Community College of Philadelphia
RS 101: Introduction to Religious Studies
Course Syllabus

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Section: RS 101-900   **Office Hours:** online/by appointment

A note: Email will be the primary form of communication for this course. If you would like to speak make an appointment, email me and we can make arrangements. I will usually answer your e-mail within 24-36 hours. Response times on weekends may be slower.

Required Text:
The following textbook is required. Be sure you have the correct edition.

Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion, 6th edition, by James C. Livingston. New Jersey: McGraw Hill, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-13-600380-9

Course Description:
An introduction to the study of religion as cultural, social and intellectual phenomena. The course teaches student how to interpret influential philosophical, social scientific and theological theories. *Fulfills Interpretive Studies, American/Global Diversity requirements.*

Course Objectives/ Learning Competencies:
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
- Explain the role of religion as a vehicle for giving meaning to the human experience
- Discuss the philosophical, social scientific and theological theoretical approaches to religion
- Analyze religious texts using a variety of theoretical approaches

Requirements:
You will earn a grade in this course by:
- Completing weekly chapter quizzes and a final exam.
- Participating in online discussions.
- Completing an essay assignment.
- Creating a group project (webpage).

Assignment		Points
Quizzes	(50pts each x 9)	450
Weekly discussions	(30pts each x 10)	300
Final Exam		100
Essay Assignment		50
Group Project		100
	Total Points	1000

<u>**Grading Scale:**</u>
A = 90 – 100%   B = 80 – 89%   C = 70 – 79%   D = 60 – 69%   F = Below 59%

<u>**Criteria for Writing:**</u>
Satisfactory writing must meet the following format and content criteria:
- They must demonstrate that you have read the relevant material in your text and that you have thought about the topic. Simple summaries will not be accepted. Instead, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the material.
- If you do happen to quote sources other than your textbook, you should include documentation so that anyone can locate the original source.
- Do not copy/paste from any source, except what is a quotation that is used to illustrate a specific point. If you do quote, use quotation marks, and cite the source properly according to MLA guidelines.
- You should write clearly and concisely in standard English. Writing should contain few, if any, errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, or usage that obscure your meaning or distract the reader.

<u>**Explanation of Assignments:**</u>

Readings –
- Each week you will have readings from the textbook. Make sure to complete ALL of the readings for a given week before starting on the written homework and/or quizzes.

Discussions-
- Each discussion is worth a possible 30 points, which will be awarded between completion of initial and response posts.
- Your <u>initial posting</u> should be at least 300 words in length and will count for up to 20 points for discussion in a given lesson. The initial post must be made by Friday midnight to count toward full credit.
- A ten-point deduction will be taken on any initial postings made after Friday so plan your time. No posts may be submitted after the end of the week's Lesson.
- <u>Response postings</u> will be made in response to classmates' initial postings and must be made by Sunday midnight to receive possible full credit. Each response should be a minimum of 100 words in length. You should complete two (2) response posts per Lesson, each worth a possible 5 points.
- There are no late submissions or makeup on missed discussions after that lesson has been completed.
- Writing on the discussion forums should be considered as academic writing, and you should not write informally. Standard rules of English grammar and spelling apply.

A Word About Internet Etiquette-

1. Be courteous and show respect to others in their opinions and ideas; no flaming.
2. All caps, bold font, etc. is an online form of shouting and will not be tolerated.
3. Sexual harassment or any form of discrimination will not be accepted in my class.
4. Academically appropriate language is required at all times. Therefore, slang is not an acceptable form of communication in this course on emails, discussion boards, or essay assignments.
5. If you make such postings that are deemed inappropriate, inflammatory, disrespectful, etc., the postings will "disapproved," you will be notified, and receive no discussion points for the posting

Quizzes-

- Quizzes will occur weekly and will cover individual chapters and any associated supplemental readings (if assigned).
- Each quiz will be worth 50 points.
- Quizzes will be available only for the current week; you will not be able to access them early or late.
- Missed quizzes or exams will only be made up under extenuating circumstances that can be documented and will be subject to the instructor's discretion and approval.
- You will have 60 minutes for each quiz.
- The following are examples of concepts that may appear on a quiz:
  - Vocabulary/Key Terms
  - Sacred Texts/Works
  - Religion Beliefs/Details
  - Philosophical Theories
- The types of questions may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching/identification, and short answer.

Final Exam-

- Your final exam will be cumulative, and you will have 90 minutes to complete it.
- Questions for the final exam will be drawn from previous quiz questions and textbook readings.

Essay Assignment-

- The essay assignment will be due at the end of Week 6 and will focus on readings from the first half of the semester.
- You can find specific instructions and requirements for the essay assignment in the Files section of the online classroom.
- An advance topic proposal that includes an abstract and works cited page will be due prior to the essay submission (at the end of Week 4) and will be counted toward your overall essay score.

Group Assignment-

- You will be assigned a group sometime during the first few weeks of the semester.

These are the students you will work with for your final project.
- You can find specific instructions and requirements for the group project in the Files section of the online classroom.
- Your group project will be due in Week 10.

Late Work:
Typically, no late work will be accepted. I will not accept computer problem excuses. You should assure a back-up system to meet the demands of the course (public libraries, CCP computer labs, etc.)

Only students with verifiable, documented emergencies (a hospital note, death in the family, or other unforeseen circumstance/tragedy) will be allowed to make-up missed work. Remember that poor planning does not constitute an emergency. Even verifiable circumstances will not automatically result in an extension on assignments and will be subject to instructor approval. It is your responsibility to communicate and follow up with your instructor in a timely fashion in order to make arrangements.

No work may be submitted after the last day of class.

Attendance Policy:
Even though this class meets online and you never have to "attend" a traditional class session, attendance may be noted through your login patterns. Generally, logging into the course frequently (3-5 sessions per week) yields far better learning and higher grades than doing so once a week.

Accommodations & Disability Policy:
Reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments are coordinated for all qualified students with disabilities on an individual basis through the College's Center on Disability. In order to receive special accommodations, students are required to submit informative and relevant documentation from a qualified professional stating the nature and impact of their disability. Additionally, students must attend a meeting at the Main Campus with the Center's counselor for a personalized review of accommodation requests. To ensure timely and effective service provision, students requiring reasonable accommodations are urged to apply to the College no later than one month before the start of the semester. Students with disabilities are encouraged to call the Center on Disability at 215-751-8050 or visit us online at http://www.ccp.edu/site/academic/cod/.

Academic Integrity:
All work that students submit for this course should be original or should be properly documented. The Community College of Philadelphia is dedicated to fostering the intellectual and personal development of its students, and to promoting an environment that exemplifies the College's core values, including Integrity, Academic Excellence, and a Commitment to Teaching and Learning.

Violations of Academic Integrity-

Violations of academic integrity can include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is an intentional effort at deception or gaining of an unfair advantage in completing academic work. Plagiarism is the act of appropriating the work of another person and passing it off as one's own. Any student who assists another in an activity that constitutes a violation of academic integrity is also responsible and accountable for such a violation.

The following list is not exhaustive, but includes some common examples of plagiarism and cheating:

- copying original ideas, images, words, or design elements and using them without proper citation or permission of the author
- creating a bibliography with fabricated sources or citing sources as references that were not used in the preparation of the report or essay
- deceiving the instructor to get more time for an assignment or examination
- hiring someone to write an essay or complete other assignments
- collaborating with classmates or others on an assignment when the class rules explain that only individual work is permitted
- using unauthorized electronic devices or software during an examination
- allowing other students to copy exam responses or homework assignment answers so that they can pass it off as their own work

Violations of academic integrity will open a student to disciplinary action.

In this class, at the very least, incidents of cheating and/or plagiarism will result in an automatic zero on the assignment in question and a report of the incident will be filed.

Details on the College Policies & Procedures related to Academic Integrity can be found at http://www.ccp.edu/vpfin-pl/policies/3.HTM.

Details on Academic & Disciplinary actions can be found at http://www.ccp.edu/vpfin-pl/policies/4.HTM.