

Instructor: Dr. James Pavlin **Office:** Loree Bldg. 130/DC **Office Hours:** MW 5:30-6:00, or by appointment **Email:** jdpavlin@rci.rutgers.edu

Course Description: The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to the academic study of religion by focusing on the monotheistic religions of the Near Eastern and Western traditions. After reviewing current methodologies and concepts related to the study of religion, the course will focus on the origin and development of the scriptures, beliefs and practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each religion will be studied with particular attention paid to readings of primary sources related to origins and historical developments in terms of theology, philosophy and mysticism.

Required Texts:

Ludwig, Theodore M. *The Sacred Paths of the West*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc., 2006.

Van Voorst, Robert E. *Anthology of World Scriptures: Western Religions*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007.

Study and Research Resources: The classroom experience will be enhanced through the use of Rutgers's web based interactive technology called Sakai. All students are required to know how to use Sakai. Although this course is not designed to be an online or hybrid course, Sakai will be our main means of communication outside the classroom. The site will contain announcements, assignments, tests and quizzes, recommended resources, chat room, discussion board, and grades, among other things.

Course Requirements:

1) Attendance, Participation, and Sakai Discussion Board Policy (15% of final grade): Students are expected to attend each class on time and contribute to class discussions. Attendance will be taken for each class. This portion of the grade is worth five points. Any unexcused absences will result in a reduction of this part of the student's grade by one point per unexcused absence. Six or more unexcused absences will result in the student's final grade being lowered by one full letter grade. Students who encounter any extended problem with absences, for example, for medical, family emergency, or religious reasons, must inform me in writing (email acceptable) about the reason and duration of the absence. Decisions on excused absences will be made on a case-by-case basis. Extended absences may require the student to do extra written assignments. Students are also required to contribute to the Discussion Board on Sakai. Five specific forums will be made available throughout the semester. This is meant to be an open threaded conversation about various topics related to the course. Content will be monitored but not graded per se. You will receive up to two points for each forum. The goal is to get you thinking about issues.

Classroom Etiquette and Netiquette: The use of lap tops is permitted only for purposes related to the course. (If I notice excessive giggling, I will assume you are not looking at course related material!) All cell phones, iPods, and any other hand held devices are strictly forbidden during class. Violation of this policy will result in your being requested to leave the class and receiving an unexcused absence. Respectful speech is required at all times, in class and in the various Sakai forums. Disputes and disagreements are expected, but vulgar and insulting language will not be tolerated. All Sakai forums will be monitored for compliance.

2) Quizzes (25% of final grade): Multiple choice, true-false, or essay quizzes will occur on a regular basis to test the students' grasp of ideas and concepts under discussion. The quizzes will be made available on Sakai: Tests and Quizzes. Quizzes will be made available for a 24-hour period according to the schedule below. Once you begin the quiz, you will have a time limit to complete it, ranging from 45 to 60 minutes. If you submit an uncompleted quiz by mistake, you must contact me. I will determine if you deserve to retake the quiz.

3) Three tests (each test is 20% of final grade): The tests will have a multiple choice section and an essay section. The multiple choice questions will be based on the key terms and concepts at the end of each chapter or section in both textbooks. The students must understand these terms in the context of the readings and class discussions. The essay questions will be based on the discussion questions at the end of each chapter in the Ludwig book. Make up exams will be given to students having an excused absence. The student must contact me immediately upon returning to class so that arrangements can be made with the department secretary, who will proctor the exam.

Grading Policy: All final grades will be calculated according to the Rutgers' grading system. Letter grades and numerical grades on a scale of 100 to 65 will be converted to the point system as follows: 4.0 = A (100-90), 3.5 = B+ (89-85), 3.0 = B (84-80), 2.5 = C+ (79-75), 2.0 = C (74-70), 1.0 = D (69-65), 0.0 = F (64 and below). For the purpose of quizzes, tests, and papers, as applicable to each course, a grade of A- (90-92) will be used and is equivalent to 3.8 points. An incomplete ("T" grade) for this course will not be given unless the student consults with me about the reason for not completing the course work on time. Grades that appear in the Sakai Gradebook are close estimations of your grade. I reserve the right to adjust and override these grades as I deem necessary. All final grades are based on my assessment of your work.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments:

9/5 **Rutgers closed, no class**

9/7 Introduction

Sakai: Discussion: Forum 1 religion in human societies-open 9/7 6:00 am to 9/10 6: pm.

9/8 **Thursday-Rutgers on Monday schedule, class cancelled**

9/12 Perspectives on the Religious Path, Ludwig, ch. 1

Sakai: Discussion: Forum 2 understanding other religions-open 9/12 6:00 am to 9/17 6:00 pm

9/14 Beginnings of the Human Religious Adventure, Ludwig, ch. 2

Religions of Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece, Ludwig, ch. 4

Quiz 1 (Sakai:Tests & Quizzes from 9/14 4:00 pm to 9/15 4:00 pm; 45 min. time limit)

9/19 Western Scriptures among the World's Religions, Van Voorst, ch. 1

9/21 Zoroastrian Tradition, Ludwig, ch. 5

Zoroastrianism, Van Voorst, ch. 2

Quiz 2 (Sakai:Tests & Quizzes from 9/21 4:00 pm to 9/22 4:00 pm; 45 min. time limit)

- 9/26 Origins of Judaism, Van Voorst, ch. 3, pp. 37-45 (Introduction), 46-49 (Call of Abraham, Call of Moses, Crossing at Red Sea, Covenant with Israel), 69 (Establishment of Circumcision); Ludwig, ch. 6, pp. 95-99
- 9/28 The Kingdom of Israel, Van Voorst, ch. 3, pp. 66 (Ordination of Priests), 60 (Holy War), 49 (Psalm for David), 55 (Messianic King), 67-68 (Call to be a Prophet and Women as Judges and Prophets), 63 (God's call to an Unfaithful People); Ludwig, ch. 6, pp. 99-103
- 10/3 Rise of Rabbinic Judaism, Van Voorst, ch. 3, pp. 50 (Ezra's Enforcement of *Torah* Observance), 75-76 (Chain of Rabbinic Tradition and Replacement of Sacrifice by Study), 78 (Why Judaism Survives under Persecution); Ludwig, ch. 6, pp. 103-114
Quiz 3 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes from 10/3 4:00 pm to 10/4 4:00 pm; 1 hr. time limit)
- 10/5 God, Creation, and Sin, Van Voorst, Ch. 3, pp. 51 (Oneness of God), 52-54 (God's Creation of the World and Revolt of Humanity), 55 (Prayer for Divine Deliverance), ; Ludwig, ch. 7, pp. 115-121
Sakai: Discussion: Forum 3 the Adam and Eve story in Genesis-open 10/5 6:00 am to 10/14 6:00 pm
- 10/10 Repentance and Transformation, Van Voorst, Ch. 3, pp. 57-60 (Ten Commandments, Laws on Slaves, Violence, and Property, and Justice for All), 56-57 (Final Judgment of the World and Resurrection of the Dead); Ludwig, ch. 7, pp. 122-126
- 10/12 Ritual Life, Van Voorst, Ch. 3, pp. 71-72 (Observance of the Sabbath, Offerings for the Forgiveness of Sin, and Day of Atonement), 70 (Establishment of the Passover), 73 (Kosher and Nonkosher Foods), Ludwig, Ch. 8, pp. 127-134
- 10/17 Observing the Law in Family and Society, Van Voorst, Ch. 3, pp. 61 (Sexual Love), 65 (Virtuous Wife), 77 (Duty to Mary and Have Children); Ludwig, Ch. 8, pp. 135-142
- 10/19 Test One** (essay question based on Ludwig, chap. 7)
- 10/24 Origins of Christianity, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 83-90 (Introduction), 90 (Birth of Jesus), 91 (Jesus' Miracles), 98 (Parables of Jesus), 103 (Sermon on the Mount); Ludwig, ch. 9, pp. 143-147
- 10/26 Crucifixion, Resurrection, and the Early Church, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 92 (Arrest, Trial, and Death of Jesus), 94 (Resurrection of Jesus and Ascension of Jesus), 95 (Coming of the Holy Spirit), 111 (Twelve Apostles and Their Mission), 96 (Persecution of the Apostles), 97 (Council at Jerusalem); Ludwig, ch. 9, pp. 148-152
- 10/31 The Medieval Church, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 117 (Scripture Canon in Formation), 119-123 (Early Noncanonical Jesus tradition, Gnostic Christianity and Orthodox Christianity, and Women and Gnosticism), 112-113 (*Matthew's* Church Order and Peter as the Rock), 125 (Papal Primacy), 110 (Fall of Rome); Ludwig, ch. 9, pp. 153-157
Quiz 4 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes from 10/31 4:00 pm to 11/1 4:00 pm; 1 hr. time limit)

- 11/2 Reformation, Ludwig, ch. 9, pp. 157-164
Sakai: Discussion: Forum 4 Christian beliefs in the modern world-open 11/2 6:00 am to 11/11 6:00 pm
- 11/7 Christian Ideas on Salvation, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 99 (Divine Word Became Human); Ludwig, ch. 10, pp. 167-173
- 11/9 Christ as Redeemer, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 99-100 (Nicodemus Visits Jesus and A sinful Woman is Forgiven), 101 (Results of Justification), 102 (End of Time); Ludwig, ch. 10, pp. 173-178
- 11/14 Ritual Practices and the Good Life, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 115-117 (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confession and Anointing), 114 (Women in the Early Church), 108 (Love), 107 ((Directions concerning Marriage), 109 (Ethics in the Christian Household)); Ludwig, ch. 11, pp. 179-195
- 11/16 **Test Two** (essay question based on Ludwig, chap. 10)
- 11/21 **Monday-Rutgers on Wednesday schedule, regular class meeting**
 Origins of Islam, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 129-134 (Introduction), Ludwig, ch. 12, pp. 196-197
- 11/28 Muhammad in Mecca, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 134-135 (Call of Muhammad), 146-147 (The Holy Qur'an), 136-137 (Mission of Muhammad and Opposition to Muhammad), 138 (The Night Journey), 139 (Flight to Medina); Ludwig, ch. 12, pp. 198-201
- 11/30 Muhammad in Medina, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 138 (The Hypocrites), 148-150 (On Unbelievers, Jews, and Christians), 156 (Different Dimensions of Struggle), 140 (Death of Muhammad); Ludwig, ch. 12, pp. 201-204
Quiz 5 (Sakai:Tests & Quizzes from 11/30 4:00 pm to 12/1 4:00 pm; 1 hr. time limit)
- 12/5 Medieval Islamic World, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 167-170 (A Sunni Creed), 170-171 (A Shi'ite Creed), 171-172 (Sufi Poetry on Love for God); Ludwig, ch. 12, pp. 204-214 and ch. 14, p. 241 (section on Basic Principles of the Shari'ah)
Sakai: Discussion: Forum 5 Islam in the 21st century-open 12/5 6:00 am to 12/12 6:00 pm
- 12/7 God, Humanity, and Salvation in Islam, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 141-143 (God's Absolute Oneness, God's Names, God's Power, and God's Predestination), 144-146 (Creation and Adam, Eve, and the Fall), 150-152 (Resurrection and Judgment and Heaven and Hell); Ludwig, ch. 13
- 12/12 Ritual Practices and the Good Life for Muslims, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 158-163 (all reading in section on Worship and Ritual), 154-155 (Women); Ludwig, ch. 14
- 12/21 (8:00-11:00 am) Test Three** (essay question based on Ludwig, chap. 13)