

Religious Traditions Curriculum Course Syllabus

3MMM, Inc. Seminary Sponsored

Developer/ Facilitator: Dr. Mark A. McCleary, Ph.D., D. Min., M. Div.

Curriculum Description:

This course series will assist students discovering and learning about the major religious traditions/ systems, historically and globally speaking. These courses will survey and facilitate students understanding man's search for and his/ her responding to God/ the Transcendent reality, and spirituality as *sin que non* to human life.

This curriculum consists primarily of research and writing of student learning and the praxis of religion for leadership significance and impact.

Rationale:

The posted title for this curriculum course series is RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS which is designed to help students understand humankind's need, search, and decisions on acknowledging the divine reality and its moral and ethical demands for how humans think and behave.

I. Spirituality as a Discipline

Course Description

This course will explore what people mean when they claim to be "spiritual but not religious." It will survey why some associate natural phenomena with spiritual power and the transcendent reality? This course invites students to explore, describe, and explain the many questions, scriptural data, and pundits who wrote about spirituality and its meaning for human existence.

Course Assignments:

1. Write an analysis and critique of the relationship between Spirituality and Religion, 10-12 pages.
2. Write an essay on Pantheism, Animism, and other Naturalist religions. How do they relate to spirituality? 8-10 pages.
3. Write an opinion paper on contemporary queries and assertions on the spirituality as a discipline for personal praxis, 5-7 pages.

II. Religions of Asia

Course Description

This course will survey the great/ traditional religions of Asia—Buddhism, Hinduism, Tibetan, Confucianism, Daoism. The student will explore to learn the historical, social, and contemporary influence of these religions and their promotion of spiritual pursuit.

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline course.

Course Assignments:

1. Research paper on the great religions of Asia. What is their vision, mission, and objective for its disciples—their historical and social context, what is their view of religious experience? 10-12 pages.
2. Write an essay on Asian religions, their foundational teaching, their salient rituals, and if they have adapted since their origin, 8-10 pages.
3. What are the primary doctrines and practices of Asian religions you select (3 max.)? How do they relate to spiritual experience and compare to Christian praxis, 10-12 pages.
4. Write an opinion paper on Asian religions that promote meditation and written text for religious/ spiritual instruction. How do these practices compare with Christian praxis? 10 pages.

III. Perspective on Death and Afterlife

Course Description

This course explores the ways in which various traditions have addressed “What happens to humans when they die?” It surveys such topics as heaven and hell, reincarnation, practices, the other world, near-death experiences, and resurrections.

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline and Religions of Asia courses.

Course Assignments:

1. Research and report on 3-5 religions’ praxis concerning death, the afterlife, reincarnation, 8-10 pages.

2. Write an opinion paper on near-death experiences, include citations, 8-10 pages.
3. Write a comparative essay on Christian belief and practices concerning death, heaven and hell (pick 3-5 Christian denominations), 8-10 pages.
4. What does the Bible describe/ explain as its theology of resurrection? 10-12 pages.

IV. The Religious Tradition of Islam and Muslims

Course Description

This course explores the origin and historical development among people who embrace Islam and their geographic strongholds—Africa, Middle East, and Western Asia.

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline, Religions of Asia, and Perspectives on Death and Afterlife courses.

Course Assignments:

1. Write a research report on Islam's origin and development, 8-10 pages.
2. Write an opinion paper on Islam's reaction and development since 1948, 8-10 pages.
3. Write an opinion paper on Islam and Christianity's relationship in Africa, ME, or Asia, 8-10 pages.
4. Write a report on the biblical description of Islam and its role in eschatology, 8-10 pages.

V. The Sociological Implications of Eve, Adam, and the Serpent

Course Description

This course examines the historical and social formation against Genesis 1-4 among Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. It includes surveying the notions of the creation of the cosmos, characterizations of the Creator, the origins and development of humanity, and the origins of evil.

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline, Religions of Asia, Perspectives on Death and Afterlife, and The Religious Tradition of Islam and Muslims courses.

Course Assignments:

1. Write a research paper on Genesis 1-3 as promoted by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, 10-12 pages.
2. Write analytical report from your exegesis of Genesis 1-3, 10-12 pages.
3. Write an opinion paper on Creation theories, ideas about the Creator, the origin of humanity and its social history, 10-12 pages.
4. Write an essay on The Origin of Evil and its resolution, include citation, 10-12 pages.

VI. Representations of the Africana Religions

Course Description

This course surveys the literary archives of African and African-descended peoples for their examination of the indigenous religions-traditions, Christian, Islamic of Africana peoples. It considers the works on the religious traditions, rituals, and practices of the Yoruba, Shona, Asante, Tswana, as well as African Independent Churches, Rastafari, and followers of Vodun, Santería, Candomblé.

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline, Religions of Asia, Perspectives on Death and Afterlife, The Religious Tradition of Islam and Muslims, and The Sociological Implications of Eve, Adam, and the Serpent courses.

Course Assignments:

1. Write an essay on the discipline of African Studies, its pundits and critics, 8-10 pages.
2. Write an ethnographic report on indigenous religious tradition from 3-5 interviewees, 8-10 pages.
3. Write an opinion paper on the religious traditions of your local setting, 5-7 pages.
4. Write a report on the pros and cons, if you agree or disagree with 3 religious' traditions (i.e., Yoruba, Asante, Tswana, or some other Africana religious tradition), 8-10 pages.

VII. Perspectives on Hebraic Religious Influence

Course Description

This course surveys the biblical and literary archives of Hebrew people, theology, religious influence--religions-traditions of Abraham, Judaism, Christianity, and contemporary claimants (i.e., Hebrew Israelites).

Prerequisite: The student for this course should have completed Spirituality as a Discipline, Religions of Asia, Perspectives on Death and Afterlife, The Religious Tradition of Islam and Muslims, and The Sociological Implications of Eve, Adam, and the Serpent, and Representations of the Africana Religions courses.

Course Assignments:

1. Use sound hermeneutic, homiletic and apologetic tactics to explore and describe the Hebrew presence and influence from the biblical and literary sources, 8-10 pages.
2. Write a research paper on Hebrew and its religious influence from ancient times, 8-10 pages.
3. Write an essay on the relationship of Hebrew (s), Israelite, and Jew (s), 5-8 pages.
4. Write an opinion paper of Semitism and antisemitism, 5-8 pages.
5. Write and exegesis of Philippians 3:1-8 and its relationship to Hebraic religious influence, 6-8 pages.