



*School of Arts & Science
Humanities*

RELIGION 100
World Religions of the West
Winter 2015

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 holy books say one thing about a religion, the people who believe in and practice that religion do quite another. Trying to understand the difference between official religion, defined by the religious virtuosi, and the believed and practiced religion of the faithful defines a central problem in making sense of religion as we see it in today's world.

Jacob Neusner, *The Way of the Torah*

'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

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*

1. Course Description and Intended Learning Outcomes

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

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

3. Instructor Information

(a)	Instructor:	Clarence Bolt		
(b)	Office Hours:	W - 10:30-11:00, F - 10:30-11:20		
(c)	Location:	Y323		
(d)	Phone:	250-370-3347		
(e)	Email:	cbolt@camosun.bc.ca		

4. Required Materials

- a. Willard Oxtoby, ed., *World's Religions: Western Traditions*, 3rd edition Companion website -- www.oupcanada.com/OxtobyWest3e
- b. Michael Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Very Short Introduction*
- c. *Bible*, recommended translations: *New Revised Standard Version*, *Revised Standard Version*, or *New International Version*
- d. *Qur'an*, recommended translation: by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (bookstore)

The following website links to online scriptural sources:

<http://www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/home/>

Lectures (9:30 Mondays and Wednesdays). This part of the course uses the Oxtoby and Coogan texts as well as the scriptures of each tradition. Read the assigned reading before class, having the outline and guide questions created for each lecture beside you. Lectures follow the book's format. Questions for the quizzes and final exam reflect both the book's major themes/points and those emphasized in class. Be sure to bring the required readings and outlines for each lecture (and seminar) to class to ensure good results.

When reading the textbook, read actively, noting the major themes of each chapter, as well as the subthemes of the major sections, that is, the primary and the sub themes.

Seminars (8:30) Wednesday or Friday – depending which you selected). Seminars discuss the assigned materials (mostly primary sources) - from the scriptures and textbooks, or emailed to you. You will hand in short, concise responses to the questions on the seminar readings (in the syllabus) before the seminar starts.

Media presentations: at some point in the semester, during the seminar, each student will do a brief presentation on a current event item from the media. Dates will be selected in the 1st week.

Course Content and Schedule

Course Introduction

Week 1 Jan. 7

Lecture - About Religion

-(for reference) Oxtoby, pp. 30-47

Seminar – What we will do this semester

Jan 9

Lecture – The Beginning of the Story

-Oxtoby, pp. 68-77, Coogan ch. 1

- Scriptures to which I will be referring in the lecture (feel free to peruse)

-Genesis chs. 1-3; ch. 12:1-8; chs.16-17; chs. 1-2

-For Abraham, you may want to check the following:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/abraham.html>

Seminar - What we will do this semester

Judaism

Judaism, the 1st of the 3 traditions covered, originated in the 1st century at the same time as Christianity with which it and Islam share sources, namely, the Hebrew traditions of Israel. In Weeks 2 and 3, we examine these sources, before examining what distinguishes Judaism from Christianity and Islam.

Some websites to consult for information about the chronology/story of the Hebrew scriptures, also known as the TaNaKh:

1. Synopsis of Contents of the TaNaKh (the Jewish Bible), Christine Hayes

2. Two links to sites summarizing the TaNaKh

a. <http://www.templeisrael.com/pdfs/Adult%20Jewish%20Learning%20-%202010%20-%20Intro%20Packet%20-%20Torah%20and%20Tanakh.pdf>

b. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Torah/Portion_by_Portion.shtml

3. A Timeline for Jewish History

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/israeltime.html>

Week 2 The Foundation Stories for the 3 faiths: Creation, Covenant, Kings, Prophets, and Beyond

For information - background scriptures are from the Torah (5 books of Moses – Genesis-Deuteronomy), Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and the

Prophets. I will provide a brief chronology/summary of the 'stories.' Note that reading the TaNaKh better gives you its flavour.

Readings:

For Lectures (January 14 and 16)

-Oxtoby, pp. 77-98 (for reference, Coogan, ch. 1-4, 8)

-Scriptures to which I will be referring in the lecture (feel free to peruse)

-Exodus chs. 6-14; ch. 20:1-20, ch. 32

-Jeremiah ch.s 1,2

-For Moses, you may want to check the following:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/moses.html>

Feel free to use *The Encyclopedia of Religion* or *Wikipedia*

For Seminars

Genesis chs. 5-9

Genesis ch. 11:1-9

Joshua chs. 1, 6, 8

Hosea chs.1-3

Questions for Seminar:

What might be the point of the genealogies in Ch. 5? Why was a flood sent?

What promises did God make after the flood?

What is the point of the story of the tower of Babel?

What does God want the Israelites to do to the people of Canaan? Why?

What was Hosea required to do? Why?

Week 3 Rabbinic Judaism – Hellenism to Talmud & Beyond

The following are good, concise summaries for your interest.

<http://oyc.yale.edu/sites/default/files/tanakh-synopsis.pdf>

<http://www.torah.org/learning/basics/primer/torah/bible.html>

Readings

For Lectures (January 21 and 23)

-Oxtoby, pp. 98-120, 404-7

For insight into how the Talmud works:

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

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

Note: The Talmud is like the internet! How so?

For Seminars

-Job 1, 2, 6, 7, 31, 38-42 (skim in between if you are interested)

-Ecclesiastes 1-4, 6, 9, 12

Check the *Jewish Virtual Library* on Job and Ecclesiastes – Google them and use Wikipedia.

Questions for Seminar

What do the books of Job and Ecclesiastes tell us about fundamental religious question (origin, meaning, and ethics)? Are their themes surprising to Judaism given what we have discussed so far? Are they more universal than earlier themes, especially the covenants with Abraham and Moses? Why might that be?

Week 4 **Pre-modern and Modern Times for Jews**

Readings

For Lectures (January 28 and 30):

-Oxtoby, 120-7, 141-157, 239-43

For Seminars:

Jewish Observances,

-Oxtoby, pp. 127-141, Coogan, ch. 7

Questions for Seminar:

What is the purpose of prayer, of ‘ritual,’ of circumcision, of dietary restrictions, or of symbolic wear? Why are certain ‘things’ worn? Why are festivals and feasts celebrated? How do the rituals relate to the major themes of Judaism?

Project Proposal, Jan 30

First Set of Journals, Jan 30

Week 5 **Judaism in our Racialized World – the State of Israel and the Dilemmas of Identity**

Readings

For Lecture February 4

-Handout on the state of Israel – to be emailed

For Lecture February 6

Quiz 1 - There is both a **Take-home and an In-class** portion for the quiz, focusing on defining Judaism, especially in the modern world. Is it a religion, culture, ethnicity... or....?

For Seminars (combined on Feb. 4 – no seminar on Feb. 6)

A key contemporary Jewish issue is the relationship among the Jewish Diaspora, the Jewish community in the State of Israel, and secularization. Since the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE), Jews have lived as exiled and dispersed peoples. Today, of approximately 15 million people who identify as Jews worldwide, about half, approximately 6 million, live in the USA. Another 6 million live in the State of Israel (founded 1948), with smaller communities across Europe, Southern Africa, the rest of the Americas, Australia, the Middle East, and Asia.

Since religious experience is imbedded in Jewish culture and history, it can be said that religious and non-religious elements of Judaism cannot be disentangled. Many Jews self-identify as secular or non-practicing Jews. Others are guided by Halakah, the laws for daily life. **Many, thus, see the categorization of Judaism as a religion as being problematic.** The following website contains summarizes 5 modern forms of Judaism.

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Jewish_World_Today/Denominations.shtml

Questions for Seminar:

Consider especially the bold section above. Of the 5 forms, which is truest to Jewish history and which best guarantees a healthy Jewish future? Or is this a non-issue? Does it matter for Jews? In short, what is the current state of 'being Jewish'?

Christianity

Week 6 Christian Origins: From Jesus to Church

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

For Lectures (February 11 and 13)

-Oxtoby, pp. 166-181.

-Matthew 1-2, 25, 27-28

-Mark 1, 16

-Luke 1, 2

-John 1.1-18

-Acts 1-2, 9:1-31, 15:1-29

For non-Canonical Gospels -<http://aggreen.net/bible/noncanon.html>

For Seminars:

Matthew ch. 5:1-14, 38-48; ch. 25:31-46

Romans chs.4-5
Hebrews ch. 11:1-3, 8-19

In Matthew, what ethics are promoted, and what is rewarded and punished (and how)? What is Paul saying about Abraham and circumcision? How does he compare Adam and Jesus? How does Hebrews define faith?

Week 7 **From Church to Imperial Religion and Beyond – Orthodox Christianity (1st of the 3 main traditions)**

Readings:

For Lectures (February 18 and 20)

-Oxtoby, pp. 181-97

For interest, read Romans 9-11 which lays out Paul's views of Jews, opinions that continue to influence how many Christians view Jews. For apocalyptic views, scan (and Google) the book of Revelations).

For Seminars

Nicene Creed (Oxtoby text)

Augustine (emailed with Christianity files and study guide)

Justin (emailed with Christianity files and study guide)

John Chrysostom (emailed with Christianity files and study guide)

Questions for discussion:

How does the Nicene Creed function for Christians around the world?

What is the significance of Augustine's views on original sin and of the divisions in the universe?

What might be the legacy of the Justin and Chrysostom's views of the Jews?

First Article Review for those doing a Journal, February 18

Week 8 **Roman (Catholic), & Reformation Christianity – the other 2 Major 'Varieties'**

Readings:

For Lectures February 25 and 27)

-Oxtoby, pp. 197-221

For Seminars

-Oxtoby, pp. 199-204, 227-239

Questions for Discussion:

What is the role of ritual and of festival? Consider prayer, festivals, life rituals, etc.

What is popular religion (199-204)? In promoting popular religion, why did the Roman Church advocate honoring relics and saints, building cathedrals, venerating Mary, selling indulgences, and creating 7 sacraments?

Does popular religion detract from or enhance the message, the essence of the faith?

Article Review for those doing a paper, February 25

Week 9 Modern Christianity - Diversity in a Global World

Readings:

For Lectures (March 4 and 6)

Oxtoby, pp. 221-227, 239-50, 257-59

Scan the Book of Revelations

For Seminars (use reference works to find your answers)

Concerning the following groups, would you define as Christian? Why or why not? The list: Jehovah's Witness, Seventh Day Adventist, and Mormons? Note origins, major ideas (those which distinguish them and give them their identity), and explain why or why not you think they fit the definition.

Week 10 March 11 - Quiz

There will be both **Take-home and In-class Exercises**, focusing on defining precisely 'Christian identity.' Or – is this an impossible question?

Islam

Week 10 Lecture March 13 - Origins of Islam

Oxtoby, pp. 268-78

View of Muhammad

61:1-7

33:40-48

View of Jews and Christians

3:84-9, 95-97

Seminars (combine both on March 13?)

The Awakening

Second Journals Set Due March 13

Week 11 Formation of Practice, the Issue of Succession (Caliphate), and the Spread of Islam

Readings:

For Lectures (March 18 and 20)

Oxtoby, 283-85, 291-305

History of Shi'ism

http://www.iranchamber.com/religions/articles/history_of_shiism.php

For Seminars, Plus Questions for Discussion

View of Abraham

3:65-68 – What is Abraham's true identity, according to the Qur'an?

2:124-140 – In what context does the Qur'an place Abraham?

37:101-113 – How does this version compare to the Jewish version?

View of Jesus http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeR_fU1acjM

3:33-63 and 4:153-159, 170-172 – How is Jesus venerated? How is it similar different from the Christian version of the life of Jesus? Why might they not like it?

View of Satan

7:10-27 and 17:61-65

Week 12 Islamic Law, Philosophy, and Sufism

Readings:

For Lectures (March 25 and 27)

Oxtoby, pp. 275-91

For Seminars

View of Women -- read the following suras

4:1-35 and 2:222-242 – How does the Qur'an view marriage and divorce?

16:54-60 – What view of a girl's birth does the Qur'an reject?

9:71-2 and 33:35 – Are these passages of a 'feminist' Qur'an? See also

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

View of Paradise – read the following suras

52:17-27 and 56:1-56 – What is heaven like? Relate to view on women.

Modesty - read the following suras

7:26-31 and 24:27-33 – Is a hijab Qur'anic? What is the principle here?

Questions for discussion:

Paper due for those doing the Paper Option, March 25

Second Article Review for those doing a Journal, March 27

Week 13 Modernity and Islam

Readings:

For Lectures (April 1 and 3)

Oxtoby, pp. 305-17, 399-404

For Seminars

Oxtoby, pp. 305-17

Osama Bin Laden and Tariq Ramadan (to be emailed)

Questions for discussion:

Contrast and account for the views of Osama bin Laden and Tariq Ramadan on how to address Islam in the modern world. What does each suggest and offer?

This is a complex topic. For assistance in answering the above question, consider the options presented in the chapter, especially the varieties within each of the following – Reformism, Revivalism, and Secularism. Which of them is likely best equipped to deal with current realities?

Further aids for these questions:

A Pew Research study similar to the one on Judaism.

<http://www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-overview/>

A link to an article which spins the typical view we have the other way – the headscarf issue can be an identity issue for some westerners, not just for Muslims.

<http://www.thelocal.fr/20130807/france-is-having-an-identity-crisis-over-islam>

Week 14 Wrap-up; Where are we Today? What's new?

Readings:

For Lectures (April 8 and 10)

-Oxtoby, ch. 8

-A Common Word: <http://www.acommonword.com/> (JCM -Conference, 2013)

For Seminars

Some issues:

- Is the future of the 3 traditions in a globalizing world to convergence or to further division? Has the Internet and Social Media 'changed everything'?
- Is inter-faith dialogue possible?
- Can both pluralistic and secular approaches work?
- Any issues that are appropriate

Final Journals due, April 8

Semi-Cumulative Final in the exam period.

Basis of Your Assessment (Weighting)

1. Two quizzes 10% each
 Final 20%

2. Paper or Journal

A. Paper

 Proposal 05%

 Article 05%

 Paper 30%

B. Journal

 Journal 30%

 2 Articles 10%

C. Negotiated Assignment 40%

3. Participation

 Discussion 10%

 Hand-ins 05%

4. Media Presentation 05%

1. Quizzes/Final details will be handed out well in advance. Use the Guide Questions emailed to you for major themes. The quizzes may consist of 4 types of questions:

- a. **Terms to identify** based on the list given at the end of Oxtoby chapters.
- b. **Short paragraph**-size answers to questions on themes and issues.
- c. **Longer essays** requiring synthesis of main themes and issues.
- d. **Take home options**

2. Paper/Project or Journal

A. Paper/Project – due March 25

Paper/project will be on a topic from the list below or one approved by me. Its focus:

- a. key concepts/movements/people within one of the traditions or
- b. offshoots or sects/cults deriving from these traditions
- 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. **or any topic** arranged after consultation with me

A ‘Crucial’ Step – to get started!

To get started, you need to have an idea of a topic. Use Reference works to get key information – who, what, where, when, how, etc. Examples of reference works: *Jewish Encyclopedia*, *Jewish Women: a Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, *(New) Catholic Encyclopedia (online)*, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an Online*, *New Schaff-Herzog Encycloedia of Religious Knowledge*, *Postmodern Bible Dictionary*, or other similar encyclopedias (even Wikipedia)]. The site *Judaica*, accesses Jewish sources. Look for Bibliographies of sources, either in print or on-line (such as the following – one of the best):

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

I will set up an appointment schedule over the first 3 weeks of the semester. For this meeting, we will make a plan for your paper proposal. By this meeting, you will have:

- an idea of what you want to develop -- a topic and a question
- a tentative plan for how you want to develop it
- a tentative list of sources that may help you meet your goal.

In short, it is essential, for success, to begin with a clear path. To ensure that it remains navigable, maintain regular contact with me. Always ask questions before getting stuck and spinning your wheels. Remember, the only stupid question is the one not asked!

Step 1. Proposal – January 30

By January 30, submit an annotated bibliography (proposal) with a list of sources, including **at least 3 academic books, 2 academic articles, and possible primary sources, or a list agreed upon in our earlier conversation.** It should look like this:

a. Paragraph with Topic Proposal

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

As noted above, before choosing books or articles, use reference works to define the topic. Reference works will not be part of your bibliography. They help to define a topic, but sources for the essay must be **academic books/articles focussed on the topic or they can be primary sources from the traditions.**

b. Bibliography

Author. *Title*. Place: Publisher, Date. **Entries must be alphabetical, double-spaced, and second-line indented. Consult the *History Style Guide* for direction.**

e.g. a book

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

e.g, article

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

Suggestions for finding books and articles:

Using the **Camosun library**, find **6 books and 4 articles** either completely devoted to your topic or with substantial references to it. If you have difficulty finding these numbers, widen your topic or select a different one. Since content may not live up to what the titles suggest, it helps 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 has an e-books collection]. Scan the bibliographies of selected books to find additional sources, thus using the research skills of those who have come before you!!

C. Once you have settled on books and two 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 from **only respected and established periodicals** use indexes such as JSTOR and Academic Search Premier (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.

D. Attachments

1. a photocopy of the title page and of the table of contents of each book
2. the 1st page of the articles.

Papers will not be considered unless a proposal is submitted. Late work is not accepted without permission from the instructor.

Note. Remember to maintain regular contact with me to negotiate modifications on your list should you encounter better sources or shift the focus of your paper. A paper is a work in progress, and "it's not done till it's done"

Step 2 -- Article Review

By February 25, 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 March 25**, 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, and a conclusion summarizing why the chosen interpretation fits the evidence best.
3. It must contain
 - title page
 - double spacing, with no headings and no extra space between paragraphs
 - minimum of 20 end/footnotes documenting specific information, themes, ideas, quotes, or paraphrases
 - Chicago Manual of Style* end/footnote and bibliographical style (see also the Humanities web page, *History Style Guide*)
 - copy of the original proposal, along with the article review
 - a second copy of the essay emailed to the instructor (to be kept on file for 5 years)**
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.

B. 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**, as outlined in a file 'Religious Journal Questions' emailed to you in the first of classes.

One entry each week will answer this question: what key (new) insight did you gain this week for the particular faith tradition we are covering, and what is its significance for that tradition? Did it change your previous knowledge or ideas about that tradition? How? Why?

A second entry will come from a list of questions, from the emailed file, for that week, from which you can choose one.

Entries should not exceed 500 words. Be precise and to the point. 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 – January 30, March 13, April 8

For those choosing this option, you will also submit two article reviews: the first by **February 18** and the second by **March 27**. These are from academic journals, from a list provided by the instructor. 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.

C. Negotiated Assignment

You may have an idea for a project you would like to do. You may negotiate the terms and conditions of such with me in the first two weeks of class. We will set dates for assignments.

3. Participation

Engagement in classroom activities is an important component of the course. Absences from class should be arranged/discussed ahead of time. More than 3 absences reduces marks for this component of the course, unless you make prior arrangements. You will email to me short, concise responses to the questions on the discussion as a passport into each class.

4. Media Presentation

Each student will present a recent news item on a religious topic from any media. You will present a brief summary of the story and why it caught your attention, accompanied with a short written summary. You will sign up for a presentation during the first week.

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

Dead Sea Scrolls, Essenes, Qumran
Jihad
Baha'i faith
Mormonism
Jehovah's Witnesses

Sufism
Black Muslims
Kabbalism
Wahhabism
Shi-ism
Zionism
Augustine
Roman vs. Orthodox Christians
Creation versus evolution
Eschatology
Pietism
Maria TV
Hagarism
Voice of Unity (Muslim Youth organization –online)
Atheism in Indonesia
Pesantren or Pondok Pesantren
Salafism
Dubai as modern city
Doha Debates
Amina Wadud, Muslim feminist

Female Rabbis or Imams
Hijab (in all of its forms)
Dispensationalism
Jack T. Chick (fund. comic artist)
Grace Baptist Church
Coca Cola, Christmas, and the 'real thing' Abdullahi An-Na'im
Sharia law in a particular place, time
20th c fundamentalism – in any of the three traditions or comparison of two
Science/culture and faith – are they compatible –pick one tradition or compare two
Thinkers/philosophers/theologians in any of the tradition (browse through the text)
Sects and denominations within any of the traditions (see lists in text)
Compare Islam in two countries with dominant Muslim populations
Islam in the west (Europe, Canada, US – see Bibliography of Esposito, *The Future of Islam*)
Christianity in China, South Korea, Africa
Pluralism vs secularism (or inclusivism, exclusivism, and pluralism)
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 after his ill-fated Regensburg Speech)
Institute for Global Engagement
Gallup World Polls
Gender (LGBTQ) issues in any of the faiths
Cow's head protest in Malaysia and subsequent reactions
Saudi Housewife Hissa Hilal in poetry contest with a poem on Ad Hoc Fatwas
Saudi House of Peace – Christians trying to convert Muslims

Internet sites

Worldnet Grace Ministries

JesusChristNet
 Dial-the-truth ministries
 Biblical discernment Ministries
 Universal Life Church
 First Church of Cyberspace
 Christian Prayer Cell Network
 Cyber Center for Liberated Christians
 BibleUSA.com Prayer Center

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.**

Other
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 or information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<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.
IP	<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.
CW	<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.

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 Readings from 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. They will indeed contain 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] was made manifest.' They are about 'religion.' They are not works of 'history,' 'philosophy,' or 'theology.'¹

We are all outsiders to faiths, traditions, and belief systems not our own. In this course, we are all outsiders at most or all points this semester. Recognize that the scriptures in each tradition are sacred to adherents and meaningful to large numbers of people.

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

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

The Judaic and Christian Scriptures

Judaism's Scriptures are based on Hebrew traditions collected over the 1st millennium BCE and collectively known as the TaNaKh, an acronym for its three sections (Torah, Prophets, and Writings). They record the covenant relationship between Jews and God.

Christianity's Scriptures include the TaNaKh, which they renamed the Old Testament, and a further set of writings dating from the 1st century CE, which they named the New Testament.

The two traditions interpret the TaNaKh in markedly different ways. The Bibles popular in Canada are from the Christian perspective and use the Old/New Testament format. The Old Testament in these versions are reliable translations of the TaNaKh and are useful for this course. Of course, there is no such thing as a perfect Bible translation but some translations are better 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 versions 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 such as the **Living Bible**, **Amplified Bible**, **The Message**, and **Barclay's Bible** are not translations. The **Douay-Reims Bible** is a Catholic translation of a Latin translation rather than a direct one from the Greek or Old Testament Hebrew.

The Qur'an

¹ R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of history* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. 12-15

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 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. Its style differs from the other 2 'books,' reflecting Arabic traditions of rhymed prose (rather than poetry) which is easy to memorize.

There are 114 chapters, known as *suras*. They are not arranged chronologically but in terms of length, starting with 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 are not Arabic, Muslim children across the world learn the Arabic alphabet and are taught to sound out the Qur'an's words phonetically. It is, thus, both a *source* of prayer and a *prayer* in its own right, highly venerated and resting in its own bookstand. An aesthetic consequence of veneration is that calligraphy is a highly developed art form in the Islamic world.

As is true of scriptures for all religious traditions, simply reading it for content does not do it justice or capture its significance for followers.