



World Religions



Instructor Mr. Martin

Phone 860-439-7800 extension 8027-

Office Room 326

E-mail martinj@newlondon.org

Office After school & by
Hours arrangement

Website mrhistory.us

Text:

Reading materials will be provided.

Description:

Introduction to the world's major religious systems including Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Islam and Animism. We will investigate these religions from several perspectives, including historical (beginnings and development), phenomenological (beliefs, rituals, practices), and comparative (similarities and differences). The course will utilize a combination of discussions on readings, lectures, films, and possibly guest speakers.

Goals:

Upon completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Articulate with sympathetic understanding the various dimensions of several major religious worldviews: history, geographical areas of influence, ritual practices, doctrinal beliefs, ethics, and expected experiences.
2. Have the ability to describe the function of religion in sociological categories.
3. Have the ability to describe and interpret the relationship between the religious aspects of a culture and individual behavior.
4. Have the ability to describe the human experience of a religious group as expressed in literature, art and music.



How do I pass this course?

1. Attendance is important. Students are expected to be in class and on time.
2. Participation. In a class like this one, student participation in discussion and activities are vital to the success of this class. Participation requires that you are prepared for class as well.
3. Readings. This class will use readings from a variety of sources. Students are expected to read materials assigned. You will submit a journal entry discussing each reading assignment as well as at least two questions that are drawn from the reading. Readings will include primary and secondary sources drawn from historical and contemporary eras.
4. Seminar Series. Students will choose three religions and prepare a background sheet for them. Guiding questions will be posted on mrhistory.us and available as handouts in the classroom.
5. Responses to speakers and media. I hope to be able to bring representatives from different religions to speak to the class and I will be showing video clips throughout the semester. Speakers and media assignments will be short writing activities following a format that will be provided and posted.
6. Exams. There will be regular exams assessing understanding of individual religions in the context of the course goals listed above. There will also be a final exam, the composition to be announced.
7. Extra Credit – Students will be able to earn extra or optional credit by visiting places of worship other than their own and completing an assignment. I will provide more information on this and post it online and in the classroom.

