

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT. THE OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE FIRST CLASS.

TITLE: Christianity and World Religions

TERM: 20109 (September 2010)

PROFESSOR: Dr. Josephine Lombardi

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Studying the forms of religious awakenings in the great religions of the world, the course is meant to show both a way to deepen our own religious experience, and a pathway to interfaith dialogue. The focus will be on Scriptures, traditions, and practices in these religions.

CLASS OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Be introduced to the central teachings and beliefs of the main religions
- Study the historical origin, geographical location, present followings and ways of relating to the divine
- Consider the Catholic Church’s position on other religious traditions
- Study recent developments in official interreligious dialogue
- Explore the official teaching on salvation outside the Church and its development throughout the centuries

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Lombardi, Josephine. *What are they saying about the universal salvific will of God?* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2007).

Smith, Huston. *The World’s Religions* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991), or most recent edition.

Not required, yet helpful and detailed introduction to World Religions:

Oxtoby, W. G. (ed). *World Religions*, in 2 vols. I. Eastern Traditions; II Western Traditions (Oxford University Press, 1996). ** concise version now available in one volume.

For comparative study, the following text may be of interest:

Coward, Harold. *Sin and Salvation in the World Religions. A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003).

POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS/PRESENTATIONS/TESTS:

Seminar Presentation

1. Students (or groups of students depending on class size) will prepare 10-15 minute presentation on the teaching, origins, practice, and beliefs of the various First Nations’ People’s communities in North America. You are asked to provide a point-form typed as well as oral presentation of the materials (no power point please). While the instructor will suggest other topics that may be discussed, some suggestions include: Navaho symbols of healing, Medicine Wheel, teachings on death and the afterlife, the role of the shaman, leadership in native communities, the relationship between the divine and the environment in Native spirituality, dialogue between Christian churches and indigenous peoples, Jesuit missions among the Huron in Ontario, moral

teachings, central beliefs, etc. Instructor will provide list of resources. Presentation on African religions is permitted. **(30%)**

2. 500 word commentary on one of the following faith related television shows:

- *Let the Qur'an Speak* (Islam) Saturday evenings on CTS
- *Passages* (Judaism) Sunday evenings on CTS 10 pm.
- *Insight into Sikhism* Saturday nights on CTS

(10%)

3. 500 word summary of one official document published by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Go to www.vatican.va and click on curia, click on Councils, click on Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue

(10%)

4. Final Examination: short answer and one essay response **(50%)**