

**Rutgers University Dept. of Religion (732-932-9641) Winter Session 2012**  
**840:212:90 (Hybrid Course) Religions of the Western World**  
**In-Class Dates: 12/23 6:00-8:45 pm FH-A3, 1/3, 1/5, 1/10, 1/12 1:00-3:45 pm SC 214/CAC**

**Instructor:** Dr. James Pavlin **Office:** Loree Bldg. 130/DC **Office Hours:** before or after class, 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.

**Learning Methods and Resources:** This class is designed as a hybrid course. Much of the work, including reading, discussions, and test taking, will be done online. The limited classroom experience will be utilized to enhance online learning by evaluating the online learning process and engaging in traditional face to face conversation. The course material and work will operate through the use of Rutgers' web based interactive technology called Sakai. All students are required to know how to use Sakai. The site will contain announcements, assignments, tests and quizzes, recommended resources, chat room, discussion board, and grades, among other things. Student self-discipline and motivation to participate daily in the online sessions cannot be over emphasized. You must truly be an active learner to benefit from (and pass) the course.

**Course Requirements:**

**1) Attendance and Participation (5% of final grade):** The in-class meetings are vital to the success of the hybrid course. 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. 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.

**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) Discussion Forums (40% of final grade):** The discussion forums are the most important aspects of the hybrid course in the sense of comprehending the subject matter. There are eleven forums for this course. Most of the content discussion will take place in these forums. Students are therefore required to contribute to the Discussion Board on Sakai. These are meant to be an open, threaded conversation about various topics related to the course. Students' posts will be graded based on your understanding of the reading assignments and the development of ideas through interaction in the forums with the professor and other students. You will receive up to 3 points for the first four forums and 4 points for the other seven forums.

**3) 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 40 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.

**4) Three tests (each test is 10% of final grade):** The tests will be multiple choice questions related to the three major religions we are covering. 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 online/class discussions. The tests will be online through the Sakai Tests and Quizzes link. Should it be necessary, make up exams will be given to students having a valid excuse for not taking the online test.

**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:**

12/23 Mandatory In-class Meeting  
Introduction to the hybrid course and Sakai  
Perspectives on the Religious Path, Ludwig, ch. 1

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 1: Ludwig ch 1: Opens: 12-23 6:00 pm - Closes: 12-25 11:59 pm. Using the discussion questions on p. 25, engage in a conversation about the study of religion. Make sure you understand the key terms on p. 26 in the context of their use in the chapter.**

12/26 Online Session 1  
Beginnings of the Human Religious Adventure, Ludwig, ch. 2  
Religions of Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece, Ludwig, ch. 4

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 2: Ludwig chs 2 and 4: Opens: 12-26 12:01 am - Closes: 12-26 11:59 pm. Engage in a conversation about the origins of religion and the ancient religions of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece. Respond to the discussion questions on pp. 33 and 81. Make sure you understand the key terms on those pages also.**

12/27 Online Session 2

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

Zoroastrian Tradition, Ludwig, ch. 5

Zoroastrianism, Van Voorst, ch. 2

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 3: Van Voorst ch 1, Ludwig ch 5, Van Voorst ch 2: Opens: 12-27 12:01 am - Closes: 12-27 11:59 pm This discussion focuses on the nature and role of scripture. It relates directly to the scripture and religious beliefs in Zoroastrianism. See discussion questions and key terms in Ludwig pp. 93-94 and Van Voorst pp. 19-20 and 34-35.**

**Quiz 1 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Quiz 1 Ludwig chs 1, 2, & 4: open from 12/27 12:01 am to 12/27 11:59 pm; 25 multiple choice questions, 45 min. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

12/28 Online Session 3

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

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 4: Ludwig ch 6 to p. 103 Van Voorst ch 2: Opens: 12-28 12:01 am - Closes: 12-28 11:59 pm. Focusing on the readings in Van Voorst as per the syllabus, what are the main features of the ancient Israelite religion? What were the concerns of the prophets in the First Temple period?**

**Quiz 2 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Quiz 2 Van Voorst chs 1 and 2, Ludwig ch 5: open from 12/28 12:01 am to 12/28 11:59 pm; 20 multiple choice questions, 40 min. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

12/29 Online Session 4

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 5: Ludwig ch 6 pp 103-114, Van Voorst ch 3: Opens: 12-29 12:01 am - Closes: 12-29 11:59 pm. Starting with Ezra in the Second Temple period, what are the important developments in Judaism? How did the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE create the Rabbinic tradition?**

12/30 Online Session 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

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 6: Ludwig ch 7, Van Voorst ch 3: Opens: 12-30 12:01 am - Closes: 12-30 23:59 pm. Focusing on the creation of the world and humanity (Van Voorst pp 52-54), what is the nature of humanity and our relation to God? What is sin and repentance in Judaism?**

1/2 Online Session 6

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

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 7: Ludwig ch 8, Van Voorst ch3: Opens: 01-02-12 12:01 am - Closes: 01-02-12 11:59 pm. Discussion of ritual and social life in Judaism. What is the role of women in Judaism? How are modern views changing from those of historical tradition?**

**Quiz 3 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Ludwig chs 6 and 7, Van Voorst ch 3: Open from 1/02 12:01 am to 1/02 11:59 pm; essay question, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

1/3 Mandatory In-class Meeting

Review and Analysis of Online Learning

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

**Test One (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Judaism Test: Open from 1/03 12:01 am to 1/03 11:59 pm; 40 question multiple choice test, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

1/4 Online Session 7

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 8: Ludwig ch 9 pp 148-152, Van Voorst ch 4: Opens: 01-04 12:01 am - Closes: 01-04 11:59 pm. Discussion of Jesus, Paul and the early Christians. What is the relation between Hellenism and Christology? What was the appeal of Christianity in the Roman Empire?**

- 1/5 Mandatory In-class Meeting  
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

- 1/6 Online Session 8  
Reformation, Ludwig, ch. 9, pp. 157-164

Christian Ideas on Salvation, Van Voorst, ch. 4, pp. 99 (Divine Word Became Human); Ludwig, ch. 10, pp. 167-173

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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 9: Ludwig chs 9 pp 157-164 and 10, Van Voorst ch 4: Opens: 01-06 12:01 am - Closes: 01-06 11:59 pm. Discussion of Martin Luther, the Reformation and ideas of salvation. What are the differences in theology between Protestants and Catholics? How does the Christian view of human nature affect ideas on salvation?**

- 1/7-1/8 **Quiz 4 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Ludwig chs 9 and 10, Van Voorst ch 4: Open from 1/06 6:00 pm to 1/08 11:59 pm; essay question, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

- 1/9 Online Session 9  
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

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 10: Ludwig ch 11, Van Voorst ch 4: Opens: 01-09 12:01 am - Closes: 01-09 11:59 pm. Discussion of Christian ritual and social life. How does the concept of love in Christianity affect the moral and ethical behavior of Christians?**

- 1/10 Mandatory In-class Meeting  
Origins of Islam, Van Voorst, ch. 5, pp. 129-134 (Introduction), Ludwig, ch. 12, pp. 196-197  
  
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

**Test Two (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Judaism Test: Open from 1/10 12:01 am to 1/10 11:59 pm; 40 question multiple choice test, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

1/11 Online Session 10

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

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. 204-219 and ch. 14, p. 241 (section on Basic Principles of the Shari'ah)

**Sakai: Discussion Forum 11: Ludwig ch 12 pp 201-219, Van Voorst ch 5: Opens: 01-11 12:01 am - Closes: 01-11 11:59 pm. Discussion of Muhammad, the rise of Islam, and Islamic law and theology. What is the nature of the differences between Sunnis, Shiites, and Sufis? How does Medieval Islamic civilization reflect the relation of belief and practice in Islam?**

1/12 Mandatory In-class Meeting

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

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

1/13 **Quiz 5 (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Quiz 5 Ludwig chs 12 and 13, Van Voorst ch 5: Open from 1/13 12:01 am to 1/13 11:59 pm; essay question, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**

**Test Three (Sakai: Tests & Quizzes: Judaism Test: Open from 1/13 12:01 am to 1/13 11:59 pm; 40 question multiple choice test, 1 hr. time limit; one extra day granted for late submission with a 10 point grade reduction)**