TH/WM 659: EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY & WORLD RELIGIONS
Fall Term 2013
Thursdays, 2:00-5:00 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 (ISBN 0140441212)
Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught (ISBN 0802130313) [order used from Amazon]
Dawood, tr., The Koran (ISBN 0140445587)

Hinnells, A New Handbook of Living Religions (ISBN 0140514805)

The following books are recommended reading:

David Burnett, Unearthly Powers (ISBN 0840796129)
Herman Wouk, This Is My God (ISBN 06716222587)

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, December 17th. There will be a final exam on Thursday December 12th.

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 December 17th. 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:

9/12: Judaism: Texts, history, teachings, denominations

9/19: Judaism: Christian anti-semitism; Zionism; Arab-Israeli conflict

9/26: Islam: history, teachings

10/3: Islam: the Quran

10/10: Hinduism: history, teachings

10/24: Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita

10/31: Buddhism: history, teachings

11/7: Buddhism: Zen; Eastern religions come to America

11/21: Chinese religions and New Age religions

12/5: Final Review and Summary; Religious Pluralism

12/12: Final Exam  [subject to adjustment by Registration Office]

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

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading:</th>
<th>% Reading Completed:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 12:</td>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Judaism”; handouts</td>
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<td>Sep. 19:</td>
<td>Judaism</td>
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<td>Islam</td>
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<td>Koran, 1-245</td>
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<td>Oct. 3:</td>
<td>Islam</td>
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<td>Oct. 10:</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
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<td>Gita, 1-42</td>
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<td>Oct. 24:</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>Gita, 43-86</td>
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<td>Oct. 31:</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
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<td>Rahula, 1-66</td>
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<td>Nov. 7:</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>Rahula, 67-138</td>
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<td>Nov. 21:</td>
<td>Chinese religions</td>
<td>Hinnells, “Chinese Religions”;</td>
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### Class Attendance:

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<td>Dec. 5:</td>
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Total # classes attended:
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.)
Judaism:


Islam:


**Hinduism:**


_________. *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*. Berkeley,
Buddhism:


Chinese Religions:


Makeham, John. *Lost Soul: “Confucianism” in Contemporary Chinese Academic

Inter-Religious Dialogue:

Gort, Jerald D., Henry Jansen, and Hendrik M. Vroom, eds. Religions View


Rahner, Karl. “Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions,” in Hick and Hebbelthwaite, eds, Christianity and Other Religions, pp. 52-79.


Schouten, Jan Peter. Jesus as Guru: Images of Christ among Hindus and Christians


