

**Religious Studies A100**  
**Introduction to Religious Studies**  
**Philip Simpkin**

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**Semester**

**Section: CRN/Day and Time**

**Room:**

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**Email: psimpkin@occ.cccd.edu**

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Office: Social Science 200A**

**Office Phone Number: (714) 432-5028**

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**Texts:**

(W) Smart, *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs* 3rd Ed., New York: Scribner, 1999

(P) Pals, *Nine Theories of Religion* 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed., Oxford University Press, 2014

(S) Supplemental reading material shall be supplied by instructor

**Course Description:**

An introduction to the study of religion as an academic discipline with particular emphasis on the nature of religion, the methods used to study religious life, ways of expressing religious experience, and the practice of religion. May be taken for grades or on a pass-no pass basis. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):**

1. Identify various definitions of religion and multiple dimensions of religion.
2. Demonstrate familiarity with general history of, state of, and controversies within the field of Religious Studies.
3. Describe how the various dimensions of religion are expressed within several religious traditions.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Identify the role of religion in relationship to the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cultures.
2. Identify the theological problems and advantages of religion.
3. Analyze tolerance in relationship to a wide range of religious views.
4. Describe how religions develop and change.
5. Analyze the art of meditation and its value.
6. Identify the adventure of exploring religious values and art as symbol.

7. Diagnose the similarities and differences of the Asian religions.
8. Define methods of dealing with destructive forces such as guilt and negativism.
9. Analyze and evaluate developing religious values and practices in the modern world.
10. Relate religious values to ethical and political views.
11. Justify the role of religion in gender problems.
12. Synthesize the historical and geographical relationship to religious view.
13. Identify religious holidays and rituals in a variety of world cultures.
14. Describe and give examples of religion in modern philosophical traditions.
15. Explain the social and psychological functions of religious rituals.

#### **Course Requirements:**

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Attendance/Participation	5%
Homework Assignments	10%
Religious Autobiography	15%
Religious Visitation and Analysis	15%
Religious Studies Book Review	15%
Quizzes	10%
Midterm	10%
Final	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **Grading:**

<b>90%-100%</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>80%-89%</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>70%-79%</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>60%-69%</b>	<b>D</b>

**Reading Assignments and Study Questions:** Students are responsible for checking the ‘Pages’ link on the left hand side of our class Home page on Canvas for daily reading assignments and study guide questions for each reading. These questions will feature prominently on quizzes and tests **but not exclusively**. These questions are designed to help students focus in on what they should be extracting from the readings and serve as examples of the kinds of questions they can expect on tests. Keeping up on reading assignments and answering the study questions is the best way to be prepared for quizzes and tests.

**Practice Quizzes:** Practice quizzes help you check your understanding of the readings, your grasp of concepts from class lectures and help you prepare for tests. They will be available on Canvas and will be worth homework points. Complete all practice quizzes for full credit.

**Written Assignments:** All written assignments must be typed, follow formatting instructions and be submitted through the proper verification site on Canvas. No email submissions will be accepted for any reason.

**Midterm:** The midterm will be based on classroom lectures and reading assignments. **Students are responsible for all information given in class and from reading assignments.** Be sure to attend class every day and complete all reading assignments.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will consist of a presentation based on the religious studies book review research paper assignment. Students must be present at all final presentation class meeting for full credit. Come talk to me if you know in advance that scheduling might be an issue.

**Make-up and Late Work:** Exams may be made up if the student has a legitimate excuse, namely a serious illness or emergency. The illness or emergency *must be documented*. The catch-all “family emergency” does not count as a legitimate excuse. Missed exams must be made up within one week, unless circumstances warrant an extension of time.

**Engagement:** Be *reflective*. For instance, don't just agree or disagree with other opinions--say why you agree or disagree. Give examples from real life, or cite evidence where possible. Be willing to risk ideas, have an inquisitive attitude and think deeply!

**My Responsibilities:**

- Being on time for all class sessions and contacting you by email if I must miss a session.
- Making myself available during office hours to help students with difficult concepts and to address any grading concerns you may have.
- Returning graded work to students in a timely manner.
- Providing constructive criticism in my comments on students' papers and exams.
- Allowing sufficient class time for discussion, questions, and review of difficult material.

**Additional Student Responsibilities:**

- Being aware of the drop dates and making certain that you drop in time, if needed.
- Being on time for all classes and staying for the entire class. (See also the Classroom Etiquette section below.)
- Checking the schedule on canvas and finding out from a fellow student what happened in class if you must miss class. This includes knowing when quizzes will occur and knowing about any work that was assigned. (“I wasn't here when...” is never a good excuse.)
- Checking the grade book on canvas for any missing scores and showing me your *graded copy* of the missing piece.

- Picking up all quizzes, tests, and written work from me if you are not in class when it is handed back. This should be done after class at the next class meeting. **Retaining all work until after final grades are posted!**
- Being on time and having the appropriate scantron on quiz and test days.

### How To Succeed In This Course

- CHECK THE CALENDAR in Canvas for reading assignments and due dates
- READ THE MATERIAL THROUGH ONCE *BEFORE* CLASS.
- ANSWER THE STUDY QUESTIONS as practice for the quizzes and tests. Come to class with questions about the readings and study questions.
- BRING YOUR BOOKS TO CLASS!!!
- TAKE NOTES ON OUR DISCUSSIONS, especially as they relate to course themes. Go over your notes, and review the readings now that you have a better understanding of the issues and course themes involved. Answer the study questions to practice articulating the arguments and concepts ahead of the exams.
- GO TO ONE OR MORE OF THE STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOPS held in the Student Success Center, Classrooms and Labs 103. Telephone 714-432-5559. They are free!!
- DO ALL THE ASSIGNMENTS.
- PLEASE SEE OR EMAIL ME if you are having difficulties. If you are concerned about your first few grades, **see me early in the term** when my assistance will be most valuable. **Do not wait until the next-to-last week** of class to assess your progress!! I especially urge students whose first language is not English to consult me with respect to course work.

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### Attendance and Drop Policy

Regular attendance in class is an obligation assumed by every student at the time of registration. Regular attendance affords the student the opportunity to acquire the content of the specific session and, over the length of the course, the continuity of the professor's plan for the presentation of the subject matter in the course. Orange Coast College Attendance Policies state that "instructors may drop a student from a course when absences number the equivalent of two weeks of class recorded from the first day of instruction." However, **it is the student's responsibility to ensure they have withdrawn** when absences have been excessive. (Absence means non-attendance for whatever reason.)

If you do miss class, be sure to get class notes and assignments either from Canvas or from a fellow student and find out any announcements that were made in class. **You are responsible for all information given out in class whether you were there or not.**

### Classroom Etiquette

Classroom Behavior and Academic Honesty – Classroom behavior based on OCC behavioral policy and instructor reserves the right to ask students to leave the class if they fail to either be

consistently respectful to all students, to the instructor or to any classroom visitors. This includes arriving late or leaving early. We must also respect each other as thinkers and collaborators in the process of understanding ourselves and our world more clearly. To this end, we must keep our classroom discussion civil, and not be too ready to dismiss others' ideas. **Cell phones** will be permitted only when I think they will be useful for learning. The rest of the time, turn them off and put them away. You cannot be on your phone and 'in' class at the same time.

**Taping (audio or video) without consent is prohibited. If audio recordings of lectures are consented to by the instructor, please be aware that they are only for the student's personal use in class-related study and preparation. The student agrees to destroy any recordings that were made when they are no longer needed for course work.**

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is required. If it appears at any time that students are engaged in cheating or any form of plagiarism they risk receiving a zero for the assignment, being dropped from the class and being reported to the Dean of Students.

Here is a set of guidelines compiled by Dr. Karima Feldhus of Irvine Valley College:

**Plagiarism** is any conduct in academic work or programs involving misrepresentation of someone else's work, including, but not limited to the following: intentionally representing as one's own work the work, ideas or arrangement of ideas, research, formulae, diagrams, statistics, or evidence of another, taking sole credit for ideas and/or written work that resulted from a collaboration with others, paraphrasing or quoting material without citing the source, submitting as one's own a copy of or the actual work of another person, either in part or in entirety, without appropriate citation (e.g., term-paper mill or internet-derived products) sharing computer files and programs or written papers and then submitting individual copies of the results as one's own individual work, submitting substantially the same material in more than one course without prior authorization from each instructor involved, modifying another's work and representing it as one's own work.

**Cheating** is the use of unauthorized materials or information in academic work, records, or programs, the intentional failure to follow express directives in academic work, records or programs, and/or assisting others to do the same including, but not limited to, the following: completing, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person, knowingly allowing any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, for himself or herself by another person (e.g. take-home exams or online assignments which have been completed by someone other than the student) copying from another student's test, paper, lab report or other academic assignment, copying another student's test answers, using unauthorized sources of information such as crib sheets, answers stored in a calculator, or unauthorized electronic devices, employing aids excluded by the instructor in undertaking course work, looking at another student's exam during a test, using texts or other reference materials (including dictionaries) when not authorized to do so, altering graded class assignments or examinations and then resubmitting them for regarding or reconsideration without the knowledge

and consent of the instructor, knowingly procuring, providing, or accepting unauthorized examination materials or study aids.

**Accommodations for Disabilities:** Students with disabilities that will affect their coursework should contact Special Programs and Services at 432-5807 *immediately*, to initiate disability verification and discuss appropriate accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any special needs.

## Semester Deadlines

Class Length	Session Begins the week of	Session Ends	Last Day to Drop and Receive a Refund	Last Day to Drop to Avoid a "W"	Deadline to select Pass/No Pass grading option	Last Day to Drop with a "W"
16 week						

## Semester Holidays:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If a holiday falls on Friday, then Saturday and Sunday classes will NOT meet.

If the holiday falls on Monday, then Saturday and Sunday classes WILL meet.

If a holiday falls on both Friday and Monday, Saturday and Sunday classes will NOT meet.

Please refer to your Student Program (Web Schedule Bill) for specific deadlines for all spring classes

**Note:** Deadlines for refunds, registration, and withdrawals are different for each course. For specific deadlines, please refer to your Student Class Program (Web Schedule Bill) or contact the Answer Center at (714) 432-5072 during business hours for specific course information. Students are responsible for verifying that their request has been received AND processed in order to avoid grade/fee penalties.

\*Students who never attend a class or stop attending a class at any time, MUST officially withdraw themselves by the stated deadlines to avoid grade/fee penalties. Students may drop classes using MyOCC, by mail (postmarked by the US Postmaster by stated deadline), or by coming in-person to the Enrollment Center (during normal business hours), or emailing the Enrollment Center at [arinfo@occ.cccd.edu](mailto:arinfo@occ.cccd.edu). Please refer to the [Dropping Classes Web Page](#) for information on dropping classes.

**Disclaimer:** Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this syllabus if it becomes necessary.

