



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

---

## WR 523: Christian Encounter with World Religions<sup>1</sup>

January 2019 Intersession (Modular/Hybrid)

---

**INSTRUCTOR:** Kehinde Olabimtan, PhD  
**Phone/Voicemail:** 780-802-0969  
**Email:** [kehindeolabimtan@hotmail.com](mailto:kehindeolabimtan@hotmail.com)

**SCHEDULE:** Monday - Friday, January 7-11, 8:30am - 4:30pm (Daily)

**CREDITS:** 3 [90 hours of work outside of class time]

### 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.

### TARGET STATEMENTS:

A. Knowledge – Student will:

- Understand the essential features, beliefs and practices of the faiths being studied.
- Identify the values these faiths seek to inculcate in their adherents.

B. Character – Student will:

- Develop compassion towards persons of other faiths who are seeking for meaning and spiritual fulfilment through religious practices.
- Be further inspired to cultivate Christian values that are found in some of these faiths.

C. Ability – Student will:

- Develop the skill to recognize the affinity or incongruence of these faiths with the Christian faith.
- Gain the skills to communicate intelligibly with persons of other faith.

### TEXTBOOKS:

Markham, Ian S. with Christy Lohr, eds. *A World Religions Reader*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. ISBN (13): 978-1405171090 (paper)

Robinson, Thomas A. and Hillary Rodrigues, eds. *World Religions: A Guide to the Essentials*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. ISBN (13): 978-0801049712 (paper or e-book)

### Supplementary Readings

Other required readings will be supplied by the instructor as needed throughout the course. These readings will be available on the Moodle site. *Please note that the views expressed in some of the readings may not necessarily be the views held by the instructor or endorsed by the Seminary.*

---

<sup>1</sup> This course draws extensively from the efforts of Dr Keir Hammer who has been gracious to allow me to adapt his materials for this modular/hybrid session. I am grateful to Dr. Hammer.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

The assignments and their weights are as follows:

### **1. Reading Log/Preparation (15%; 20hrs.)**

In preparing for this course, students will submit a reading log of a minimum of 250 reading pages, covering at least five of the religious traditions mentioned in the course description. However, students may start their reading by placing the entire course in context as presented by Muck & Adeney (2009:7-31). This is already posted in the e-class. Subsequently, primary readings may be taken from the textbooks listed above and supplemented with materials from other referenced sources. Logs may contain brief summaries of the essential beliefs of the adherents of the religions; concepts of salvation, if any; significant social issues raised; and gender bias, if any. Any of these, and more, may inform personal reflections on their points of affinity and/or departure from the Christian faith. Students should be ready to present aspects of their log entries to the class as basis for discussions. This preparation is critical to meaningful class sessions during the intensive week of learning. **Due on January 6, 2019.**

### **2. Participation (& attendance) (10%)**

Marks will be given for participation and are at the discretion of the instructor. Your mark will be based on your overall contribution to the class, including your presentation(s) and participation in class discussions. Your questions and comments should demonstrate an awareness of the lectures and the readings (In other words, you are expected to do more than just 'shoot from the hip' when you participate.).

### **3. Response Paper (20%; 20hrs.)**

Students will read two book sections (i.e. chapters) on the relationship between Christians and people of other faiths and will write a response to and evaluation of these readings. The purpose is to interact with these ideas, especially considering your current studies in this course. The instructor will give further details on these readings. The paper should be 4-5 pages (1200-1500 words) in length and conform to the Guidelines for Written Assignments below. **Due on January 22, 2019.**

### **4. Visitation Report (25%; 25hrs.)**

Each student will submit a written report of ONE of her/his visitations to and interaction with TWO of the religions covered in this course (one from the WESTERN tradition and one from the EASTERN tradition). Because the study of religious traditions should be more than an in-class experience. These visitations are expected to take place after the week of intensive classes, therefore no class will be cancelled for the visitation.

Your visitations can take on various forms but must include observation of some activity connected to the two religious traditions or their institutions (e.g. a community gathering, service of worship, etc.), and could also include the details of an informal interview (or interviews) with practitioners of those religious traditions. You must approach these visitations directly and gain the permission of the respective institution and/or people, explaining the purpose and source of the project. Your report should include comments on your own experiences as a participant and/or observer as well as an evaluation of the experience from the perspective of a student in this course. Remember that the goal of this assignment is to understand the religion better, not to engage in any kind of debate or critique (although there should be academic, critical elements to the report and you are certainly welcome to dialogue with those you meet IF they are interested in such discussions. Any discussion, however, should not digress to the point of debate or denunciations). Preparation for and completion of each visit and/or interview will likely take 3-5 hours.

You can choose which visitation will form the basis of the more detailed report. The report will require additional time to complete. You will also need to complete the Visitation Summary Sheet in Moodle.

A solid report will require that you have asked thoughtful questions and have sought out available literature or resources (if/where necessary) for the purposes of clarification and interaction. This report should be 3-4 pages (900-1200 words) in length and is worth 25% of your final grade (NOTE: this grade will be reduced by 50% if the Summary Sheet is not completed or you only completed one visit. **The report is due on February 12, 2019.**

### 5. Research Paper (30%; 25hrs.)

A research paper on a selected topic will be the final requirement for this course. Each student must select one of the major religious traditions covered in the course and write an in-depth research paper on a topic of their choosing that falls within the parameters of that religious tradition. You are encouraged to confirm your topic with the instructor before fully engaging it.

The paper must include an element of comparison with some aspect of the Christian faith tradition. More specifically, the student must discuss and engage a significant point of contact between Christian teaching and/or practice and the topic of his/her paper. This portion of the paper should form 1/4 to 1/3 of the total length.

This paper can be submitted electronically (by email). You assume full responsibility to ensure that I receive the e-mail attachment in an accessible and legible format. I will count your paper as submitted once I can **properly access** the file attachment.

The paper should be 10-12 pages (3000-3600 words) in length and give evidence of research including footnotes and a bibliography of no less than 6 sources. See more details under "Guidelines for Written Assignments" below. Bibliographic sources shall include various books and *at least one refereed journal article*. **Final due date is 11:59pm on March 1, 2019.**

### EVALUATION:

The chart below summarizes the marking scheme for the above course requirements.

Item	Weight	Date
Participation (and Attendance)	10%	Each Class Period
Reading Log	15%	January 6, 2019
Response Paper	20%	January 22, 2019
Visitation Report & Summary	25%	February 12, 2019
Research Paper	30%	March 1, 2019

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** This is a weeklong, intensive course, therefore full attendance is expected, and marks will be deducted for any missed classes without a valid reason. Excessive, unexcused absences and lack of participation may adversely affect your grade.

### GENERAL INFORMATION:

#### 1. MOODLE

Taylor Seminary's Moodle is located on a shared platform with our partner seminary, Sioux Falls Seminary. Bookmark this site on your computer for easy, regular access:

<https://moodle.sfseminary.edu>

Moodle log-in is the first initial of your first name and your last name - all in lowercase, with no spaces. For example, if your name is John Calvin, you would log-in as jcalvin

The default password is: TaylorSem123\$ (After your first login it will require you to change it)

The default enrolment key is the course code (all in lowercase, with no spaces). The course code consists of the course prefix followed by the course number.

For example, Old Testament Introduction's key is: ot417

If you are having trouble logging into Moodle or self-enrolling, please email [teresa.seibel@taylor-edu.ca](mailto:teresa.seibel@taylor-edu.ca)

## 2. COURSE WRITING

### *Formatting*

All studies and papers should be typed and formatted according to the Society of Biblical Literature writing style as outlined in the Seminary's *Guidelines for Research Writing in Religion & Theology (SBL)*. For the full stylesheet, please refer to Patrick H. Alexander, et al., ed., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) which is in Reading Room.

### *Research Language.*

You should employ acceptable research language for your paper which is not too informal yet reads inclusively. Avoid the use of gender specific language (e.g., Do not refer to "man" generically or to "mankind," "men," "he"; rather use "humankind," "humanity," "person," etc.)

### *Plagiarism.*

Academic honesty and integrity is essential to the academic enterprise and the Seminary community. All written work submitted *must* be your own. *Guidelines for Research Writing* defines plagiarism as the failure to give credit where credit is due: "To plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written something original which in fact you have borrowed from another without acknowledging that other person's work" (*Guide for Research and Writing*, 2016, p. 11-13). If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, or include direct quotations in your written assignments, you must acknowledge your source(s) properly by in-text citation or footnote. It is also wrong to copy another person's work or to submit an assignment previously handed in for credit in another course. **Students guilty of plagiarism may receive a grade of zero for the assignment and may be brought to the attention of the Seminary's Academic Committee.**

## 3. COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY

After the period for which tuition refunds are available, a "W" will be placed on the transcript of a student who withdraws from any course. Beyond those dates, an "F" will be recorded on the student's transcript.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Reading Material</b>
Day 1: <b>Jan. 7</b>	8.30 - 10.00am	Introduction	Muck & Adeney, 7-31. Robinson & Rodrigues, 1-15. Markham & Lohr, 1-10.
	10.15 - 12noon	Judaism	Robinson & Rodrigues, 39-73. Markham & Lohr, 163-89.
	1.00 - 2.30pm		
	2.45 - 4.30pm		
Day 2: <b>Jan. 8</b>	8.30 - 10.00am	Islam	Robinson & Rodrigues, 109-41. Markham & Lohr, 213-34.
	10.15 - 12noon	Hinduism	Robinson & Rodrigues, 145-76. Markham & Lohr, 31-65.
	1.00 - 2.30pm		
	2.45 - 4.30pm		
Day 3: <b>Jan. 9</b>	8.30 - 10.00am	Sikhism	Robinson & Rodrigues, 225-41 . Markham & Lohr, 237-58
	10.15 - 12noon		
	1.00- 2.30pm	Buddhism	Robinson & Rodrigues, 177-207. Markham & Lohr, 77-102.
	2.45 - 4.30pm		
Day 4: <b>Jan. 10</b>	8.30 - 10.00am	Taoism	Robinson & Rodrigues, 243-56. Markham & Lohr, 109-27.
	10.15 - 12noon		
	1.00 - 2.30pm		
	2.45 - 4.30pm	i. Christianity Encountering World Religions: Some Reflections ii. Closing: Clarifications on assignments	Muck & Adeney, 7-31.

**Other Resources:**

Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll (NY): Orbis, 1991. ISBN (13) 978-0883447192

McLaren, Brian D. *A Generous Orthodoxy: Why I am a missional, evangelical, post/protestant, liberal/conservative, mystical/poetic, biblical, charismatic/contemplative, ... emergent, unfinished Christian*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004. ISBN (13) 978-0310257479

Muck, Terry and Frances S. Adeney. *Christianity Encountering World Religions: The Practice of Mission in the Twenty-first Century*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. ISBN (13): 978-0801026607