***California State University Northridge***

***RS 150: World Religions***

***Fall 2016***

***Instructor:*** Mary Jane O'Donnell, Ph.D.

***Ticket Number:*** 19670

***Course Day/Time:*** Completely Online

***Online Office Hour:*** Thursday: 8:00-9:00 a.m.

***Office Hours:*** F: 7:00-8:00 a.m. and 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

***Office:*** Santa Susana Hall 229

***Telephone:*** 818-677-3940 (Office hours only)

## *Email:* [mjod@csun.edu](mailto:mjod@csun.edu)

This course provides an introduction to major religions around the world, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Our goal is to develop a better understanding of and appreciation for the diverse religious traditions of the world.

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| ***Student Learning Objectives for World Religions 150*** |
| 1. Think empathetically and critically about conflicting religious claims. |
| 2. Acquire knowledge of the history and culture of more than one major religious tradition. |
| 3. Become familiar with the broad outlines of several world religions that continue to shape major civilizations and which have important influences on the culture of Southern California. |
| 4. Grasp the phenomenological approach (as exemplified in the textbook) to the study of religion and culture through the study of clear descriptions and sympathetic insights into the religion of others. |
| 5. Become a more proficient and critical reader through careful study and discussion of a masterfully written survey of selected world religions. |

* ***General Education Student Learning Outcomes:*** Comparative Cultural Studies/ Gender, Race, Class, Ethnicity Studies and Foreign Languages.
* ***Goal:*** Students will understand the diversity and multiplicity of cultural forces that shape the world through the study of cultures, gender, sexuality, race, religion, class, ethnicities and languages with special focus on the contributions, differences, and global perspectives of diverse cultures and societies.

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| ***GE Student Learning Outcomes*** |
| 1. Describe and compare different cultures; |
| 2. Explain how various cultures contribute to the development of our multicultural world; |
| 3. Describe and explain how race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, sexuality and other markers of social identity impact life experiences and social relations; |
| 4. Analyze and explain the deleterious impact and the privileges sustained by racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, classism, homophobia, religious intolerance or stereotyping on all sectors of society. |

* ***RS150 is a GE Paths (Global Studies/Comparative Cultural Studies):*** Students enrolled in the GE Paths program explore a special theme or major question from a multidisciplinary perspective in the context of their general education requirements. If you are interested in this program you can find additional information and sign up through the website: www.csun.edu/gepaths or you can contact them directly at gepaths@csun.edu.

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| ***Student Learning Outcomes from Global Studies Path Courses*** |
| Two or more of the learning outcomes listed below are addressed in each Global Studies Path course: |
| 1. Students will be able to define globalization and key concepts related to globalizing trends. |
| 2. Students will be able to recognize a variety of globalized political, economic, socio-cultural, and aesthetic forms. |
| 3. Students will be able to discuss the political, economic, socio-cultural and/or historical underpinnings of globalization |
| 4. Students will be able to analyze the diverse consequences of globalization including its impacts on various social formations (e.g. identity, culture, art, communities, media, markets, nation-states, among other examples) and/or the environment. |
| 5. Students will be able to demonstrate how globalization affects and is affected by one’s own life. |

***Very Important:*** This course will be held completely online. This means that it will require more independent study and individual discipline than your other classes at CSUN, which are held in classrooms. I will, of course, give you guidance and be available for your questions each week, but you will be required to read the material and attempt to understand it on your own before entering into discussions with your fellow classmates. Moreover, it will be up to you as to when you will do the work required for this class. You will have a week to complete each of the scheduled assignments. Waiting until the last minute to do so usually does not end well. I urge you to fully understand how to use Moodle and to take the online readiness quiz before committing to this course: <https://www.csustan.edu/teach-online/online-readiness-self-assessment-0>

***Required Texts:***

* *God is Not One* by Stephen Prothero (HarperOne, 2010)
* Selected readings online.

***Instructor’s Office Hours:*** ***Instructor’s Office Hours:*** My office hours and my office address are posted above. I look forward to working with each of you in class and on an individual basis. I will also be available by phone on Thursdays from 8 to 9 am via phone. You will be given a number on the Moodle site to call. Therefore, I urge you to take advantage of my office hours. I am happy to discuss any aspect of this course with you, and help you with the assignments. I especially urge you to contact me if you are confused about the course or an assignment. Really successful students ask questions!

***Course Assignments:***

* All reading assignments must be read as early as possible in the week they are assigned in order to allow for more sophisticated in-depth discussions;
* You must post one (1) 250-word analysis of the week’s material. More detailed instructions for the discussions are on the RS 255OL Moodle site;
* Groups will look for one issue in the news involving the religion under discussion for the week and do a power point presentation that explains the issue and its context within the religion;
* All papers must be written according to basic scholarly standards appropriate for university level work. Not only does this include proper citation as well as grammar, punctuation, and syntax, but also serious reflection on your topic. There are many sources to help you with your writing assignments. The most important is the Writing Program at CSUN’s Learning Resource Center, which is on the 3rd floor/East Wing of the Oviatt Library. For more information, go to: <http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/learning-resource-center/writing-center-and-freshman-writing-lab>
* All assignments must be turned in on the date listed. Unless students present a written and documented reason why a paper is late or will be late, which is accepted by the instructor, the grade will be deducted one letter grade per day.
* Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a failing grade, certainly for the item plagiarized, but also *quite* *likely* for the course. Moreover, you many not turn in a paper, whether whole or in part, that you previously wrote and submitted to another class, whether at CSUN or elsewhere. If you wish to build upon previous work you have done, please contact me prior to incorporating it into your assignment.

***Technological Information:***

* This course will employ Moodle. You are responsible for learning how to use this format.

Instructions may be found at: <http://www.csun.edu/it/student-moodle-help/>

***Grading: Plus-Minus System will be used***

* ***Quizzes:*** 45%
* ***Group Presentations:*** 5%
* ***Mid-term:*** 25%
* ***Final:*** 25%

***Letter Grades:***

* 95-100 A
* 90-94 A-
* 87-89 B+
* 83-86 B
* 80-82 B-
* 77-79 C+
* 73-76 C
* 70-72 C-
* 60-69 D

***Course Schedule:***

## *Week 1: August 29-September 4*

* ***Read:*** “Why Study Religion in the Twenty-first Century?” by William A. Graham (on Moodle)
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

## *Week 2: September 5-11*

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Introduction, 1-24 and Conclusion, 331-340
* ***Quiz #1***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 3: September 12-18***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 1: Islam: The Way of Submission, 25-63
* ***Quiz #2***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 4: September 19-25***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 2: Christianity: The Way of Salvation, 65-99
* ***Quiz #3***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 5: September 26-October 2***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 3: Confucianism: The Way of Propriety, 101-130
* ***Quiz #4***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 6: October 3-9***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 4: Hinduism: The Way of Devotion, 131-168
* ***Quiz #5***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 7: October 10-16***

* ***Mid-term***

***Week 8: October 17-23***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 5: Buddhism: The Way of Awakening, 169-201
* ***Quiz #6***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 9: October 24-30***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 6: Yoruba Religion: The Way of Connection, 203-241
* ***Quiz #7***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 10: October 31-November 6***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 7: Judaism: The Way of Exile and Return, 243-278
* ***Quiz #8***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 11: November 7-13***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 8: Daoism: The Way of Flourishing, 279-315
* ***Quiz #9***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 12: November 14-20***

* ***Read:*** Prothero: Chapter 9: A Brief Coda on Atheism: The way of Reason, 317-329
* ***Quiz #10***
* ***Post:*** one (1) 250-word essay analyzing the reading

***Week 13: November 21-27***

* ***Thanksgiving Break: No Class***

***Week 14: November 28-December 4***

* ***Conclusion***

***Week 15: December 5-9 Prepare Final***

***Important to note:*** This syllabus is subject to change. I will make every effort to notify you in advance about any changes.

***DRES:*** If you have a disability and need accommodations, please register with the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) office or the National Center on Deafness (NCOD). The DRES office is located in Bayramian Hall, Room 110 and can be reached at 818-677-2684. NCOD is located on Bertrand Street in Jeanne Chisholm Hall and can be reached at 818-677-2611. If you would like to discuss your need for accommodations with me, please contact me to set up an appointment.