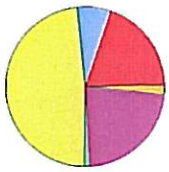


# Religion and Ethnicity

## Syllabus

<a href="#">Colorado State University</a> <a href="#">University Honors Program</a> Honors Senior Seminar HPCC 492 001 <a href="#">Spring 2005</a> Wednesdays 4:10-7:00 p.m. <a href="#">Eddy 8</a>  Prof. <a href="#">James Treat</a> <a href="mailto:treaty@ou.edu">treaty@ou.edu</a> Office hours: Wednesdays 10-11, 1-2 <a href="#">General Services 361</a> (970) 491-7674	<b>January 18-20</b> <a href="#">Week 1: Course Introductions</a> <b>January 20-27</b> <a href="#">Week 2: Understanding Religion</a> <b>January 27-February 3</b> <a href="#">Week 3: Oral Religions</a> <b>February 3-10</b> <a href="#">Week 4: Hinduism</a> <b>February 10-17</b> <a href="#">Week 5: Buddhism</a> <b>February 17-24</b> <a href="#">Week 6: Jainism and Sikhism</a> <b>February 24-March 3</b> <a href="#">Week 7: Shinto</a> <b>March 3-10</b> <a href="#">Week 8: Taoism and Confucianism</a> <b>March 10-24</b> <a href="#">Week 9: Judaism</a> <b>March 24-31</b> <a href="#">Week 10: Christianity</a> <b>March 31-April 7</b> <a href="#">Week 11: Islam</a> <b>April 7-14</b> <a href="#">Week 12: Alternative Paths</a> <b>April 14-21</b> <a href="#">Week 13: The Modern Search</a> <b>April 21-28</b> <a href="#">Week 14: Research Projects</a> <b>April 28-May 5</b> <a href="#">Week 15: Course Conclusions</a>	<a href="#">Course Description</a> <a href="#">Grading Schedule</a> <a href="#">Class Roster</a>  <a href="#">Response Essay</a> <a href="#">Peer Critiques</a> <a href="#">Weekly Evaluation</a> <a href="#">Oral Presentation</a> <a href="#">Campus Event</a> <a href="#">Community Event</a> <a href="#">Research Project</a>  <a href="#">ezboard</a> <a href="#">WebCT</a>
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# Religion and Ethnicity

## Course Description

This course is an interdisciplinary survey of the world's religious traditions and their relationship to ethnic identities. How have various communities and individuals negotiated the complex intersections of spiritual commitment and cultural heritage, of human territory and transcendent reality, of personal path and social boundary? Relying on the theories and methods of comparative religious and ethnic studies, we explore themes of similarity and difference, continuity and change, migration and indigenization. Course readings include conventional texts and electronic resources; class meetings focus on contemporary issues and feature guest speakers and audiovisual presentations. Students have the opportunity to deepen their appreciation for religious and ethnic diversity, to broaden their understanding of responsible citizenship in the context of an emerging global society, and to develop their critical skills for use in academic, professional, and personal settings.

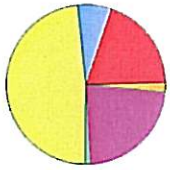
The course textbooks can be purchased at the [CSU Bookstore](#) in the [Lory Student Center](#) and are also available at the [Loan and Reserve Desk](#) in [Morgan Library](#):

Michael Molloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: [McGraw-Hill](#), 2004).

Jonathan Z. Smith (ed.), *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion* (New York, NY: [HarperCollins](#) and the [American Academy of Religion](#), 1995).

All course assignments are governed by the [Policies and Guiding Principles](#) found in the [General Catalog 2004-2006](#). Please make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities as a CSU student, especially the policy on Academic Integrity (which is located toward the bottom of the [Policies and Guiding Principles](#) page).





# Religion and Ethnicity

## Grading Schedule

Each assignment is evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis according to the following schedule:

<u>Course Orientation</u>			15 points
<u>Response Essays</u>	12 @	30 points >>	360 points
<u>Peer Critiques</u>	12 @	10 points >>	120 points
<u>Class Meetings</u>	14 @	15 points >>	210 points
<u>Oral Presentations</u>	2 @	60 points >>	120 points
<u>Weekly Evaluations</u>	12 @	5 points >>	60 points
<u>Research Project</u>			120 points
<u>Final Examination</u>			150 points
TOTAL			1155 points

Any of the following assignments may be completed for extra credit:

<u>Campus Event</u>	limit 1 @	15 points	
<u>Community Event</u>	limit 1 @	15 points	
<u>Research Interview</u>	limit 1 @	15 points	

Course grades are determined according to the following schedule:

A =	1065-1155 points
B =	975-1064 points
C =	885-974 points
D =	795-884 points





# Religion and Ethnicity

## Research Project

### Assignment

The research project is an opportunity to explore a topic of your own choosing, along the lines of the oral presentations but in a more **detailed, systematic** fashion.

An appropriate topic is one inspired by, but not limited to, the assigned readings from the Molloy text, the Smith text, and/or the Internet. Your topic must focus on either (1) a **particular aspect of one religion** studied during weeks 4-8, or (2) a **comparative theme relevant to two religions**, at least one of which was studied during weeks 4-8. In either case, you may not formulate a topic involving your own (past or present) religious tradition; someone who was formerly or is currently a Zen Buddhist, for example, may not focus on any branch of Buddhism.

Keep in mind that this course is an introductory survey of religious traditions and their relationship to ethnic identities; develop your topic carefully so that you, as an inquisitive outsider, will be able to approach your research from a **religious studies** perspective and to interpret your findings in connection with the question of **ethnicity**.

Specific details on each research project assignment will be made available according to the following schedule:

Week 11: Abstract (15 points) due Wednesday, April 6, 4:00 p.m.

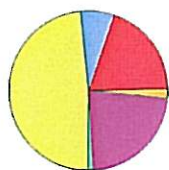
Week 12: Bibliography (15 points) due Wednesday, April 13, 4:00 p.m.

Week 13: Interview (15 points, OPTIONAL) due Wednesday, April 20, 4:00 p.m.

Week 13: Outline (15 points) due Wednesday, April 20, 4:00 p.m.

Week 14: Paper (75 points) due Wednesday, April 27, 4:00 p.m.





# Religion and Ethnicity

## Final Examination

### Assignment

Answer **two** questions, one from Group A and one from Group B; please read the questions carefully.

#### Group A

(1) What is religious studies? Write an essay that explores this question through a critical evaluation of the written work of one of your colleagues in this course. Choose someone you consider to be a thoughtful and perceptive student of religion, someone whose writings are exemplary of the religious studies approach. Evaluate your colleague's response essays, weekly evaluations, oral presentations, and research project, quoting brief excerpts to support your argument. Offer some assessment of the development of her/his thought over the semester.

(2) The year is 2020. Two recently deceased scholars, Michael Molloy and Jonathan Z. Smith, are being considered for induction into the Religious Studies Hall of Fame. A comprehensive search of government records has turned up the fact that you studied the work of both authors in an honors seminar while enrolled at Colorado State University. As a successful, internationally respected professional in your field, you have been asked by the chair of the selection committee to serve as a non-specialist consultant to the committee. Write a memo outlining your thoughts on Molloy's *Experiencing the World's Religions* and Smith's *HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion* as representative texts in the study of religion. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each scholar's methodology for presenting the world's religious traditions to a general audience. Offer a tentative recommendation on whether either scholar deserves to be inducted into the hall, and suggest what other factors--beyond your limited experience and expertise--you think the committee should consider.

#### Group B

(3) What is religion? Write an essay offering a tentative definition based on what you have learned in this course. Illustrate your argument with specific, detailed examples drawn from at least five of the religious traditions we have covered. Evaluate the similarities and differences between your definition and the various proposals in the Molloy and Smith texts. Discuss the relevance of your--or any--definition of religion in an era of multiculturalism and globalization.

(4) The year is 2020. The United States of America was recently privatized and replaced by a new transnational conglomerate, USA Inc., which has just completed a hostile takeover of the United Nations and the World Court through a series of leveraged buyouts of all member countries. As one of the few intellectuals who survived--literally--the corporate restructuring of global society, you have been appointed Director of Religious Affairs in the Division of Personnel Management. The Vice President for Compliance has assigned you the task of inventing a religion suitable for the company's ethnically diverse workforce, now more than six billion strong. Write a proposal outlining your ideas, drawing specific points from at least five of the religious traditions covered in the aptly named "Religion and Ethnicity" course you recall from your college days. Discuss the internal coherence of your new religion and its potential for widespread acceptance across a multitude of ethnic communities. Append a secret memorandum to other intellectuals, not for submission to the VP, explaining how your proposal satisfies the company's desire for



	<p>docile, productive employees while also surreptitiously bearing the seeds of revolution; to put it another way, how your religion will help people survive under a totalitarian regime while also eventually empowering them to reclaim their earthly freedom.</p> <p><b>Each essay</b> should be <b>at least 600 words</b> of polished prose; no parenthetical or bibliographic citations are necessary.</p> <p>"Sign" each essay by appending your <b>name</b> and the <b>word count</b> to the end of each essay; for example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wanda Goodgrade 687 words</p> <p>Use a word processor to draft your essays, with <b>double-spaced</b> paragraphs. Be sure to save a <b>copy</b> for your own records.</p>
Submission	Bring your printed exam to <b>class</b> on Wednesday, May 4.
Criteria	<p>A <b>satisfactory</b> final examination meets the following criteria:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Substantive essay(s) demonstrating your <b>understanding</b> of the course material.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Polished prose</b> not burdened by distracting errors: each <b>word</b> spelled and used correctly; each <b>sentence</b> built on proper punctuation and grammar; each <b>paragraph</b> addressing a coherent and unified point; the entire <b>essay</b> offering an organized exposition of your subject.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Each essay <b>at least 600 words</b> of text, with a <b>signature</b> consisting of your name and the word count.</p> <p>Each essay is worth <b>75 points</b>; the final examination is worth <b>150 points</b>.</p>
Gradebook	<p><u><b>Prof. Treat</b></u> will record your gradebook entry manually.</p> <p>The deadline for this assignment is <b>Wednesday 4:00 p.m.</b></p>