religions

The following books are recommended reading:

A.L.Basham, Origins & Development of Classical Hinduism  
David Burnett, Unearthly Powers  
Herman Wouk, This Is My God

Requirements:

Faithful class attendance and participation in class discussion is expected. Each student will write a 12-15 page paper on a topic related to one of the religions studied in the course (see appendix), or a 12-15 page area study analyzing the demographic, religious, historical, and cultural characteristics of a specific nation or people group, and developing a focused strategy for presenting the gospel in that context. Due date: Tuesday, Dec.21st. There will be a final exam during the week of Dec. 15-17th.

The date of Dec.9th is reserved as a back-up date in case of a snow cancellation, or for the purpose of a final review session or completion of unfinished course topics.

Evaluation:

For the final evaluation, the paper or area study and the final exam will each count one-half. A reading report is to be turned in with the final paper on May 3rd. Faithful class attendance and completion of assigned readings will help the student in borderline grading situations.

Grade Scale:

A+ = 98-100; A = 93-97; A- = 90-92; B+ = 88-89; B = 83-87; B- = 80-82; C+ = 78-79; 
C = 73-77; C- = 70-72; D = 65-69; F = 0-64.
Schedule of Topics:

9/16: Judaism: Texts, history, teachings, denominations

9/23: Judaism: Christian anti-semitism; Zionism; Arab-Israeli conflict

9/30: Islam: history, teachings

10/7: Islam: the Quran

10/21: Hinduism: history, teachings

10/28: Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita

11/4: Buddhism: history, teachings

11/18: Buddhism: Zen; Eastern religions come to America

12/2: Chinese religions; Religious Pluralism

12/9: Open date; review session

(NOTE: The above schedule may vary with the dynamics of class discussion).
**Reading Assignments:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>% Reading Completed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept.16</td>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Judaism”; handouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept.23</td>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Judaism”; handouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept.30</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Islam”; Koran, 1-245</td>
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<td>Oct.7</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Koran, 246-435; handouts</td>
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<td>Oct.28</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>Gita, 43-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov.4</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Buddhism”; Rahula, 1-66</td>
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<td>Nov.18</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>Rahula, 67-138</td>
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<td>Dec.2</td>
<td>Chinese religions</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Chinese Religions”; <em>The Analects</em></td>
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**Class Attendance:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Attended Class?</th>
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<td>Sept.16</td>
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<td>[Dec.9:]</td>
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**Total # classes attended:***

Name: ______________________ Box#: _____________ email: ____________________________
Appendix: Sample Paper Topics

Scripture and Tradition in Judaism

Ordination of Women in Modern Judaism

Issues in Christian-Jewish Dialogue

Christian Anti-Semitism

Christian Zionism and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Modern State of Israel and Biblical Prophecy

Rabbinic Judaism and Christian Biblical Interpretation

The Rise of Rabbinic Judaism

Presenting the Gospel in a Jewish Context

Jesus in the Quran

Explaining the Trinity to a Muslim

Islamic Concept of Prophethood

Islamic Concept of Jihad

The Role of Women in Islamic Society

Concepts of God in Hinduism

Concepts of Salvation in Hinduism

The Caste System in Hindu Tradition

Role of Women in Hinduism

The Search for the Historical Buddha

Historical Development of Zen

Buddhist Concept of Nirvana

Eastern Techniques of Meditation

Eastern Religions Came to America

Eastern Religions and the "New Age"
Presenting the Gospel in an Eastern/New Age Context

(NOTE: These are samples only; other topics may be pursued in consultation with the instructor.)