

RELG 101: Introduction to Religious Studies

Prof. Dale C. Hathaway, Instructor

Jan 12, 2015 - May 05, 2015

Introduction to Religious Studies (3) -
CRN: 22306 - RELG 101 - 001
Winthrop University
Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies
MW 9:30 am - 10:45 am
Classroom: Kinard Building 301
Jan 12, 2015 - May 05, 2015
3 Credit Hours

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Course Description

The following syllabus is subject to change. Any modifications will be communicated clearly to the students and posted on /Blackboard.

Overview

Description: This course provides an introduction to the religious dimension of human existence. It examines various concepts of religion and the methods used in studying religious behavior and belief.

Through a series of selected readings, this class will reflect and discuss key elements of the academic study of religion. Discussion and various group activities will highlight experiences that point toward the sacred in the world we live in.

From lectures and a synthesis of reading reflections and discussions the class highlight some of the major questions in the scholarly study of religion. What is religion? How does or should religion relate to morality? What is the relation of religion to culture?

The readings will illustrate that there are a wide variety of ways to approach the study of religion. Through discussion and guided exercises we will reflect critically on our own religious tradition in comparison to other traditions. We will identify some of the ways in which different religious traditions impact the world we live in.

Student Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

The successful student in RELG 101 will:

- Recognize main ideas that characterize all religious thought and practice
- Identify theoretical issues surrounding the study of religion
- Identify different methodologies for the study of religion
- Recognize fundamental topics of religion: ritual, sacred communication, morality, and theodicy and the nature of evil

GNERD Requirements - University Level Competencies

RELG 101 helps students make progress toward the following University Level Competencies whereby Winthrop graduates :

think critically and solve problems by applying various methods for understanding the phenomenon of religion, the students will gain skills in critical problem solving.

are personally and socially responsible as students wrestle with the way in which religion is related to ethics, morality and social justice through class lectures, discussions and journals, the students will reflect on their own approach to personal and social responsibility.

understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live as the students learn to relate the function and meaning of religion to their own contemporary lives.

communicate effectively week by week in individual presentations and periodically through writing and exam assignments the students will expand their ability to communicate effectively.

Texts

Required Texts

Eliade, Mircea. *Sacred and Profane* ISBN-10: 015679201X ISBN-13: 978-0156792011 Wiesel, Elie. *Night* ISBN-10: 0374500010 ISBN-13: 978-0374500016 Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha* ISBN-10: 0553208845 ISBN-13: 978-0553208849 Tribble, Phyllis and Letty M. Russell, eds. *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children*: ISBN-10: 0664229824 ISBN-13: 978-0664229825

Course Requirements / Assignments

Class participation

Each student is expected to complete the week's readings ahead class and to participate actively in activities and discussions. Homework will occasionally be scheduled.

Weekly quizzes

Most weeks there will be an in-class, open-book quiz. These quizzes may not be made up.

Weekly journals

Each week the student will submit to Blackboard a double-entry journal reflecting on the week's readings. A sample and directions for this journal are posted on Blackboard.

Written Assignment

Each student will write a cumulative reflective paper on the course. This paper will consolidate and synthesize the weekly journal entries. Details of the assignment and the grading rubrics will be provided.

Examinations (3 including the final)

The three exams will cover the readings, and the topics covered in class. The third exam will be an oral exam. This will be taken in pairs. More information will be given as the course begins.

Grading Formula

%	Weight of assessments
15	Class Participation
10	Weekly reading log
15	Quizzes
40	Exams (4)
20	Paper
100	

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62

Academic Success Center

Winthrop's Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success. Note that these services are not just remedial or for students who are failing. Good students become even better by becoming more focused on what makes them successful.

Students With Disabilities

Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 323-3290. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from Services for Students with Disabilities, please inform me as early as possible in the semester.

Office of Nationally Competitive Awards

Winthrop's *Office of Nationally Competitive Awards* (ONCA) identifies and assists highly motivated and talented students to apply for nationally and internationally competitive awards, scholarships, fellowships, and unique opportunities both at home and abroad. ONCA gathers and disseminates award information and deadlines across the campus community, and serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff throughout the nationally competitive award nomination and application process. ONCA is located in Dinkins 222. Please fill out an online information form at the bottom of the ONCA webpage www.winthrop.edu/onca and email onca@winthrop.edu for more information.

Student Code Of Conduct

- Class attendance is required. I will take attendance.
- University policy states that you will not receive credit for the course if you miss more than 25% of the class. For this class, any classes missed beyond five (5) will reduce your grade. Please note that there are no automatically excused absences. "Cuts" are built in to provide for sickness, emergencies, sports travel and other engagements that require your absence – don't abuse them. If you have a difficulty that might lead to excessive absence, please contact me about it.
- There will be no makeup for the occasional quizzes.
- Arriving late for class is rude and disruptive. Please don't do it. You may be counted absent.
- Regardless of absence or lateness, you are responsible for all course material and requirements.
- Reading assignments are meant to be completed before class so that you can effectively participate in discussion. You will be quizzed on your reading.
- Each student will be expected to arrive in class each day prepared to discuss the assigned reading. Participation includes not only class preparation and involvement but attentive attendance.

- I can see no reason for the use of cell phones during this class. My policy follows that of the division of Arts and Sciences found at <http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/artscience/PolicyForHandHeldTech-April2014.pdf>.
- Laptops may be useful and sometimes essential in this class. There is clearly a temptation to be doing something other than course related work. My expectation is that you will only use your computer for course work. To do otherwise is to show disrespect for both teachers and students in the class and such disrespect will reduce your participation grade. Tablets are not allowed in class except by special permission of the instructor.
- You should be familiar with the full policy on this technology in the classroom for the College of Arts & Sciences.

Academic misconduct

As noted in the Student Conduct Code: “Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals.” The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the “Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy” in the online Student Handbook which can be accessed at <http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/studentconduct/StudentHandbook.pdf>. Dishonesty is a serious offense in all its forms, whether lying about reasons for an absence or missed assignment or cheating on a test or misrepresenting borrowed material as your own. It can result in a failing grade on a test, assignment, or the course, or even dismissal from the university.

