REL 101: RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD  
Fall 2015 Mon 6:45-9:30 PM Eggers 111  
Instructor: Terry Reeder threeder@syr.edu (315) 350-9926  
Office Hours: Mondays 5:30-6:30 in classroom; Tuesday 10-11 in Bird Library 1st floor  
and gladly by appointment

![Coexist]

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The exploration of religions and religion. We will explore six major world religious traditions, focusing on the ways in which central components of religion—e.g. the sacred, myth, texts, ethics, ritual, community—are understood and lived. We will also explore the phenomenon of religion and the relationship between religion and culture. We will use case studies to further understand, articulate and clarify, yet complicate, our own ideas of religions and religion.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you will:

1) Understand and apply terminology central to the study of religion(s).
2) Have enhanced your understanding of the diverse and complicated spirituality/religions/worldviews of the human family.
3) Apply course concepts to your professional life.
4) Apply course concepts to your own enduring questions.
5) Compare and contrast components of religion without orientalizing, exoticizing, stereotyping, heteronormativity, patriarchy or promoting colonial legacies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see [http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/](http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/).

Of special concern is plagiarism. Plagiarism is stealing. Anytime a person uses another's words as their own OR cuts and pastes, EVEN in a power point, they are plagiarizing. If you need help with citations I am glad to help you, as is the Writing Center.
ACADEMIC SUPPORT
If you have academic accommodations I encourage you to use them to the fullest to support your learning. Syracuse University and I value diversity, and will work with you to provide access to services that accommodate your learning. For more information see the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at http://disabilityservices.syr.edu or contact odssched@syr.edu or (315) 443-4498.
All students can and will benefit from the services of the Writing Center. For more information see http://wc.syr.edu/.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE
SU’s religious observances policy is found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observation.htm. This policy recognizes the diversity of faiths in the campus community and protects the rights of the community to observe holy days according to their tradition. Please register your religious observance through My Slice by 9/11/15.

REQUIRED TEXTS
**Check Blackboard (Bb) frequently for important course information, announcements, assignment rubrics, optional readings and course slides.

REQUIREMENTS
1. a. Attendance & Participation: We are partners in exploring world religions. Therefore, active participation in discussions and activities is an essential component of the course and attendance is a crucial part of your grade. As this class meets only once a week, more than one absence will lower your final grade, except, of course, in the case of documented illness or emergency. Any necessary absence or tardiness should be communicated to me prior to class.
b. Reading: Engaged reading of texts should be completed prior to class. Bring copies of texts to class, along with notes, highlighting, questions and comments.
c. Writing: Each class you will have a short writing assignment–homework, in-class directed writing or a recognition level quiz on the reading. (25%)

2. Experiencing: Attend an event pertaining to religion. A critical reflection paper (600-800 words) is due one week after you attend. (20%)

3. Teaching: You and one or two other students in the class will teach us about an aspect of religion or religions. After your presentation you will write an individual critical reflection. (20%)

4. Two in-class exams. (20%)

5. Final. (15%)
GRADING:
25% Participation: includes attendance, informal writing, homework writing, group work and quizzes. (2 pts @ for 11 non-testing classes. One point each class is for participation and preparedness. The other point is for the written work or homework for that day. Reflective writing for To Become a Human Being, The Ramayana and The Rabbi's Cat are worth two points).
20% Event & critical reflection
20% 2 Exams
20% Teaching presentation & critical reflection
15% Final

DUE DATES AND LATE WORK
Assignments are due when they are due. If you have extenuating circumstances, talk to me in advance and we will attempt to work something out. Do not, however, ask for an extension at the last minute and expect it to be granted. Late work that is accepted will have a point reduction.

ETIQUETTE
• Communicate
• Texting and surfing the web are not only extremely disrespectful; they inevitably dilute you and your classmates' attention from the class. No cell phones!
• Listening to others carefully is expected, required, and key to learning.
• I am excited to be doing this work with you!! I will hold myself to the same standards that I ask of you. If I can do anything to improve your learning experience, please let me know.

CLASS SCHEDULE, READING & ASSIGNMENTS
Readings and writings are due on the day that they are listed.

1. Aug 31 Introduction
   Sept 7 No Class, Labor Day

2. Sept 14 Indigeneity
   Reading: Smith, World Religions, Chapter I AND Intro, forward & two chapters from To Become a Human Being
   Writing: Bring To Become a Human Being homework to class (rubric provided).

3. Sept 21 Hinduism
   Reading: Smith, Chapter II (pp. 17-39) AND Smart, "Introduction" to Worldviews (Bb)
   Writing: Directed question, in class.

4. Sept 28 Methods of Exploring Religion
   Reading: Smith, Chapter II (40-58)
   Writing: quiz

5. Oct 5 Hinduism
   Reading: The Ramayana (entire)
   Writing: Bring Character Sketch from The Ramayana to class (rubric provided).
6. Oct 12: Test 1 (Methods for exploring religion(s), Indigeneity, Hinduism)

7. Oct 19 Buddhism
Reading: Smith, Chapter III
Optional Reading: Lopez, "Belief" pp. 1-10
Writing: 3-5 facts or characteristics of the Buddha from the video or your reading, bring to class

8. Oct 26 Judaism
Reading: The Rabbi's Cat (entire)
Writing: 1. Bring Character Sketch from Rabbi's Cat to class (rubric provided).
2. Short abstract of Presentation topic; upload to Blackboard.

9. Nov 2 Judaism
Reading: Smith, Chapter VII
Student Presentation(s)

10. Nov 9 Christianity
Reading: Smith, Chapter VIII
Student Presentation(s)
Have you attended your Religious event? Have you turned in your writing?

11. Nov 16: Test 2 (Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity)

Nov 23, No class, Thanksgiving Break

12. Nov 30: Islam
Reading: Smith, Chapter VI
Student Presentation(s)
Reading: "Hijab, Niqab or Nothing" video to be viewed in class
Student Presentations
Last day for critical reflection on Religious Event.

13. Dec 7
Student Presentations, evaluations. Hard copy of take-home Final given at the end of class.

14. Dec 14 Final
I will be in the classroom should you wish to ask questions, turn in a hard copy of your Final, say goodbye to me 😊, etc. However, physical attendance is not mandatory. If you do not turn in a hard copy, please upload your Final to Blackboard.