
A Note about Grading: A’s are supposed to be exceptional grades. In order to earn an A(-) in this course, you must complete all assignments really well. Your work should not only be flawless, but also above and beyond expectations. Doing all assignments well fits more appropriately in the B range of grades. When work is flawed, late, or incomplete, it fits into the C and D range.

Course Requirements:
1. Attendance. Good attendance demonstrates a solid commitment and typically influences your grades on all other aspects of the course. Some of the material covered in lectures and class discussion is not found in the textbooks; additional details may be given in class regarding particular assignments; and exams will draw from both text and class material – so it is vital to be present. If you are sick or have an emergency, it is wise to let me know. Use the University absence reporting website (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. You will be allowed two absences (beginning January 22) before your grade is officially penalized; each absence beyond that (or the equivalent in tardies or leaving early) will lower your “Attendance and Participation” grade one notch. No “incomplete” grades will be given for falling behind or sporadic/poor attendance.

2. Participation in class. This requires completing the assignments before each class, arriving on time, taking notes, and being actively engaged in any class discussion. This also includes leading one sacred text discussion and explicitly contributing to all sacred text discussions (in both written and oral form), in addition to your performance on occasional “pop” quizzes on the reading material. Note: while late written assignments will be penalized, you will be allowed one late paper (one class period) without a penalty. Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, laptops and tablets in class must only be for purposes related to this course (such as note-taking). The burden of proof is on you to demonstrate that you are not using such devices for other purposes. Otherwise, my assumption will be that you are not participating in class and your grade will be lowered.

3. Reflection Papers, due as indicated on the syllabus. These are critical reflections (NOT summaries) on your reading of the assigned sacred texts of each tradition. You should do your best to address thoughtful reactions, concerns, questions and insights, especially in light of material covered in class or in the textbook. The point is to engage in a deeper, more critically-thought way with the formative texts of these religions. In a sense, you will “interrogate” the text in order to reveal multiple levels of meaning and interpretation, to expose problems for today’s world, to uncover “hidden” contradictions, and to challenge your own preconceived notions and assumptions about what these sacred texts have to say. See more detailed suggestions on separate assignment sheet.

You will need to complete a total of three (3) of these papers, one for each of the religious traditions studied (on the syllabus: #’s J1 or J2; C1 or C2; I1 or I2). These should be two-pages minimum, typed double-spaced in 12-point (no larger) Times New Roman font with 1" margins (or less) all around. Do NOT waste space for a heading; you may write your name and the date in the top margin and begin your text on the first typed line. Each paper is graded on a 1-10 numbered scale and will drop a half-number for each class period the paper is late.
10 = A (An extraordinary paper. Thorough. Effective critical thinking. Rare but possible)
9.5 = A- (An excellent paper – well above and beyond expectations)
9 = B+ (Insightfully completed paper as expected and written very well)
8.5 = B (This is the typical grade for completing the paper as assigned)
8 = B- (Not quite up to expectations)
7.5 = C+ (Falls short in length or critical thinking)
7 = C (Falls short as above and/or too much summary without analysis)
6.5 = C- (Falls short as above and/or poor writing skills)
6 = D+ (These grades and below are compounding the problems mentioned above)
5.5 = D
5 = D-

4. Service Critique, due no later than May 4. See and follow separate instructions given in class. A late Service Critique will drop a full grade (example A- to B-) for each week it is late. You should be prepared to discuss your experience with the class.

5. Two Tests, on Judaism and Christianity, February 26 and April 6. Absence from the tests without prior notification and arrangements will result in a zero grade.

6. Final Exam, on Islam and inter-religious issues, Thursday, May 7, 8:00-11:00 am. Again, absence will result in a zero grade.

Criteria for Evaluation:
- accuracy and precision of scholarship
- clarity of oral and written expression
- progress in critical thinking skills
- completion of assignments and readings on due dates
- thoroughness, creativity, originality and contribution to field of inquiry

Grades will be based on the following formula:
Attendance and Participation 20%
Sacred Text Reflection Papers 20%
Service Critique 20%
Two Tests 20%
Final Exam 20%

All assignments should be turned in as a hard copy. If you need to email an assignment in order to hand it in on time (by the beginning of class), please feel free to do so. You should send it to duganmcg@rci.rutgers.edu BOTH as an attachment and as text in the message, then follow it up with a hard copy. An Attachment alone does not guarantee the paper has been received. You may also leave papers in the mailbox or under the office door as long as they are clearly marked to the attention of Dr. McGinley. Remember that if you EVER consult an outside source for something you are writing, you MUST acknowledge it through an appropriate citation. Portraying someone else’s ideas or work as your own is plagiarism and any student found plagiarizing will receive an F for the entire course.
### Schedule of Topics, Readings and Assignments:
Readings and papers are DUE on the date for which they are listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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| Jan 26 | “Religion” and other critical terms  
Importance of Historical Eras  
Introduction to Abrahamic Religions  
Oxford Text: pp. 3-26 |                                                                                         |
| Jan 29 | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 26-36; 77-84 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 2  | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 84-91 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 5  | JUDAISM Sacred Texts  
*Scriptures:* The Call of Moses; Crossing the Red Sea; The Covenant with Israel; Ezra’s Enforcement of *Torah* Observance; The Ten Commandments; Laws on Slaves, Violence, and Property; God’s Call to an Unfaithful People; The Establishment of Circumcision; The Establishment of Passover  
Reflection Paper #J1 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 9  | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 91-100 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 12 | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 100-114 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 16 | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 114-128 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 19 | JUDAISM Sacred Texts  
*Scriptures:* The Oneness of God; Prayer for Divine Deliverance; Justice for All; Holy War; The Observance of the Sabbath; Kosher and Nonkosher Foods; The Chain of Rabbinic Tradition: “The Sayings of the Fathers;” The Replacement of Sacrifice by Study; The Duty to Marry and Have Children; Why Judaism Survives Under Persecution  
Reflection Paper #J2 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 23 | JUDAISM  
Oxford Text: pp. 129-144 |                                                                                         |
| Feb 26 | TEST on JUDAISM |                                                                                         |
Mar 2  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 147-156

Mar 5  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 156-170

Mar 9  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 170-175

Mar 12  CHRISTIANITY Sacred Texts
Scriptures: Jesus’ Miracles; The Coming of the Holy Spirit; The Council at Jerusalem; The Parables of Jesus; The Sermon on the Mount; Matthew’s Church Order; Baptism

Mar 12  Reflection Paper #C1

Mar 16, 19  Spring Break – No Classes

Mar 23  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 175-184

Mar 26  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 184-201

Mar 30  CHRISTIANITY Sacred Texts
Scriptures: Nicodemus Visits Jesus; Results of Justification; Directions Concerning Marriage; Ethics in the Christian Household; Peter as the Rock; Women in the Early Church; The Eucharist; Early Noncanonical Jesus Tradition; Women and Gnosticism; Papal Primacy Derived from Petrine Primacy

Mar 30  Reflection Paper #C2

Apr 2  CHRISTIANITY
Oxford Text: pp. 201-215; 311-313

Apr 6  TEST on CHRISTIANITY

Apr 9  ISLAM
Oxford Text: pp. 219-228

Apr 13  ISLAM
Oxford Text: pp. 228-242

Apr 16  ISLAM Sacred Texts
Scriptures: God’s Absolute Oneness; God’s Names; God’s Power; God’s Predestination; The Holy Qur’an; On Unbelievers, Jews, and Christians; The Conduct of Believers; Women

Apr 16  Reflection Paper #I1
Apr 20    ISLAM
          Oxford Text: pp. 243-257

Apr 23    ISLAM
          Oxford Text: pp. 257-269

Apr 27    ISLAM Sacred Texts
          Reflection Paper #12
          Scriptures: The Different Dimensions of
          Struggle (Jihad); All Selections from the
          Hadith; A Sunni Creed; A Shi’ite Creed

Apr 30    ISLAM
          Oxford Text: pp. 269-287

May 4     Conclusion: Issues in Inter-religious Dialogue
          Service Critique
          Oxford Text: pp. 287-303

Thursday,
May 7     FINAL EXAMINATION: 8:00-11:00 am

NOTE: If you have any special needs or a disability that requires any special accommodation to
fulfill any course requirements, you need to provide acceptable documentation to the Office of
Disability Services. That office will then make arrangements as needed with Dr. McGinley.