



Nipawin Bible College
GE2253 World Religions (Deacon's Track)
Winter 2023
3 Credit Hours
Mr. Doug Harkness
dharkness@nipawin.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will ground students in a biblical worldview of religion. Students will become acquainted with basic beliefs and practices of major world religions, preparing them for understanding and effective evangelism.

COURSE TEXTBOOK

Farhadian, Charles E. *Introducing World Religions A Christian Engagement*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015.

The Bible (a translation, not a paraphrase). Suggested translations are CSB, ESV, NIV, NKJV, NLT, NASB...

NOTE: The course outline is available for download on the NBC website.

THE BIG QUESTION

What are the foundations, basic beliefs and practices of the major religions of the world?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will understand the biblical foundations of religion.
2. Students will apply this understanding to major world religions as expressions of what it is to be distinctly human (created in the image of God).
3. Students will gain a basic understanding of the major beliefs and practices of the religions under consideration.
4. Students will gain insight into the challenges and opportunities related to reaching people of other religions with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Textbook Quizzes – 5 x 4% per quiz (20% total)

- Five quizzes will be given pertaining to assigned textbook reading, as indicated in the Course Outline below.
- The checks will be done at the beginning of class.

- Each quiz will include an acknowledgment (i.e., “Yes I have done the assigned reading”), a memory verse (see Course Outline below), and an opportunity to express one insight gained from the reading.
- The **Bonus Quiz** (Tue., Jan. 31) is an opportunity for students to increase their textbook quiz score to the maximum (20%).
- The Bonus Quiz (and reading of chapter 7) is **optional**, but recommended.

DUE: See Course Outline

Group Project (Paper & Presentation) - 30%

- Students will be divided into groups. Each group will collaborate on a comprehensive project investigating the beliefs and practices of one major world religion.
- The report will include:
 - The origin of the religion (founder, location, circumstances).
 - How the religion reflects the human condition.
 - How the religion addresses human spiritual need.
 - The authority and structure of the religion (who leads; how is the position filled; how is it enforced).
 - The religion’s core beliefs and practices.
 - Its global distribution.
 - Major variations (sects, factions, sub-groups) within the religion.
 - Comparisons with Christianity.
 - Opportunities and obstacles for the Gospel.
 - A bibliography.
- Deacon’s Track students will be interviewed by the instructor regarding details of their group project.
- In the interview, the student will be expected to report orally on:
 - Their personal contribution to the group project.
 - What they have learned from their own research.
 - What they have learned from other members of the group.
- Each student is responsible for scheduling time with the instructor **before** the assigned deadline for the group class presentation.

DUE: As assigned

Interview Regarding a Personal (“Insiders”) View of a World Religion - 25%

- Students will conduct an interview with someone of another faith (currently practicing or former adherent, but someone who is able to articulate the views and beliefs of that faith from personal experience), and report findings orally to the instructor.
- The report should include pertinent details such as:
 - What it is to be an adherent of the _____ religion.
 - Their view of the human condition.

- Their relationship to deity (personal, immediate interaction or impersonal, distant, . . .)
- The existence, origin and nature of evil.
- What constitutes sin and how it is dealt with.
- The ultimate destiny, and personal goals of adherents (heaven, perfection, oblivion, ...) and how adherents try to achieve them.
- How success is measured.
- How adherents view outsiders (fear, resenting, welcoming, tolerating, proselytizing, avoiding. . .)
- Their view of Jesus Christ.
- Personal takeaways (of the student, from the interview).
- Recommendations from the student (for reaching adherents of this religion with the Gospel), as well as appropriate reflections by the student including, "How does this religion express the fundamental spiritual aspect of being human?" (i.e., don't just report facts!).
- This interview can be done in person, phone call or by Zoom.
- Each Deacon's Track student is responsible for scheduling time with the instructor **before** the assigned deadline for class presentations to provide an oral report of the interview.

Report DUE: Tue., March 21, 2023
Class Report DUE: As assigned

Final Exam - 25%

- In lieu of the final exam, each Deacon's Track student will be interviewed by the instructor. The interview will be inclusive of all material covered in class and assigned reading.
- Each student is responsible for scheduling time with the instructor for this interview **before** the date of the final exam.

DUE: TBA

Assignments will be due at the **beginning of class** on the date assigned.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

- Refer to the NBC Handbook 2022-2023

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:

- Refer to the NBC Handbook 2022-2023

Reading: 250 pages

Class Format: Instruction; group and individual presentations.

Bring: Bible, notebook, and textbook.

COURSE OUTLINE: DEACONS TRACK

Week	Class	Date	Topic	Evaluative Assignment Due	Homework to be assigned
1	1	Tue, Jan 17	Syllabus & Introduction; Biblical Foundations of Religion		
	2	Fri, Jan 20			Read: Chapter 1 (pp.1-57)
2	3	Tue, Jan 24	Aberrations: Manifestations, Distortions & Substitutes	Reading Quiz #1 (Chapter 1) MV Jeremiah 10:5	
	4	Fri, Jan 27			Read: Chapter 7 (pp.307-350) (Optional, but recommended)
3	5	Tue, Jan 31	Components of Religion	Reading Bonus Quiz (Chapter 7) MV Psalm 135:15-18	
	6	Fri, Feb 3			Read: Chapter 8 (pp.353-403)
4	x	Tue, Feb 7	ReNew Day – No classes		
	7	Fri, Feb 10	Core Beliefs	Reading Quiz #2 (Chapter 8) MV Isaiah 45:20	
5	8	Tue, Feb 14			
	9	Fri, Feb 17	Animism		Read: Chapter 2 (pp.59-110)
	x	Tue, Feb 21	Mid-Semester Break – No classes		
	x	Fri, Feb 24			
6	10	Tue, Feb 28		Reading Quiz #3 (Chapter 2) MV Habakkuk 2:18-19	
	11	Fri, Mar 3	Hinduism		
7	12	Tue, Mar 7			Read: Chapter 3 (pp.115-171)

	x	Fri, Mar 10	Three60five Sr – No classes		
8	13	Tue, Mar 14	Buddhism	Reading Quiz #4 (Chapter 3) MV Galatians 4:8	
	14	Fri, Mar 17			
9	15	Tue, Mar 21	Sikhism	Interview Report Due	
	16	Fri, Mar 24			Read: Chapter 9 (pp.415-463)
10	17	Tue, Mar 28	Islam	Reading Quiz #5 (Chapter 9) MV 1 Corinthians 10:20	
	18	Fri, Mar 31			
11	19	Tue, Apr 4	Interview Reports		
	x	Fri, Apr 7	Good Friday no classes		
	20	Tue, Apr 8	Interview Reports		
		TBA		Final Exam	