



*School of Arts & Science*  
*Humanities*  
**RELIGION 100**  
**World Religions of the West**  
**Fall, 2011**

*What is hateful to yourself, do not to your fellow man. That is the whole of the Torah and the remainder is but commentary. Go and study.*

**Rabbi Hillel** (ca. 30 BCE - 10 CE)

*The beliefs of each that it possesses the one true revelation and special covenant and, in the cases of Christianity and Islam, that it supersedes earlier revelations and has a universal mission, have been stumbling blocks to religious pluralism and tolerance.*

John Esposito, *The Future of Islam*

*People of the Book, let us arrive at a statement that is common to all: we worship God alone, we ascribe no partner to Him, and none of us takes others beside God as lords.*

Qur'an 3:65

*Because state formation by definition makes people into either citizens or aliens, the modern nation-state creates rather than solves the problem of multiculturalism. States need to create formal identities for their citizens, and these legal boundaries typically coincide with territorial boundaries, thereby producing a binary division between insiders and outsiders – that is between, aliens and citizens... And here we should note an important difference between citizenship and religion as identities, the former is by definition national; the latter, transnational,*

**Bryan S. Turner, *Islam, Diaspora, and Multiculturalism***

### Course Description

An introductory survey of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, this course explores the sources, beliefs (including representative texts), and practices of these religions. The traditions of each will be studied in their cultural and political contexts from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

### 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Explain the contexts/historical settings in which Judaism, Christianity, and Islam arose.
2. List major dates, events, and places central to each.
3. Describe the historical linkage/relationships among them.
4. Summarize their major beliefs, teachings, ideals, and practices.
5. Explain variations/splits/divisions in each tradition.
6. Analyze their similarities/differences.
7. Compare/contrast each religion's view of the others.
8. Evaluate their relationship to and impact on the world today.

## **2. Instructor Information**

(a)	Instructor:	Clarence Bolt		
(b)	Office Hours:	MW -- 9:00-10:00, TuTh -- 1:30-2:20, Th -- 4:30-5:20		
(c)	Location:	Y323		
(d)	Phone:	370-3347		
(e)	Email:	cbolt@camosun.bc.ca		

## **3. Required Materials**

- a. Willard Oxtoby, ed., *World's Religions: Western Traditions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition and companion website -- [www.oupcanada.com/OxtobyWest3e](http://www.oupcanada.com/OxtobyWest3e) (handy for studying/tests)
- b. Michael Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Very Short Introduction*
- c. *Bible*, recommended editions, *New Revised Standard Version*, *Revised Standard Version*, Or the *New International Version*
- d. *Qur'an*, recommended edition by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (available in the bookstore)
- e. Deborah Ellis, *Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*. (Optional)

## **4. Course Content and Schedule**

The Lecture component of the course will be based on the Oxtoby text and the scriptures of each tradition. Read the assigned reading before class and make an outline that follows the structure of the text. The book is organized into chapters and each chapter into sections. The major sections of the chapter have titles in UPPER CASE letters while the subheadings are lower case. An identical format for your outline will make for easy note taking. For each section and subsection, ask the following:

1. What is the main question of this section and how is it answered?
2. What are the main and the sub- themes of this section?

Lectures will largely follow the book's format. Questions for the quizzes and the final exam will reflect both the book's major themes/points and those emphasized in class. They will include items from the list of terms at the end of each chapter. Reading the book and attending the lectures will ensure good results.

The Seminar component of the course is for in-class discussion. Note that one seminar group meets on Tuesday, the other on Thursday. For each session, there are assigned readings, mostly from primary sources from the traditions. You will hand in short, concise responses to the questions on the seminar readings before the sessions start.

Finally, for each class and seminar, make sure that you bring to class the books/sources from which we will be working. Make sure that you have either a Bible or a Qur'an when we are using them - that is, most every class! For each class, have a copy of the week's lecture outline that I will have emailed you the previous week.

# Course Introduction

## Week 1

### Lecture One – Sept. 6

Introduction to Course – Work Explained

### Lecture Two – Sept. 8

The Ancient World Context

Oxtoby, ch. 2, Coogan, ch. 4

### Seminar – About Religion - the Waves of Religious Experience

Oxtoby, ch. 1

## Judaism

## Week 2

### Lecture One -- Sept. 13

Israelite Background to Judaism (and to the other two!!)

Coogan, chs. 1-3

### Lecture Two – Sept. 15

The Formation of Judaism – Origin Accounts and Older Traditions

Oxtoby, pp. 68-84, Coogan ch. 4 (repeat)

Background scriptures for the lecture (choose those that interest you. I will go through the list to give you an idea of what these are about)

Genesis 1-4, 6-9, 12

Genesis 15-16, 21-2

Exodus 1-5, 12-14, 20:1-20, 32

Deuteronomy 27-30

Joshua 1-8

Judges 1-2

### Seminar: From the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 1-4, 6-9, 12, 15-16

Exodus 12-14, 20:1-20, 32

Questions for the seminar discussion:

What do the Creation, flood, Abraham, and Exodus accounts say about the relationship between God and ‘his people?’ What is ‘covenant?’

## Media Selection due September 17

## Week 3

### Lecture One – Sept. 20

The Formative Period of Judaism – Captivity and Definition

(Kings, Prophets, and Beyond)

Oxtoby, pp. 85-90, Coogan, ch. 8

Background scriptures for the lecture (choose those that interest you. I will go through the list to give you an idea of what these are about)

I Samuel 3, 8-10, 16

I Kings 5, 12

II Kings 17, 24-25

Note I Chronicles 1-9 (what purpose would these chapters provide)

## **Lecture Two – Sept. 22**

Hellenistic Judaism

Oxtoby, 90-98

Background scriptures for the lecture (choose those that interest you. I will go through the list to give you an idea of what these are about)

Ezra

Nehemiah

Esther

### **Seminar:** From the Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 1, 9:1-17, 11

Hosea 1-3

Jeremiah 1

Coogan, ch. 8

Questions for the seminar discussion:

: Bearing in mind the answers to the questions from the previous seminar, how do the prophets connect to the themes of ‘god’s people’ and ‘covenant?’ What is the underlying purpose of the prophets?

## **Week 4**

### **Lecture One – Sept. 27**

Rabbinic Judaism

Oxtoby, 98-113

For insight into how the Talmud works, browse the following:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Talmud/talmudtoc.html>

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/etm/index.htm>

### **Lecture Two – Sept. 29**

Differentiation: Medieval Judaism and Beyond (Classical Judaism)

Oxtoby, pp. 113-127

A *Kabbalah* site

<http://www.jewfaq.org/kabbalah.htm>

### **Seminar:** From the Hebrew Scriptures

Coogan, ch. 10

Job 1, 2, 38-42

Ecclesiastes 1-4, 6, 12

Song of Solomon (check in a reference book and pick selections)

Questions for the seminar discussion:

What are the main themes of these passages? Are they surprising given the themes discussed in the previous seminars? Are they more universal? Why might this be?

## **Project Proposal Due Sept. 29**

## **First Journal Entry Due Sept. 29**

## **Week 5**

### **Lecture One – Oct. 4**

Judaism in the Contemporary World (2<sup>nd</sup> Age of Diversity)

Oxtoby, pp 141-157, 239-43

**Lecture Two – Oct. 6**

Modern Dilemmas – Identity in a Racialized World  
Oxtoby, 141-157

**Seminar: Jewish Observances**

Oxtoby, pp. 127-141

Coogan, ch. 7

Questions for the seminar discussion:

What is the purpose of ‘ritual?’ How do these Judaic rituals connect with the major themes of Judaism?

**Week 6**

**Lecture One – Oct. 11**

Quiz on Judaism

**Seminar: From the Christian New Testament**

Matthew 1-8, 25, 27-28

Mark 1, 16

Luke 1, 2

John 1.1-18

Questions for the seminar discussion:

How does each one introduce the ‘gospel’ (define this word)? Do you notice a different tone? What is it for each, and why might that be?

# Christianity

For Christianity, the following is a website that links to original sources from earliest days to the recent times: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.html>

## Week 6

### Lecture Two – Oct. 13

Christian Origins – New Testament

Oxtoby, pp. 166-175

Check this site for non-Canonical Writings rejected or lost

<http://aggreen.net/bible/noncanon.html>

Background scriptures for the lecture:

Matthew 1-8, 25, 27-28

Mark 1, 16

Luke 1, 2

John 1.1-18

Seminar: From the Christian New Testament

Matthew 1-8, 25, 27-28

Mark 1, 16

Luke 1, 2

John 1.1-18

Questions for the seminar discussion:

How does each one introduce the ‘gospel’ (define this word)? Why do they differ?

## Media Project work till now Due Oct. 13.

## Week 7

### Lecture One – Oct 18

From Sect to Church

Oxtoby, pp. 175-81, 227-239

Background scriptures for the lecture:

Acts 1, 2, 9.1-31

Romans 9-11

### Lecture Two – Oct. 20

Imperial Christianity

Oxtoby, pp. 181-193

Seminar: From the Christian Scriptures

Galatians 3-6

James (especially chapters 1, 2)

Questions for the seminar discussion:

Do James and Paul contradict each other? Construct a defense of both positions (imagine that you are each). Can both positions be accommodated in Christianity or are they fundamentally different?

## Second Journal Entry Due October 20

**Week 8**

**Lecture One – Oct. 25**

Roman (Catholic) Christianity  
Oxtoby, pp. 193-209

**Lecture Two – Oct. 27**

The Protestant Reformation  
Oxtoby, 209-227

Background scriptures for the lecture:

Hebrews 10:19-12:29

**Seminar: Reformation Writings**

**Augustine and Luther (to be provided)**

Questions for the seminar discussion:

What is Augustine's view of original sin? How is the world divided? What is Luther's prescription for Weller's (Google Jerome Weller) depression? What do you make of Luther's view of the books, James and Jude?

**Article Review Due October 27**

**Week 9**

**Lecture One – Nov. 1**

Modernity  
Oxtoby, pp. 239-49  
Scan the Book of Revelations

**Lecture Two – Nov. 3**

Contemporary Christianity in a World of Diversity  
Oxtoby, 249-59

**Seminar: Two Modern Responses**

Fundamentalism -- Evangelicalism vs Atheism, Dawkins vs LeHaye/Jenkins. Details about sources will follow. Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*, is on the web ([Google Books](#)).

Questions for the seminar discussion:

What is 'fundamental' to each man's position? What makes them different/similar?

**Week 10**

**Lecture One – Nov. 8**

Quiz on Christianity

# Islam

## Week 10

### Lecture Two – Nov. 10

Origins of Islam

Oxtoby, pp 268-78

Background scriptures for the lecture:

**Introduction to the Qur'an -- read the following *sura***

1

96 (1-5 is considered to be the first revelation to Muhammad)

**View of Scriptures -- read the following *sura***

3:1-10

**Relationship between Qur'an & Muhammad -- read the following *suras***

3:144-148

16:101-105

25:1-13, 32-39

**Special Instructions about Muhammad**

33:45-58

### **Seminar:**

**View of Human creation**

22:5

23:12-15

**View of Abraham -- read the following *suras***

2:124-140

3:65-68, 93-99

4:123-6

10:69-89

16:120-124

**View of Noah -- read the following *sura***

11:25-49

71

10:105-122

**View of Moses -- read the following *suras***

20:9-98 (note 87ff)

26:10-68

Questions for the seminar discussion:

Compare the views about the above with those from the *tanakh*. How different/similar are the Jewish and Qur'anic texts? Account for that.

## Week 11

### Lecture One – Nov. 15

Formation of Practice and the Issue of Succession (Caliphate)

Oxtoby, pp. 297-302, 283-85

### Lecture Two – Nov. 17

Sufism and the Question of Culture

Oxtoby, pp. 285-91, 302-5



**Seminar:**

**View of Jesus -- read the following *suras***

3:33-67

5:17

4:153-159, 4:170-172 and 79:109-120

17:111

61:1-7

**View of Satan -- read the following *suras***

10:1-32

5:27-40

17:61-65

**View of Jews and Christians -- read the following *sura***

5:56-86

**Questions for the seminar discussion:**

How does the Qur'an view Jesus and Satan? How does it see the relationship of Muslims to the other people of the book (Jews and Christians)?

**Students doing the Journal option -- Third Journal Entry and Article Review Due Nov. 17**

**Week 12**

**Lecture One – Nov. 22**

Islamic Law

Oxtoby, pp. 278-83

**Background scriptures for the lecture:**

**Jihad**

25:48-57 (esp. 52)

4:75-76

53:29-30 (stay aloof)

16: 106ff (dissimulation)

**Lecture Two – Nov. 24**

The Spread of Islam, and Splits in the Community

Oxtoby, pp. 291-97

**Seminar**

**View of Paradise – read the following *suras***

44:40-57

47:15

52:17-27

55:39-76

56:1-26

82:22ff

**View of Women -- read the following *suras***

2:221-242

4:1-35, 127-30

9:71,72

16:56-9

24:27-33

33:35

Questions for the seminar discussion:

How is paradise viewed? What kind of place is it? How are women written about?

You may want to browse this site on women in Islam. Who created it?

<http://www.islamfortoday.com/women.htm>

### **Final Project due Nov. 24**

#### **Week 13 Lectures One and Two – Nov. 29 & Dec. 1**

Modernity and Islam

Oxtoby, pp. 305-17

Background scriptures for the lecture:

**View of *Jihad* -- read the following *suras***

2:189-195

4:71-76

16: 105ff (dissimulation)

#### **Seminar: Modernity and Islam (two views – to be provided)**

Questions for seminar discussion:

Contrast and account for the views of Osama bin Laden and Tariq Ramadan. Who are they?

#### **Week 14 Lecture One – Dec. 6**

New Religions and Movements

Oxtoby, ch. 7, pp. 388-89, 397-407, 409-12, 416-18

#### **Lecture Two – Dec. 8**

Current Issues

Oxtoby ch. 8

#### **Seminar: Ellis (all)**

Questions for the seminar discussion:

Who/what is responsible for this state of affairs? Is there room for hope?

#### **Media Project Due Dec. 6**

#### **Final Journal Entry due Dec. 8**

**Cumulative Final** in the exam period.

## 5. Basis of Your Assessment (Weighting)

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| <b>1. Two quizzes</b> | 10% each |
| <b>Final</b>          | 20%      |

### **2. Media Project, Paper, or Journal**

#### **A. Media Project**

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| <b>First Presentation</b> | <b>5%</b>  |
| <b>Final Project</b>      | <b>35%</b> |

**Or**

#### **B. Paper**

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| <b>Proposal</b> | <b>05%</b> |
| <b>Review</b>   | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Paper</b>    | <b>25%</b> |

**Or**

#### **C. Journal**

- |                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| <b>Journal</b> | <b>30%</b> |
| <b>Review</b>  | <b>10%</b> |

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>3. Participation</b> | <b>15%</b> |
|-------------------------|------------|

- |                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>4. Media Presentation</b> | <b>05%</b> |
|------------------------------|------------|

- 1. Quiz/Final** details will be handed out well in advance. Use the Guide Questions emailed to you for major themes. The quizzes will consist of 3 types of questions:
- Terms to identify** based on the list given at the end of Oxtoby chapters.
  - Short paragraph**-size answers to questions on themes and issues.
  - Longer essays** requiring synthesis of main themes and issues.

### 2. Media Project, Paper, or Journal

#### A. Media Project – Due Dec. 6

How we see or understand 'religion is often shaped by what we read/see in books and media. Media tend to be superficial and they respond immediately to issues and events.

The assignment will examine the manner in which a selected group of media approaches religion.

#### The Method

You will collect items from the media listed below and organize the selections into a scrapbook/portfolio.

- By September 17 (the last date by which I will accept this as an option)** you will have selected either
  - Two newspapers – the Globe and Mail and the National Post

Or

  - Two networks – BBC (western) and Aljazeera (southwest Asia)

- ii. From each, pick out **all** stories which have a religious theme about, or significant reference to, one or all, of the 3 traditions we are covering in this class. Keep a separate file on each Medium chosen.
- iii. For each story, include the following
  - a. the article (story) headline or title
  - b. the date – stories must be arranged in chronological order
  - c. a hard copy of the story, a saved copy, **or** a link to the story. If you use a link, summarize the story - explain its content and the reason for inclusion
- iv. For **5 marks**, for **October 13**, hand in what you have collected so far.
- v. The final project is due by **December 6**. The remaining marks will be divided up as follows: **25 marks** for the collection of articles/stories, **10 marks** for the analysis which will be no more than **3000 words**, consisting of the following:
  - a. Who owns/controls each medium, and what is the bias tendency in each? Who is the target audience of each?
  - b. How is each tradition presented and treated in each media?
  - c. List/briefly explain 3 major insights that you gained from this exercise.

The final submission will be graded on comprehensiveness, presentation, and depth of analysis.

## **B. Paper**

The paper, **due November 24**, will be on a topic from the list below or one approved by me. It may focus on

- a. key concepts/movements/people within one of the traditions or
- b. offshoots or sects/cults deriving from these tradition
- c. contacts among the traditions, whether it be of major groups or individuals
- d. encounters with non-western traditions
- e. an evaluation of the works/books of a major figure within a tradition
- f. a topic arranged after consultation with me

**Please consult with me before starting your work** and do so regularly to stay on track.

For many topics, the *Encyclopedia of Religion* is a good reference work and starting point to define the topic. The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, another great source, is on-line. The site Judaica is a good point of access to Jewish sources. Look for Bibliographies of sources, either in print or on-line (such as the following):

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.html>

## **Step 1. Proposal**

**By September 29**, you will submit a proposal (annotated bibliography) with a list of sources, a minimum of **3 books** and **2 academic articles**, specific to the topic.\* If you want to vary these numbers to include fewer books and more articles, put together a list and consult me before handing in the assignment. Primary material may be included.

**The submitted proposal will look like this:**

### **a. Paragraph with Topic Proposal**

This paragraph will

--introduce the topic (who, what, when, where – not how or why)

--explain which question that the paper will answer

--lay out the approach/style of presentation.

There is no need to formulate a thesis at this point. Theses should be generated by research rather than the other way around.

#### Suggestion for choosing books or articles:

Use reference works (see above) to define the topic. Please note that they are not substitutes for the essay's sources which must be either primary sources or academic books/articles focussed on the topic. Reference works are not to be included in the bibliography.

#### **b. Bibliography (examples)**

Author. *Title*. Place: Publisher, Date.

e.g. a book

Ellis, Deborah. *Three Wishes, Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*. Toronto: House of Anansi, 2004

e.g. an article

LaViolette, Forrest. "Missionaries and the Potlatch." *Queen's Quarterly* 58 (1951):237-51.

**Entries must be alphabetical, double-spaced, and first-line indented. Consult the *History Style Guide* for direction.**

#### **Suggestions for finding books and articles:**

Using the **Camosun library**, find **six books** and four articles either completely devoted to your topic or with substantial references to it. If you have difficulty finding these numbers, you may wish to widen your topic or select a different one. Since content may not live up to what the titles suggest, it is helpful to look up more titles than you need, locate them in the stacks or on-line, skim them for content, and then select those that best fit the topic. [Camosun an e-books collection]. Feel free as well to scan the bibliographies of the books you choose to find additional useful sources. This is using the research skills of those who have come before you!!

#### **C. Once you have settled on books and articles, write out a summary that will:**

Explain why your choices will help create an essay on the topic. Usefulness/value is determined by both the work's content (primary or secondary) and, where applicable, the author's use of the material.

Your mark will be determined by both the work's usefulness and your assessment of why it is so. Do not simply say that you liked 'it' or that 'it' covered the topic. Try to figure out the deeper themes and meaning to explain why the work is useful. This summary may be written beneath the bibliographic entry.

To find articles, use indexes such as JSTOR and EBSCO. Academic journal articles are peer-reviewed and well documented (footnotes and bibliography). *National Geographic*, news magazines, *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, and such popular magazines **are not** appropriate. **Articles must be from respected and established periodicals.**

#### **c. Attachments**

1. a photocopy of the title page; and the table of contents of each book
2. the 1<sup>st</sup> page of the articles.

Papers will only be considered if a proposal is submitted. Late work is not accepted without permission. Maintain regular communication with me to keep things on track.

## **Step 2 -- Article Review (a sample will be provided)**

**By October 27**, you will write a review of one of the two academic articles chosen for the essay. Each review will be 300 words and consist of three paragraphs:

- paragraph one will define the theme (argument, thesis, main point)
- paragraph two will discuss style, sources, and method of argument
- paragraph three will give your opinion on the basis of the information in paragraphs one and two.

Include a full bibliographic citation as well as attach the complete article (or a direct link). Failure to follow these instructions will mean the return of the review.

## **Step 3 –The Essay**

The paper, **due November 24**, will meet the following Conditions and Standards:

1. It will be no longer than 2500 words (approx. 7-8 pp).
2. It will consist of a thesis, supported by evidence, analysis of alternative interpretations (where applicable), and a conclusion summarizing why your interpretation fits the material best.
3. It must contain
  - title page
  - double spacing, with no headings and no extra space between paragraphs
  - justified margins
  - minimum of 20 end/footnotes documenting specific information, themes, ideas, quotes, or paraphrases
  - proper end/footnote and bibliographical style (see the Humanities web page, *History Style Guide*)
  - copy of the original proposal, along with the article review
4. Grammar, spelling, and syntax are critical to a good paper. Marks will be lost for deficiencies in these areas.
5. The final grade is based on the quality of work and presentation (see 4), use of sources, a clear/strong thesis, consistent argument, proper transitions, and originality of approach.

## **C. Journal**

A journal is a record of personal reactions and responses over time. Subjects in journals can vary widely. A journal for this course is a specialized type and is not to be confused with a private diary. Entries, while personal, must be analytical, intellectual responses, focused on specific subjects and meeting established criteria. They will be based on two foundations:

- the course material (texts, readings, lectures, and discussions)
- previous knowledge, intuitive reactions, and feelings about the material

Your entries must be solid, well-articulated positions. It is not adequate to say that you like or do not like something. This does not have to be award-winning writing. Religion 100 is neither a creative writing nor a psychology course.

You will make a minimum of **2 entries per week**, one responding to the material assigned for the upcoming classes, and a second after the week's classes have been held. In short, you are responding to material before and after it has been dealt with in class. Entries should not exceed 500 words. Be precise and to the point but do not over-edit.

Your grade will be based on the following:

- engagement of material
- depth of response
- use of course material
- quality of writing (not expected to be literary masterpieces)

Entries may be handwritten or printed but hard copies are due on the assigned dates.

**Due dates are – Sept. 29, October 20, Nov. 17, and Dec. 8.**

For those choosing this option, you will submit, by **Nov. 17**, an academic journal review, based on a course topic which has caught your interest. Please note the following:

- consult with your instructor when you have a topic that interests you
- find an article
- see **Paper Step 2** (above) for details on writing a review. Include a Bibliographical citation, double space between sentences, and justify the margins.

**All work is due in class on the due date, before the class meets. Attendance for that class is mandatory. Failure to follow these rules forfeits the mark.**

**3. Participation** in classroom activities is an important component of the course. Seminar sessions will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings. Attendance is required. If you must miss one, your absence must be arranged/discussed with me ahead of time. More than 3 absences will reduce this component of the course, unless prior arrangements have been made.

#### **4. Media Presentation**

For each seminar, one student will present a news item on a religious topic, for the week prior to the seminar, from any media. Be prepared, to present a (very) brief summary of the story and why it caught your attention. A short written summary will be handed in. Each student will sign up for a seminar media presentation during the first week.

#### **List of Possible Paper Topics (for these or any other topic, consult me)**

Dead Sea Scrolls, Essenes, Qumran	Wahhabism
Jihad	Shi-ism
Baha'i faith	Zionism
Mormonism	Augustine
Jehovah's Witnesses	Roman vs. Orthodox Christians
Sufism	Creation versus evolution
Black Muslims	Eschatology
Kabbalism	Pietism

Sharia law in a particular place, time

20<sup>th</sup> c fundamentalism – in any of the three traditions or comparison of two

Science/culture and faith – are they compatible –pick one tradition or compare

Thinkers/philosophers/theologians in any of the tradition (browse through the text)  
 Sects and denominations within any of the traditions  
 Islam in the west (Europe, Canada, the United States – see Bibliography at end of Esposito, The Future of Islam)  
 Christianity in China  
 Pluralism vs secularism  
 Multi-culturalism and religion  
 Televangelism in either Christianity or Islam (Amr Khaled or Abdullah Gymnastiar)  
 West-Islamic World Dialogue (named C-100 ) Also produces *Islam and the West, Annual Report on the State of Dialogue*  
 Alliance of Civilizations  
 Amman Message (Jordanian initiative)  
 “A Common Word between us” (Pope Benedict initiative following his ill-fated Regensburg Speech)  
 Institute for Global Engagement  
 Gallup World Polls  
 Gender issues in any of the faiths

Note the dimension of time. Be clear about which time in the past, which place, and about whom you are writing. **Context is crucial in writing accurate papers.**

### 1. Grading System

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Equivalency	Point
90-100	A+		9	
85-89	A		8	
80-84	A-		7	
77-79	B+		6	
73-76	B		5	
70-72	B-		4	
65-69	C+		3	
60-64	C		2	
50-59	D		1	
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0	

**Temporary Grades** are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy at [camosun.ca](http://camosun.ca) or information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

<b>I</b>	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
<b>IP</b>	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.
<b>CW</b>	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

### 2. Recommended Materials or Services to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

#### LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services or the College web site at [camosun.ca](http://camosun.ca).

#### STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

There is a Student Conduct Policy **which includes plagiarism**. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services and on the College web site in the Policy Section.



## Notes on the Scriptures of Each Tradition.

1. Scriptures are not historical works, academic treatises, analytical inquiries, or literary creations in the modern sense of these words. They are literary, written expressions of beliefs, values, teachings, lessons, and the like. Certainly, one can find contained in them history, reasoned argument, and literature but they are religious expressions first of all, fundamental to the writers' existence as human beings. They record the 'deeds whereby [God] has made himself manifest.' They were writing 'religion,' not 'history,' 'philosophy,' or 'theology.'<sup>a</sup>

2. With that in mind, as you read each section, try to determine what is being said. Remove preconceived notions as much as possible. The scriptures employ various writing genres. Understanding how each genre works is vital to comprehending meaning and message. About each selection, ask the following:

- Why was it written, and in what genre?
- What was the message to its audience?
- What was being said about God?
- What was it telling humans about how they ought to live? not to live?
- What should the believer walk away with?

3. We are all outsiders to faiths, traditions, and belief systems not our own. Hence, because we are covering three 'religions' in this course, no matter what our belief and value systems, we will all be outsiders at most or all points this semester. Even if you do not share the values/beliefs of any of these traditions, recognize that the scriptures in each tradition are sacred to adherents. Readings have been chosen to provide a sense of what is meaningful to large numbers of people.

### Note on the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, known in popular circles as the Old and New Testaments

There is no such thing as a perfect Bible translation and so no particular translation is assigned for this class. However, some translations are more appropriate than others.

**Most recommended:** The **New Revised Standard Version** has become the standard academic translation of the Bible for many Jewish, Christian and non-religious Bible scholars. It is based on the best original texts available. Other recommended version include the **Revised Standard Version**, **New International Version**, **New American Bible** (with the *revised New Testament*), **New American Standard Bible**, **Modern Language Bible**.

**Acceptable but not recommended:** The **King James Version** (Authorized Version) uses 400-year-old English, which is partially resolved by the **New King James Version**. Their New Testaments are based on slightly different Greek texts from those used for most modern translations. The **Jerusalem Bible**, **Good News Bible** (Today's English Version), and **New English Bible** are less literal.

**Not suitable:** Paraphrases (not translations) include the **Living Bible**, **Amplified Bible**, **The Message**, and **Barclay's Bible**. The **Douay-Reims Bible** is a Catholic translation of a Latin translation rather than a direct translation from the Greek or Old Testament Hebrew.

### Note on the Qur'an

For most Muslims, the Qur'an ('to read' or 'to recite' – 'a collection of things to be recited') is God's final revelation, God's single greatest sign, containing all that is needed for salvation, whether instructions for how to live or ethical principles. Most believe that God's word(s) is written on a tablet, one that resides in God's presence. The revelations in the Qur'an, revealed to

<sup>a</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of history* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. 12-15

Muhammad, as well as the ones revealed to Jews and Christians before him, came from this original holy source.

Hence, the Qur'an confirms the teachings of the older scriptures: the laws, the prophets, and the gospels. The Qur'an's style differs from the other 2 'books,' reflecting Arabic religious traditions, consisting of rhymed prose (rather than poetry) which is easy to memorize.

There are 114 chapters, known as *suras*. Some are long, others are short. They are not arranged chronologically but in terms of length, starting with longer the longer ones. The name for each *sura* is chosen from a word that appears somewhere at its beginning. Each *sura* has verses called *ayat* ('signs'). Twenty-nine *suras* begin with seemingly disjointed letters which may be a code or simply a filing system.

Even if they do not understand Arabic, Muslim children across the world continue to learn the Arabic alphabet and to sound out the words of the Qur'an phonetically. Thus, the Qur'an is both a *source* of prayer and a *prayer* in its own right, highly venerated and shelved with other books but resting in its own bookstand. Muslims generally do not buy or sell it; gifts rather than money are often offered in exchange. An aesthetic consequence of such veneration is that calligraphy is a most highly developed art form in the Islamic world.

The recitation of the Qur'an is captivating and reciters have a high status. As is true of all scriptures for all religious traditions, simply reading it for content does not do it justice or capture its significance for Muslims.