

## INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

Rel's T122-011

TR 11:00 – 12:15            Bobet 216

Fall 2008

Instructor: Dr. Catherine Wessinger

Phone: 865-3182

Office: 406 Bobet

wessing@loyno.edu

<http://www.loyno.edu/~wessing>

**OBJECTIVE:** To acquaint the student with the primary religious groups of the world in order to promote an awareness and understanding of the goals that have been of ultimate concern to various peoples as well as the methods used to achieve these goals. This will entail an exposure to the cultures that are the expression of these ultimate concerns. There will be a comparison of these religious/cultural groups in order to understand similarities and differences.

**Text:** Theodore M. Ludwig, The Sacred Paths: Understanding the Religions of the World 4th ed. (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006). LUDWIG

Special Edition of Time magazine on World Religions (2004). TIME

- T Aug. 26            First class
- R Aug. 28            Introduction  
LUDWIG: Chapter 1, "Perspectives of the Religious Path," 3-25.  
TIME: "Agus Bambang Priyanto," 2-3; "You've Gotta Have Faith," 3; "Verbatim," 3; "Relaxing in a Labyrinth," 44.
- T Sept. 2            Indigenous Religions  
LUDWIG: Chapter 2, "Beginnings of the Human Religious Adventure," 27-33;  
Chapter 3, "Sacred Paths among Indigenous Peoples," 34-67.
- R Sept. 4            Indigenous Religions  
TIME: "The Journey of Our Lives: Birth and Childhood," 4-5.  
VIDEO: "The Sunrise Dance" (30 min.) (DVD-803).
- T Sept. 9            QUIZ #1: Perspectives on Religion and Indigenous Religions  
Hinduism: Vedic Religion, Upanishads and Society  
LUDWIG: chapter 4, 71-80;  
chapter 5, 91-94, 96-102;  
chapter 6, 108-09, 110-11, 113-16, 117-24.
- R Sept. 11            Class canceled for Mass of the Holy Spirit
- T Sept. 16            Hinduism: Concepts of the Divine  
LUDWIG: chapter 4, 80-90;  
chapter 5, 94-96, 102-06;  
chapter 6, 109-10, 111-13, 116-17
- R Sept. 18            Hinduism: Contemporary Events & Issues

TIME: "Mohandas Gandhi," 9-11; "In the Heart of Hate," 45.

- T Sept. 23      Hinduism  
VIDEO: "333 Million Gods" (50 min.) (DVD-000005); continued discussion of Hinduism.
- R Sept. 25      QUIZ #2: Hinduism  
Buddhism: Theravada  
LUDWIG: chapter 7, 127-34, 137-39;  
chapter 8, 144-46, 147, 148-55;  
chapter 9, 158-64, 166-73
- T Sept. 30      Buddhism: Theravada  
DVD: "Footprints of the Buddha" (50 min.) (DVD-000005).
- R. Oct. 2      QUIZ #3: Theravada Buddhism  
Buddhism: Mahayana  
LUDWIG: chapter 7, 134-37, 139-40  
chapter 8, 146, 147-48, 155-57  
chapter 9, 164-65
- T Oct. 7      Buddhism: Vajrayana; in America  
LUDWIG: chapter 7, 137, 140-43  
TIME: "The Dalai Lama: 'It's Time to Prepare New Leaders,'" 16; "Buddhism in America," 12-15.  
Review for Mid-Term Exam.
- R Oct. 9      QUIZ #4: Mahayana & Vajrayana Buddhism  
MID-TERM EXAM
- T Oct. 14      OFF – FALL BREAK
- R Oct. 16      No Class.
- [Oct. 17 – Mid-Term Grades Due.]
- T Oct. 21      Discussion of Religious Visits  
Religious Visit Paper due (15 pts). (5 pts. deducted from the grade of the paper if turned in late.)  
Reports on religious visits.
- R Oct. 23      Judaism: Biblical Period  
LUDWIG: chapter 20, 347-57  
chapter 21, 367-76;  
chapter 22, 379-81.  
TIME: "The Legacy of Abraham," 6-8; "Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus," 21-27.
- T Oct. 28      Judaism: Rabbinic  
LUDWIG: chapter 20, 357-62  
chapter 22, 379-93
- R Oct. 30      Judaism: Denominations, Contemporary Practices & Contemporary Issues  
LUDWIG: chapter 20, 362-66  
TIME: "Pop Goes the Kabbalah," 18-19; "A Ritual for All Ages," 20.  
VIDEO: Sixty Minutes Report: "Zion's Christian Soldiers"
- T Nov. 4      No Class.

- R Nov. 6 DVD: "The Chosen People" (50 min.) (DVD-000005).
- T Nov. 11 QUIZ #5: Judaism  
Islam: Founding, Faith & Practice  
 LUDWIG: chapter 26, 448-57;  
 chapter 27, 472-81;  
 chapter 28, 482-90.
- R Nov. 13 Islam: Historical Developments  
 LUDWIG: chapter 26, 457-71;  
 chapter 28, 490-97.  
 TIME: "The Women of Islam," 32-35.
- T Nov. 18 Islam: Contemporary Issues  
 TIME: "A Jihadi's Tale," 36-37; "As American as...", 38-40; "Voices of Islam," 41;  
 "Missionaries Under Cover," 28-29.  
 VIDEO: "There is No God But God" (50 min.) (DVD-000005).
- R Nov. 20 New Religious Movements  
 LUDWIG: chapter 29, 500-15.  
 TIME: "Lost without a Faith," 17; "Cult Shock," 42-43.
- T Nov. 25 Religion and Violence  
 TIME: "God Is Not on My Side, or Yours," 48.  
 Lecture.
- R Nov. 27 OFF – THANKSGIVING
- T Dec. 2 LUDWIG: Chapter 30, "Guideposts & Crossings on the Path," 517-22.  
 TIME: "The Lord's Business," 30-31; "Will Politicians Matter?" 46-47.
- R Dec. 4 QUIZ #6: Islam, New Religions, Religion & Violence, Guideposts & Crossings  
 Review for exam.
- FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 9, 11:30 - 1:30 p.m.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The Final Grade will be based on: 5 True-False Quizzes counting 5 pts. each or 25% of the grade; a Religious Visit Paper counting 15 pts. or 15% of the final grade; and 2 exams. Each exam will consist of one discussion question counting 20 pts. These two exams make up 40% of the grade. 10% of the final grade will be based on attendance and participation in class discussion. The remaining 10% of the final grade will be based on participation in the class discussion board on Blackboard. See the separate handout for Religious Visit requirements.

A total of 6 True-False Quizzes will be given throughout the summer session. The Quizzes will not be cumulative. They will cover the material discussed in class immediately prior to the Quiz. The Quiz with the lowest score will be dropped at the end of the session, leaving 5 Quizzes that will be counted as 25% of the Final Grade.

There will be absolutely no make-up Quizzes. If you miss a Quiz, that will be the Quiz that will be dropped. If you miss any additional Quizzes, your Final Grade will be diminished by 5 pts. for each Quiz you missed. No make-up quizzes will be given regardless of ill health or family emergency.

For your convenience, the approximate dates for the Quizzes are given on the Syllabus. However, if these dates are changed by the instructor, you are responsible for the Quiz even if you have missed the previous class in

which the Quiz date was announced.

The True-False Quizzes will consist of 10 questions counting .5 pt. each.

There will be no make-up Exams, except in the case of severe illness or a family emergency. In either case, the student should notify the instructor at once.

Regular class attendance is very important. Students who do not attend class regularly do not do well on the quizzes and the exams. Class attendance is part of the discussion grade.

Students can earn up to 10% of their final grade (10 pts.) for their participation on the class discussion board on Blackboard. Every student must log into the discussion board and leave an initial message as proof that they can log on. After that, students can participate in the board's discussion as they see fit, responding to questions or articles posted there by the instructor, raising their own questions, making observations, posting news articles. Students are encouraged to initiate their own threads. To participate fully on the discussion board, students should post a message there at least 3 times each week.

### **Policy on Laptops in the Classroom**

It has become evident that with the introduction of wireless access to the Internet, laptops have been used as distractions in the classroom. Therefore, any student wishing to use a laptop to take notes must sit on the front row. If the instructor becomes aware that the student is using the laptop to surf the Web or check email, the student will lose the privilege of using the laptop in the classroom for the rest of the semester. Laptops must be closed when movies are shown.

### **Policy on Cell Phones and Text-Messaging**

The student should make every effort to turn off his or her cell phone before entering the classroom. Any student observed text-messaging in class will be counted absent for that class period.

**Disability Services:** A student with a disability that qualifies for accommodations should contact Sarah Mead Smith, Director of Disability Services at 865-2990 (Academic Resource Center, Room 405, Monroe Hall). A student wishing to receive text accommodations (e.g., extended test time) should provide the instructor with an official Accommodation Form from Disability Services in advance of the scheduled test date.