



Spring Semester: 16 January – 13 May 2018

PHILOSOPHY 1304: INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: College-level Reading; ENGL 1301, Composition I, *strongly suggested*

Course Delivery Method: Lecture/Lab

Professor:

Mr. Tony J. Howard
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Office Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 2:30-4:00pm,
and by appointment.

Sections:

S01	Tuesdays & Thursdays	1:00-2:15pm	L251 (CRN 21320)
S70	Tuesdays	7-9:45pm	L200 (CRN 21337)

Texts

Brodd, Jeffrey, et al. *Invitation to World Religions*. 2nd ed. Oxford UP, 2016.

Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. *Rules for Writers*. Bedford/St. Martin's,
2016. (Recommended)

Manning, Christen & Phil Zuckerman. *Sex & Religion*. Wadsworth, 2005.

Novak, Philip, editor. *The World's Wisdom*. HarperOne, 1995.

Note: Please do not attend class without bringing the assigned text(s).

Course Description & Objectives

The course offers an introduction to the five major living religious traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will briefly examine the history of each tradition, but our primary focus will be phenomenological, the *lived experience* of each tradition as it grapples with such matters as the nature of God, the origin of evil, human responsibility, morality, and mortality.

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. gain an understanding of the similarities and differences among the major world religions;
2. understand the evolution of religion;
3. ask relevant questions regarding religion;
4. define “religion” clearly; and
5. think critically and analytically.

This is a reading and writing intensive course, and it presumes college-level competency; your writing will be evaluated not only for content but also for clarity. Ideally, you will have completed ENGL 1301 *and* ENGL 1302 prior to taking this course. If you have not completed *any* college-level English courses, please consult with me about your preparation for this class.

Attendance and Late Work Policy

To receive credit for the course, you may miss no more than nine hours’ worth of classes while maintaining at least a 2.0 average for coursework completed. As a rule, I will not accept late work nor give makeup work, so please be sure to attend classes punctually, prepared, and with assigned work completed. Hard copies of essays are due by the date assigned in the syllabus. *Do not submit work electronically.* It is your responsibility to follow the syllabus and to contact classmates if you are absent in order to stay current. Occasionally, circumstances may require that I change the syllabus. However, I will make every attempt to provide sufficient notice. Please do not email me and ask if you ‘missed anything important’; most of your professors like to think what we teach is ‘important.’ Bottom line: to receive three credit hours for a course means that you were actively present, engaged, and successfully completed the assignments for the three hours per week that the class met. Fair enough?

If you withdraw from the course *after* the census date, 29 January 2018, a grade of W will be posted to your transcript and count as one attempt toward the repeat policy. **The last day to drop is Friday 9 March 2018.** Students who have stopped attending classes but have not officially withdrawn in the Registrar’s Office by then will receive an “F” on their transcripts.

Course Repeat Policy: Beginning Fall 2016, Texas residents attempting a course more than twice at Collin College are subject to regular tuition plus an additional \$50 per semester credit hour. Please see the “Repeating Courses” section of the Spring 2018 Registration Guide for more information. Also note that students enrolled in Texas colleges/universities may drop a *maximum* of six courses (18 credit hours) during their *entire* college career. If you are contemplating a withdrawal from the course, please see me first so that I may understand your reasons and advise you accordingly. Bottom line: choose your drops carefully but realize it is certainly better to bail than fail.

Etiquette:

In order to maintain a respectful, positive learning environment:

- 1) Please do not interrupt the class by coming in late.
- 2) Please do not schedule doctor’s appointments or other business during class.
- 3) Please **turn off your cell phone and place it out of sight**. If I see it, I may be rude.
- 4) Please bring your text(s) with you to every class. No texts? Ciao, baby.
- 5) Please do not carry on private conversations outside of class discussions or study for other courses or file your nails or eat or sleep or, indeed, engage in any other behavior disrespectful of your classmates and professor.
- 6) Unless you have a special need, and I have given my approval, please do not use your laptop computer during class.
- 7) Always use your Cougarmail Email account when corresponding with me; I may not respond to your private email accounts.

If you fail to observe basic civility, I reserve the right to ask you to leave the class and may report such behavior to the Dean of Students, who can be less accommodating than I. Attending college is your *choice*. You do not *have* to be here, and I do not *have* to tolerate inconsiderate behavior. I will offer everyone my utmost attention and will respect every point of view that is considerately expressed and seriously presented.

Professors and students alike enjoy academic freedom, which gives us the opportunity to grow and learn from one another. Show an interest, and I will go out of my way to deepen that interest; show apathy, and I will likely repay in kind.

Course Requirements:

Reading Quizzes (25%) Classes will generally begin with a reading quiz based on the day’s assignment in order to assess how closely you are reading the text. These quizzes will range from the simple multiple-choice to the more involved short essay response. **Although I do not accept late quizzes, at the end of the semester, I will drop your two lowest quiz grades.**

Oriental Religions Essay (25%) You will be asked to write a formal, out-of-class essay based on the course readings and expressing your understanding of Hinduism and Buddhism; the essay should be 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, using current MLA

format (parenthetical documentation and a Works Cited page). Grading standards for college-level writing appear later in the syllabus.

Abrahamic Religions Essay (25%) You will be asked to write a formal, out-of-class essay based on the course readings and expressing your understanding of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; the essay should be 3-5 pages, as per the Oriental Religions essay.

Final Exam (25%) During the scheduled final exam period, you will be asked to complete an objective fifty-question comprehensive final. Please bring scantron & pencils.

Scale: A = 90>, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = <60

Grade Reports: Since I do not use the grade book in Canvas, I will provide students with a print out of their grades at least twice during the semester. And, of course, students may discuss their grades with me at any time during office hours.

Plagiarism Policy: Other than sources documented and cited according to MLA format, all work submitted for a grade must be your own original work. Submitting another's words as your own is plagiarism and will result in a grade of zero for the work itself; similarly, plagiarism may result in an "F" in the course. Further, the College may initiate disciplinary proceedings against students accused of academic dishonesty. Quote carefully and document fully in order to avoid even the *appearance* of plagiarism. Please refer to section 54 in *Rules for Writers* for further information regarding plagiarism.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance: It is the policy of Collin College to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty member and/or the Services for Students with Disabilities at 972.881.5950 in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Grading Standards for College-Level Writing

Closely graded work will indicate your strengths and weaknesses. I provide specific guidelines for matters of style and substance, and I encourage students to strive for clarity of expression in addition to depth of thought. **Clear writing mirrors clear thinking.** For additional help with writing, consider the free tutoring available in the Writing Centers on each campus (Spring Creek = 972.881.5843). Also, the college offers free tutoring throughout the semester; phone 972.881.5128 for assistance.

Superior (A = 90-100, B = 80-89)

Note: Although "A" and "B" papers possess many of the same features, the style, originality and level of excellence of the "A" paper are exceptional.

Preparation: The student adapts his thinking to the form and requirements of the assignments, and develops his paper through preliminary outlines and drafts.

Contents: The paper contains a significant and central idea clearly defined and supported with concrete, substantial, and consistently relevant detail. The superior paper displays freshness and originality of perception; it moves through its ideas with an inevitability organic to its central idea.

Development: The paper engages attention and interest at the beginning, progresses by ordered and necessary stages, and ends with a conclusion that supports the bulk of the essay without being repetitive. Development is economical, original, well proportioned, and emphatic; paragraphs are coherent, unified and properly developed; transitions between main ideas are effective and logical.

Sentence Structure: Sentences are unified, coherent, forceful, and varied to promote a lively and interesting rhythm.

Diction: The language is distinctive, fresh, economical, and precise.

Grammar and Punctuation: (See the handout on the Basics of grammar and punctuation.) Correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics reflect clear and effective thinking.

Appearance: The superior paper is carefully proofread and correctly documented. It is typed or word-processed according to MLA style.

Average (C or 70-79)

The "C" paper is clear, competent, and controlled, but its style and originality are undistinguished.

Preparation: The paper contains evidence of at least one preliminary draft. The topic and content are clearly and competently adapted to the assignment.

Content: The central idea is apparent but too general, too familiar, or too limited. It is supported with concrete detail, though that detail may be occasionally repetitious, irrelevant, or sketchy.

Development: The plan of the paper is recognizable, but not developed or not consistently fulfilled. The essay might be disproportionately developed or exhibit an inappropriate emphasis. Transitions are clear but too abrupt, mechanical, or monotonous. The paragraphs are unified, coherent, and usually well developed.

Sentence Structure: The sentences are competent, but many lack force, variation in structure, or effective rhythm.

Diction: The language is appropriate to the paper's purpose, subject, and audience; it is not overly formal, abstract, or colloquial.

Grammar and Punctuation: Deviations from standard grammar, punctuation, spelling, or mechanics damage the paper's clarity and effectiveness.

Appearance: The "C" paper conforms to the guidelines established for the superior paper.

Unsatisfactory (D = 60-69, F = <60)

Though "D" and "F" papers may share the same faults (such as inadequate development or absence of a discernible thesis), the "F" paper exhibits an obvious breakdown in style and structure. A plagiarized paper will receive a zero.

Preparation: The student's ideas do not relate to the specific assignment, and there is little evidence of a preliminary draft.

Content: The central idea is missing, confused, superficial, or unsupported by concrete and relevant detail. Content is obvious, contradictory, or aimless.

Development: The essay has no clear and orderly stages and fails to emphasize and support the central idea. Paragraphs are typographical rather than structural; transitions between paragraphs are missing, unclear, ineffective or rudimentary.

Sentence Structure: Meaning is thwarted by sentences which are incoherent, incomplete, fused, monotonous, rudimentary, or redundant.

Diction: The level of language is inappropriate to the subject.

Grammar and Punctuation: Frequent mistakes in basic grammar, spelling, and punctuation obscure the ideas.

On Grading

I do not . . . grade on potential, talent, improvement, effort, motivation, intention, behavior, personality, weight, height, sex, race, accent, appearance. I grade on accomplishment, subjectively, I admit, but to the standards I feel are appropriate to the course. A's represent exceptional work, far above average. B's represent good work, above average. C's represent average work. D's below-average work. And F's exceptional work in the wrong direction.

It is the work I am grading, not the student. It is work that can be shown to the student, to colleagues, to administrators; it is work that relates directly to the quality of the reference that would be given for the student when that student applies to more advanced courses or for a job. It is a grade that represents my evaluation of what the student has accomplished and demonstrated at the end of the course after the student has had the benefit of extensive writing and extensive reaction to that writing.

From A Writer Teaches Writing by Donald Murray

The Fallacy of Separable Form and Content

Any pretense that something called “content” can always be separated easily from something called “form” in a piece of writing is just that—a pretense. Naïve at best and, at worse, an excuse for careless writing and muddled thinking, such a notion denies language any self-sufficient communicative power and thrusts readers into the roles of psychics who glance at jumbled words, then mysteriously divine what the writer “Really meant.” Very few have psychic powers, and, to the majority of readers, vague, confused writing succeeds only in expressing vague, confused thought.

Similarly, the comfortable old saw that “what one says” is more important than “how one says it” rests on the lazy assumption that language is the mere ornament of basic intention. If such really were the case, then why not reply to a respected host’s offer of a cup of coffee with “Yuk, no! Your coffee tastes like skunk toes”? According to the axiom that the intention of “what’s said” matters more than the manner of saying it, isn’t one simply refusing the coffee just as he would be refusing it by answering, “No, thank you”? Of course not; expression and impression here are of a piece, and attempting a reduction to some sort of “basic meaning,” as opposed to “form,” comically distorts the nature of social communication, if not of language itself.

In what one writes, even more than in what one says, lies all the meaning, or lack of it, an audience finds, for a writer can not often face his readers and protest “I didn’t really mean that.” Simply put, written work alone either makes sense, or it doesn’t; it communicates clear thinking to literate readers, or it doesn’t. And literate readers are hardly found only in college departments of English. Complaints that how a paper is written should matter only in English courses, aside from betraying a dangerous ignorance of the function of language, insults professors in all other disciplines by assuming they—thought obviously literate—somehow don’t have the sense or the right to expect literate discourse from students.

One can no more limit making sense in writing to English courses than he can confine the use of numbers to math classes. Understandable language, whether it take the form of sentences or of equations, is too basic, too necessary to civilized living to admit restriction. All college courses require students to write literately. To require any less would deny the social purposes of a liberal education.

--M.L. Lawhon

Student Profile for PHIL 1304: Introduction to World Religions

Name _____ Birth date _____

Address _____
Street City Zip Code

Cell Phone _____ Email _____

College ID # _____ What is your major? _____

Have you completed ENGL 1301? YES NO (If yes, when?) _____

(Where did you take it & with whom?) _____

What other courses are you taking this semester besides PHIL 1304?

Why are you taking PHIL 1304?

Please list five adjectives that describe you well; then choose *one* of them and write an in-depth paragraph (six or seven sentences) describing why it fits you. Feel free to overflow onto the back of this sheet.

Religious Profile (Anonymous)

What is your religion? _____

Do you feel the need to convert others to your religion? Yes No

Do you believe in an afterlife? Yes No
(If “yes,” briefly explain)

Which of these statements best describes your approach to the Bible?

___ The Bible is literally true, the infallible, immutable Word of God, no if’s, and’s, or but’s.

___ The Bible was written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, but it is not *literally* true in all respects. Some parts are to be taken as symbolic, open to interpretation.

___ The Bible is a work of poetry and myth, full of wisdom but not divinely inspired.

___ I have no opinion on the matter.

Do you feel religion and politics should be kept separate? Yes No

In whom or in what do you place your “ultimate trust”? Briefly explain.

Spring 2018 Semester Calendar of Assignments for PHIL 1304.S70
Tuesdays 7:00pm – 9:45pm L200

Reading assignments should be completed by the date assigned. Depending on how quickly you read and assimilate the material, each assignment should require an average of two hours for completion (excluding the essays, of course, which will require an additional commitment). Please try to budget your time wisely between employment, recreation, and education. For example, *if you work full-time (40 hours per week), you should not be enrolled for more than nine hours of college credit.* Be realistic, not sociopathic.

KEY: Brodd = *Invitation to World Religions*, Manning = *Sex and Religion*, Novak = *The World's Wisdom*

Tuesday 1/16/18: Introduction to the course: syllabus, handouts.

Tuesday 1/23: Brodd, pp. 3-114 (“An Invitation to the Study of World Religions” & “The Teachings of Hinduism”).

Tuesday 1/30: Brodd, pp. 114-141 (“The History of Hinduism” & “Hinduism as a Way of Life”). Novak, pp. 1-48 (“Hinduism”).

Tuesday 2/6: Manning, pp. 1-14 (“Sex and Religion: An Introduction”). Manning, pp. 18-39 (Sherma, “Hinduism”).

Tuesday 2/13: Brodd, pp. 143-186 (“The Teachings of Buddhism”, “The History of Buddhism,” & “Buddhism as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 2/20: Novak, pp. 49-109 (“Buddhism”). Manning, pp. 41-57 (Sponberg, “Buddhism”). **Oriental Religions Essay assigned.**

Tuesday 2/27: Brodd, pp. 351-408 (“The Teachings of Judaism,” “The History of Judaism,” & “Judaism as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 3/6: Oriental Religions Essay due. Novak, pp. 173-226 (“Judaism”). Manning, pp. 93-112 (Geller, “Judaism”).

Friday 3/9: Last day to drop courses with a grade of W.

Monday 3/12 through Sunday 3/18 = SPRING BREAK

Tuesday 3/20: Brodd, pp. 411-452 (“The Teachings of Christianity” & “The History of Christianity”).

Tuesday 3/27: Brodd, pp. 351-408 (“The Teachings of Judaism,” “The History of Judaism,” & “Judaism as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 4/3: Manning, pp. 117-138 (LoPresti, “Christianity”). Manning, pp. 142-156 (Hansen, “Mormonism”).

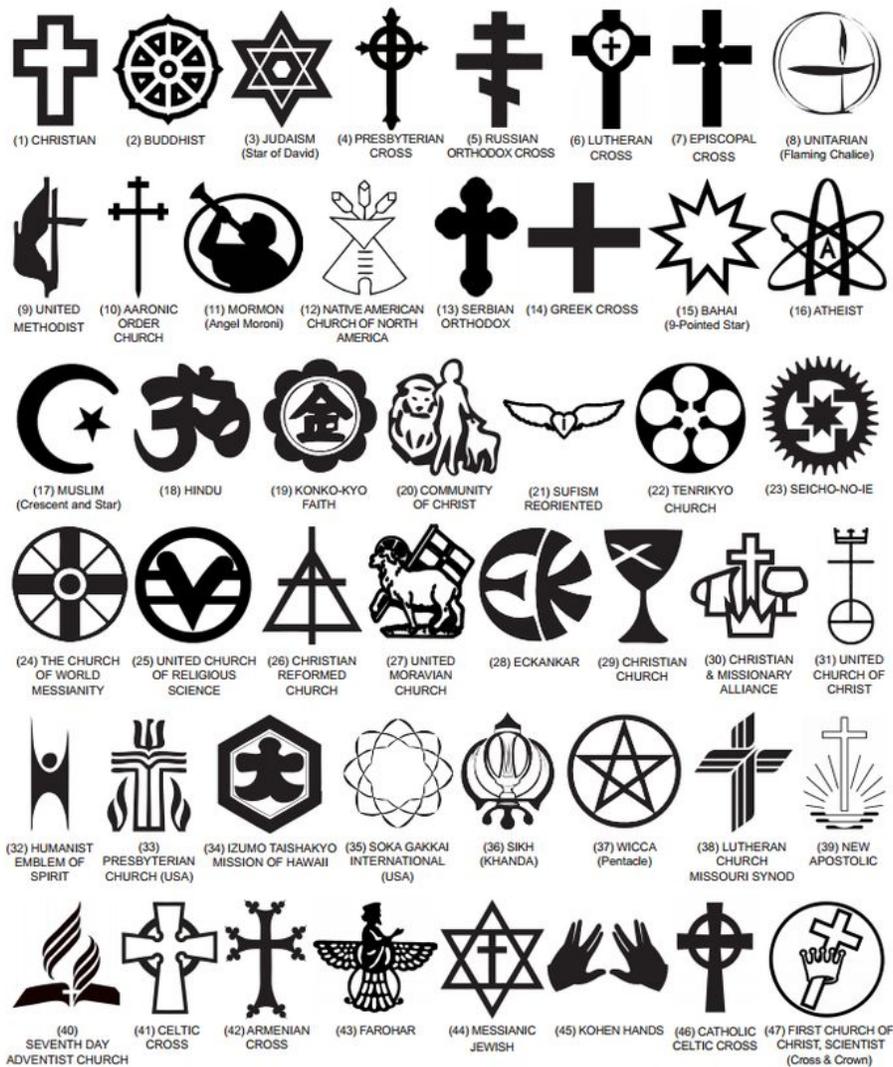
Tuesday 4/10: Brodd, pp. 469-522 (“The Teachings of Islam,” “The History of Islam,” & “Islam as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 4/17: Novak, pp. 281-332 (“Islam”). Manning, pp. 181-195 (Poston, “Islam”).
Abrahamic Religions Essay assigned.

Tuesday 4/24: Brodd, pp. 525-568 (“New Religious Movements”). Manning, pp. 160-176 (Boeri, “The Children of God”)

Tuesday 5/1: Abrahamic Religions Essay due. Video: *Fornication, A Religious Perspective*. Video: *Marital Sex, A Religious Perspective*. Review for Final Exam

Tuesday 5/8: Final Exam (Bring scantron and #2 pencil(s))



Emblem (98) MUSLIM (Islamic 5-Pointed Star) is not shown due to copyright.

Spring 2018 Calendar of Assignments for PHIL 1304.S01
Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:15pm L251

Reading assignments should be completed by the date assigned. Depending on how quickly you read and assimilate the material, each assignment should require an average of two hours for completion (excluding the essays, of course, which will require an additional commitment). Please try to budget your time wisely between employment, recreation, and education. For example, *if you work full-time (40 hours per week), you should not be enrolled for more than nine hours of college credit.* Be realistic, not sociopathic.

KEY: Brodd = *Invitation to World Religions*, Manning = *Sex and Religion*, Novak = *The World's Wisdom*

Tuesday 1/16/18: Introduction to the course: syllabus, handouts.

Thursday 1/18: Introduction continued.

Tuesday 1/23: Brodd, pp. 3-29 (“An Invitation to the Study of World Religions”).

Thursday 1/25: Brodd, pp. 89-114 (“The Teachings of Hinduism”).

Tuesday 1/30: Brodd, pp. 114-141 (“The History of Hinduism” & “Hinduism as a Way of Life”).

Thursday 2/1: Novak, pp. 1-48 (“Hinduism”).

Tuesday 2/6: Manning, pp. 1-14 (“Sex and Religion: An Introduction”).

Thursday 2/8: Manning, pp. 18-39 (Sherma, “Hinduism”).

Tuesday 2/13: Brodd, pp. 143-154 (“The Teachings of Buddhism”).

Thursday 2/15: Brodd, pp. 155-186 (“The History of Buddhism” & “Buddhism as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 2/20: Novak, pp. 49-109 (“Buddhism”).

Thursday 2/22: Manning, pp. 41-57 (Sponberg, “Buddhism”). **Oriental Religions Essay assigned.**

Tuesday 2/27: Brodd, pp. 351-386 (“The Teachings of Judaism” & “The History of Judaism”).

Thursday 3/1: Brodd, pp. 386-408 (“Judaism as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 3/6: **Oriental Religions Essay due.** Novak, pp. 173-226 (“Judaism”).

Thursday 3/8: Manning, pp. 93-112 (Geller, “Judaism”).

Friday 3/9: Last day to drop courses with a grade of W.

Monday 3/12 through Sunday 3/18 = SPRING BREAK

Tuesday 3/20: Brodd, pp. 411-431 (“The Teachings of Christianity”).

Thursday 3/22: Brodd, pp. 431-452 (“The History of Christianity”).

Tuesday 3/27: Brodd, pp. 452-466 (“Christianity as a Way of Life”).

Thursday 3/29: Novak, pp. 225-279 (“Christianity”).

Tuesday 4/3: Manning, pp. 117-138 (LoPresti, “Christianity”).

Thursday 4/5: Manning, pp. 142-156 (Hansen, “Mormonism”).

Tuesday 4/10: Brodd, pp. 469-488 (“The Teachings of Islam”).

Thursday 4/12: Brodd, pp. 488-522 (“The History of Islam” & “Islam as a Way of Life”).

Tuesday 4/17: Novak, pp. 281-332 (“Islam”). **Abrahamic Religions Essay assigned**

Thursday 4/19: Manning, pp. 181-195 (Poston, “Islam”).

Tuesday 4/24: Brodd, pp. 525-568 (“New Religious Movements”).

Thursday 4/26: Manning, pp. 160-176 (Boeri, “The Children of God”).

Tuesday 5/1: **Abrahamic Religions Essay due.** Video: *Fornication, A Religious Perspective*.

Thursday 5/3: Video: *Marital Sex, A Religious Perspective*. Review for Final Exam.

Tuesday 5/8: **Final Exam (Bring scantron and #2 pencil(s))**