

Syllabus for  
**eTHE 303/ePRM 573—Major Religions of the World**

3.0 Credit Hours

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A historical survey of current world religions. Emphasizes major beliefs and ethics of various religions.

Prerequisites: None.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- A. Understand the major religions.
- B. Understand the contemporary influence of each of the major religions.
- C. Respect the constituents of the major religions.
- D. Understand the significant similarities and differences of each of the major religions in relation to Christianity.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Identify and discuss the major elements of each world religion.
- B. Recognize the influence of each major religion on today's society.
- C. Record one's subjective response to the various religions when confronted by them through literature, film, etc.
- D. Converse intelligently and in a non threatening way with constituents (guest speakers) of the various major religions.
- E. Analyze each major religion for possible bridges for effective evangelism.
- F. Research and present a selected religion.

IV. TEXTBOOKS

Required Textbooks:

Esposito, John, Darrell Fasching and Todd Lewis. *World Religions Today*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Nigosian, S.A. *World Religions: A Historical Approach*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston, New York: Bedford, St. Martin's, 2008.

Tennent, Timothy C. *Christianity at Religious Roundtable*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

Recommended Textbooks:

Corduan, W. *Neighboring Faiths*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1998.

George, Timothy. *Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

House, H. Wayne. *Charts of World Religions*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

Hunt, A.D. et al. *Ethics of World Religions*. San Diego: Greenhaven, 1998.

Knitter, Paul F. *No Other Name?* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985.

Lutzer, Erwin. *Christ Among Other Gods*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.

McDermott, Gerald. *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions?* Downers Grove: IVP, 2000.

Nielsen, Niels. *Religions of the World*. Third Edition. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.

Porterfield, Amanda. *The Power of Religion*. NY: Oxford, 1998.

Stackhouse, John Gordon, ed. *No Other Gods Before Me*. Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing, 2001.

Vroom, Hendrick. *No Other Gods*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

V. COURSE PROCEDURES

A. Course Prerequisites: None

B. Evaluation Procedures:

1. Grading Scale

A = 90-100

D = 60-69

B = 80-89

F = below 60

C = 70-79

2. Composition of assignments

Quizzes

21%

Assignments

18%

Mission Strategy Paper

16%

Midterm Exam

20%

Final Exam

25%

TOTAL

100%

a. Quizzes: There will be seven quizzes with true/false and/or multiple choice questions (units 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13). They will be objective in form, focusing on the facts of the material covered in the respective unit.

b. Assignments: Read the weekly unit assignment in the course books. Take notes. There are also lectures to listen to. Every other week, you are supposed to answer the questions accompanying the material of the last two units. The questions are scheduled for unit 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14.

- c. Mission Strategy Paper: Suggest a mission strategy for one major religion, including supporting information about cultural, social and political issues. The paper should be 8 double-spaced pages long. More instruction will be given in the class.
- d. Midterm Exam: An online test covering the first 8 units. More instruction will be given in the class.
- e. Final Exam: A comprehensive online test covering units 1-15. More instruction will be given in the class.

#### C. Procedures

- 1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Livets Ord Theological Seminary. Absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
- 2. Students and faculty at Livets Ord Theological Seminary must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, video, multimedia, or computer software. By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means.
- 3. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.

### VI. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

#### A. Evaluation Policies

- 1. Completion of a Course
  - a. All assignments for each Week or Unit are due on the week established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus or assigned in class. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date will be penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day.** All work turned in two weeks after the assignment deadline will be received but will be granted a grade of zero for that assignment.
  - b. No work is accepted after the final exam date.
- 2. Incompletes
  - a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the instructor and the department chair by written petition that his or her work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that

are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete will be excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.

- b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval at least one week prior to the end of normal classes. The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete. The petition must be approved by the appropriate academic committee of the school.

### 3. Examinations and Other Assignments

- a. Early examinations **are not** allowed.
- b. Late examinations are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family, sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician). In fairness to all students, some persons should not have more time to prepare for an examination than others. **The granting of a late examination request is rare.**
- c. A Petition for Late Examination without penalty must be signed by the professor and the Dean. Proper documentation must accompany the petition. The student must schedule the makeup exam with the professor of the course. The exam must be taken no later than five (5) calendar days after the approval of the petition. **Grade penalties may be applied.**
- d. **All exams will be given as scheduled. It is the student's responsibility when purchasing airline tickets, for example, to take this schedule into consideration. Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**
- e. These requirements apply to all quizzes, tests, and examinations administered by the school.

### 4. Attendance

- a. The Official Attendance Policy for the LOTS is as follows for a three credit course: the missing of 6 class sessions (two weeks) will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 12 class sessions (four weeks) will automatically result in a grade of "F."
- b. **The absences allowed prior to grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses, and are not designed for indiscriminate use.** Many students incorrectly assume that they may use these allowable absences as unexcused "cuts" from class. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.

- c. Students are expected to be prompt for classes. **Two tardies will equal one absence.**

5. Internet Study Policies

- a. The student is expected to listen to all the internet lectures and participate in all activities unless administratively excused. Only administrative excuses, notice by e-mail or phone to the office or teacher, are accepted.
- b. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
- c. Illness and injuries are not considered excused absences (You always have to notify your teacher when for some reason you cannot do certain course work).

B. Academic Honesty

1. By signing the Honor Code, the student has pledged, "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments."
2. The Catalog and Student Handbook reiterate that "no Christian intellectual community can maintain its integrity or be faithful to its members if violations of its central purpose are tolerated for any reason. This principle of intellectual responsibility applies to all work done by students."
3. Cheating and plagiarism attack the basis for academic accreditation and Judeo-Christian civilization. They are violations of God's moral codes. Plagiarism is literary or artistic theft and misrepresentation. It is not only a moral wrong, but it is illegal. For a full description of plagiarism, see Alexander Lindley, Plagiarism and Originality, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1952.
4. No collaboration among students on assignments will be allowed without prior written approval from the professor. The Catalog specifies that "each student will do his or her own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments. A student violating this principle of intellectual responsibility will receive an F grade in the course involved and face disciplinary action including possible suspension from Livets Ord Theological Seminary."

VII. COURSE CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Esposito</u>	<u>Reading Nigosian</u>	<u>Tennent</u>
Unit 1	Understanding Religion Globalization 2-33 Spectrum of views		1-14	16-27
Unit 2	Judaism Zoroastrianism		318-362 297-317	
Unit 3	Christianity		363-411	
Unit 4	Premodern Hinduism Jainism	270-300	207-217	
Unit 5	Modern Hinduism Sikhism	301-339	218-230	
Unit 6	Hinduism and Christianity			37-88
Unit 7	Taoism and Confucianism		233-271	
Unit 8	Shinto MIDTERM EXAM		272-294	
Unit 9	Premodern Buddhism	340-379		
Unit 10	Modern Buddhism	380-415		
Unit 11	Buddhism and Christianity			89-140
Unit 12	Premodern Islam	194-234		
Unit 13	Modern Islam 235-269 Baha'i		465-478	
Unit 14	Islam and Christianity			141-198
Unit 15	New Religions Concluding Comparison	496-531	506-515	
	FINAL EXAM			

**Course Inventory for LOTS' Student Learning Outcomes**  
**eTHE 303/ePRM 573—Major Religions of the World**

This course contributes to the LOTS student learning outcomes as indicated below:

**Significant Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

**Moderate Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

**Minimal Contribution** – Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

**No Contribution** – Does not address the outcome.

The Student Learning Glossary at <http://ir.oru.edu/doc/glossary.pdf> defines each outcome and each of the proficiencies/capacities.

<b>OUTCOMES &amp; Proficiencies/Capacities</b>		<b>Significant Contribution</b>	<b>Moderate Contribution</b>	<b>Minimal Contribution</b>	<b>No Contribution</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Outcome #1 – Spiritually Alive Proficiencies/Capacities</b>				
1A	Biblical knowledge		X		
1B	Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit	X			
1C	Evangelistic capability	X			
1D	Ethical behavior	X			
<b>2</b>	<b>Outcome #2 – Intellectually Alert Proficiencies/Capacities</b>				
2A	Critical thinking		X		
2B	Information literacy	X			
2C	Global & historical perspectives	X			
2D	Aesthetic appreciation		X		
2E	Intellectual creativity		X		
<b>3</b>	<b>Outcome #3 – Physically Disciplined Proficiencies/Capacities</b>				
3A	Healthy lifestyle				X
3B	Physically disciplined lifestyle				X
<b>4</b>	<b>Outcome #4 – Socially Adept Proficiencies/Capacities</b>				
4A	Communication skills	X			
4B	Interpersonal skills	X			
4C	Appreciation of cultural & linguistic differences	X			
4D	Responsible citizenship	X			
4E	Leadership capacity		X		