



TAYLOR SEMINARY

WR 523 Christian Encounter with World Religions (online)

Fall 2013

To develop Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world

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Course Weight: 3 credits

Description: This course examines Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Taoism and evaluates their impact on both Canadian society and world affairs. Some practical strategies for witnessing to the adherents of these non-Christian religions are also proposed.

Objectives

1. To understand the presence and impact of non-Christian religions in the world today and how this relates to the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ
2. To be able to compare and contrast the basic teaching on non-Christian faiths with Christianity
3. To prepare oneself to live and witness in a community of diverse faiths
4. To engage in the challenges of evangelistic dialogue with those of other faiths.

Text books:

Terry Muck, Frances S. Adeney, *Christianity Encountering world Religions*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 2009

Hopfe & Woodward, *Religions of the World*, Pierson/Prentice Hall, 2005 or later

Course Requirements

1. Regular participation in class. This means that you engage weekly in the online Forum Discussion, answering the initial forum question posed by your instructor within 3 days into time frame allotted for the discussion of the topic. Then you will be expected to respond to another student's posting by the end of the allotted time set aside for that topic.
2. Engage in a regular on-line or face-to-face discussion with someone of another faith over the duration of the course. Hand in a 3 page reflection paper of the encounter describing the interaction, evaluating the relationship and recommending changes should you be in such a relationship again.

3. A six week curriculum for a high school or adult Sunday school class dealing on the subject of “The Christian’s Response to World Religions”. The curriculum should include:
 - a. PowerPoint presentations for six classes of 1 hour each in duration
 - i. Class 1: Introduction to World Religions
 - ii. Class2: A Christian’s response to Islam
 - iii. Class 3: A Christian’s Response to Hinduism
 - iv. Class 4: A Christian’s Response to Sikhism
 - v. Class 5: A Christian’s Response to Buddhism
 - vi. Class 6: How to Build Effective Relationships that Lead to Inter-religious dialogue
 - b. Each class should include:
 - i. Basic beliefs
 - ii. Demographic maps or charts
 - iii. Key similarities and differences of the world faith with Christianity
 - iv. Suggestions for evangelism
 - v. Appropriate etiquette when visiting the place of worship
 - vi. Resources for further study
4. A one to five page report, documenting a conversation you have had with an international worker or missionary working with the adherents of a specific world religion. You may interview, write, SKYPE or e-mail the Christian worker. Have at least two or three times that you interact with this worker as you return with follow up questions. The point of this assignment is to obtain first hand experience regarding the following: Building relationships; overcoming contentious religious differences; cultural knowledge useful to know so as to avoid insulting or causing awkwardness in the relationship; important life-cycle events; important religious celebrations and the role a Christian friend may take during the celebration of these events; ways a Christian may be targeted to become an adherent to this religion.

Grading and Course Load Distributions

Assignment	Percentage	Due Date
Weekly participation and discussion	20	Weekly
Reading and responses to the text	20	Weekly
Dialogue with Missionary	10	Oct. 18th
Sunday School Curriculum	20	Nov. 22
Relationship Building with someone from another faith	20	Over the course of the semester with response to be handed in Nov. 29
Final	10	Dec.9 th (based on class notes and Woodward text)

Course Outline

Topic #1: The Study and Practice of Religion

Topic #2: Indigenous Traditional Religions

Topic #3: Judaism

Topic #4: Hinduism

Topic #5: Taoism and Confucianism

Topic #6: Shinto

Topic #7: Buddhism

Topic #8: Islam

Topic #9 Sikhism

Topic #10: Christianity among the World's Religions