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| **Miyazaki International College**  **Course Syllabus Spring 2021** | |
|  | Introduction to Religion HMN 103 (4 credits) |
| Content Teacher | |
| Instructor | Nahum Brown |
| E-mail address | nbrown@sky.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp |
| Office/Ext | 1-405 / ext. 3731 |
| Office hours | TBA |
| Language Teacher | |
| Instructor | Cathrine-Mette Mork |
| E-mail address | cmork@sky.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp |
| Office/Ext | 1-303 / ext. 3722 |
| Office hours | Mondays 13:00 ~ 16:00 |

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| **Course Description:** |
| Introduces religious language and behavior by examining the history, beliefs, customs, and practices of various religious traditions of the world through different conceptual frameworks designed and used in the study of comparative religion. |
| **Course Goals/Objectives:** |
| By the conclusion of this course, students will have achieved the following objectives:  ***Content Objectives***   * Understand the key beliefs, stories, and practices of major world religions * Understand the impact of religious belief on the development of world cultures   ***Language Objectives***   * Develop new vocabulary related to course content * Develop oral speaking skills through class speaking activities * Develop critical reading skills   ***Critical Thinking Objectives***   * Deductively and inductively infer conclusions from premises * Understand / evaluate from different normative and informational perspectives * Identify and categorize relevant information to understand similarities and differences between religious traditions   Critical thinking objectives will be achieved through such active learning teaching strategies as:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***Active Learning Strategy*** | ***Critical Thinking Objective*** | | * Interactive lectures * Unit reading and short essay questions * Paraphrasing * Venn diagrams & timelines | * Deductive / inductive reasoning, perspectival thinking * Deductive and inductive inference, perspectival thinking, application / evaluation of information * Identifying relevant information * Categorical thinking | |
| **Teaching Methodology:** |
| Course objectives will be achieved through a variety of active learning teaching strategies, including but not limited to:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Active Learning Teaching Strategy | Course Schedule | | 1. Interactive Lectures with note-taking | *Most classes* | | 1. Spoken summaries/ paraphrases | *Most classes* | | 1. Self-Assessment and peer review | *Last class(es)* | | 1. Pair & Group work | *Most classes* | | 1. Presentations | *Last class(es)* | | 1. Comprehension questions | *Regular homework* | | 1. Content review quizzes | *Most classes* | |

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| **Course Schedule** | | |
| **Day** | **Topic** | **Content** |
| Day 1 | Course Overview | Course outline; evaluation criteria; purpose of religion – symbols  HW: review for syllabus quiz, |
| Day 2 | Introduction to Religion | **Syllabus quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Importance and difficulty of religious ideas, definition of religion, study approach to religions in the course |
| Day 3 | Forms of Religious Belief | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Early religions: hunters and gatherers, agriculture, empires; polytheism vs. monotheism; atheism and agnosticism |
| Day 4 | Unit 1 - Hinduism | Answers to reading questions  **Introduction quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  History and core beliefs of Hinduism (Brahman, Atman, Samsara, Moksha, Karma) |
| Day 5 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Hindu ethics |
| Day 6 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Hindu caste system and religious groups |
| Day 7 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Hindu practices, rituals, stories |
| Day 8 | **Submit reading questions online before class start**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Hinduism review |
| Day 9 | Unit 2 - Buddhism | **Hinduism quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Buddhism overview, stories; beliefs |
| Day 10 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Beliefs continued |
| Day 11 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Community – the two great traditions |
| Day 12 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Buddhist practices/rituals |
| Day 13 | **Submit reading questions online before class starts**  Buddhism review, Hinduism & Buddhism comparison  HW: review for Buddhism quiz |
| Day 14 | Unit 4 - Judaism | **Buddhism quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Western religions introduction; Judaism overview  HW: Eastern religions review assignment, work on reading questions |
| Day 15 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Jewish communities; the importance of history in understanding Judaism |
| Day 16 | **Eastern religions review assignment due!**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Jewish ethics; practices and rituals |
| Day 17 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Jewish stories; Jewish sacredness |
| Day 18 | **Submit reading questions online before class starts**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Judaism review |
| Day 19 | Unit 5 - Christianity | **Judaism quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Overview of Christian beliefs |
| Day 20 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Christian communities (Orthodox Church, Roman Catholic Church, Protestant Churches) |
| Day 21 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Christian stories; Christian practices |
| Day 22 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Christian ethics; Christian sacredness |
| Day 23 | **Submit reading questions online before class starts**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Christianity review |
| Day 24 | Unit 6 - Islam | **Christianity quiz**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Overview of Islam; relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam |
| Day 25 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Islamic beliefs; Stories in Islam |
| Day 26 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Communities within Islam (Sunni and Shi’a); Muslim ethics |
| Day 27 | Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Muslim practices; Sacredness in Islam  HW: submit reading questions online |
| Day 28 | **Submit reading questions online before class starts**  Lecture, reading, note-taking, paraphrasing:  Islam review |
| Day 29 | Review &  Shinto Project | **Islam quiz**, project work  HW: project completion |
| Day 30 | Shinto project showcase & evaluation, final essay preparation |
| **Required Materials:** | | |
| All course materials will be distributed in class and/or made available in on MIC Moodle, to which students must self-enroll. Students must also have an A4 binder to organize required course materials that are distributed in class. Students cannot participate in class without the required materials, so it is essential that students come with their materials to class. | | |
| **Course Policies (Attendance, etc.)** | | |
| ***Attendance & Participation:***  Regular class attendance and participation are essential to success in this class. Students are expected to come to each class session on time and prepared to engage in discussion and activities on the course topic. Students are also expected to listen respectfully to their peers in the class.  In the event that a student must miss class, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructors in advance, as well as find out afterwards what was missed.  Students with more than five absences will be recommended to withdraw from the course. Students must submit and Excused Absence Form to Student Affairs in order to have their absences cleared as an excused absence due to illness, injury, bereavement, etc.  ***Plagiarism:***  Any plagiarized student work will not be accepted. Consult the student bulletin for more information regarding Academic Honesty at MIC. Students who are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult with an instructor prior to submission deadlines. | | |

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| **Class Preparation and Review** |
| For every hour of class time, students are expected to spend a minimum of two hours in preparation and review. It is essential that students prepare sufficiently at home to be able to successfully participate and complete in-class learning activities. Students must complete their readings at home and try to understand them to the best of their abilities.  Students should come to class with questions about anything that they were unable to understand. The final exam will be a comprehensive final exam. Therefore, even though we will examine religions in sequential order, students must continually review to remember earlier content, as well as to look for similarities and differences among the different religions we will study. |
| **Grades and Grading** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***Homework Assignments***  *unit questions 20%*  *unit activities 10%*  *vocabulary portfolio (submitted at end of course) 5%*  *paraphrasing 5%* | 40% | | **Unit Quizzes**  *(6x5% per unit)* | 30% | | **Shinto Project**  *(Script: 5%, Presentation: 5%)* | 10% | | **FinalExam**  *(Essay format)* | 15% | | **Total** | **100%** | |
| **Methods of Feedback:** |
| In principle, work will be peer (and teacher) evaluated online using peer review software. Feedback will be provided in the form of:   * Written comments on quizzes, exams, projects; * Oral feedback both in class and during office hours; * Model answers made available on class website; * Rubric-based evaluations; * Peer review and peer evaluations |

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| **Diploma Policy Standards Satisfied by Course Objectives:** |
| Diploma Policy Objectives (School of International Liberal Arts)   1. Advanced critical thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought) 2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations 3. The ability to identify and solve problems 4. Advanced communicative proficiency in both Japanese and English 5. Proficiency in the use of information technology |
| **Notes** |
| Students are expected to bring a smartphone or other device to access the course website during classes for reading, audio, and video materials. They can download and print out materials outside of class time. If they do not own any devices, they can borrow tablets from the school for use on campus. Students are also requested to being headphones. 100yen shops usually supply them. |

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| Introduction to Religion  Basic Rubric | | Advanced | Proficient | Developing | Emerging | No Attempt |
| Critical Thinking | Ability to Identify & Solve Problems | Gives insightful comments in class discussions.  Shows ability to analyze data, gather and assess resources, and express opinions in a cogent manner. | Able to contribute to class discussions, perform basic content analysis, gather and assess resources, and express opinions in an adequate manner. | Beginning to visualize content in a holistic manner but struggles with complex concepts and relationships. | Shows motivation but lacks the skills needed to think critically, such as information gathering, assessment, and synthesis. | Underwhelming or completely lacking student performance |
| Information Gathering |
| Assessment of Credibility |
| Global Perspectives | Awareness of World Religions & Religious Issues | Engages in the study of world religions, shows comparative understanding of religious ideas, and  can apply course material to contemporary global issues. | Shows awareness of world religions and religious issues, but is unable to undertake macro-level analysis. | Exhibits interest in world religions and religious issues, but has difficulty understanding central ideas and relevance to broader social concerns. | Lacks basic understanding of world religions and religious issues. Engages with materials from limited perspectives. |
| Comparative Analysis |
| English Language Ability | Reading | Exhibits an impressive degree of fluency in speaking and writing. Grammar and reading ability do not impede communication. Is able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary. | Exhibits a sufficient degree of fluency in speaking and writing to convey message. Relies mainly on familiar vocabulary and is not able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary. | Exhibits a satisfactory degree of fluency in speaking and writing but occasionally struggles to convey message.  Frequently references dictionary or other sources of help. | Lacks comprehension and/or confidence in English language usage. Has limited vocabulary knowledge, struggles with grammar and pronunciation, unable to formulate questions. |
| Writing |
| Oral Communication |
| Advanced Communication Proficiency | Public Speaking | Speaks clearly, engages dynamically in discussions and presentations, uses a broad range of vocabulary and relevant jargon. Uses appropriate social cues and nuance. Clearly expresses opinions that are well supported. | Engages in relevant discussions and presentations. Is able to express opinions, but pronunciation and grammar can obscure intended meaning. | Is able to answer simple questions and convey basic information, but pronunciation, intonation, and stress can make responses difficult  to understand or interpret. | Is unsuccessful or struggles to explain and express ideas. Does not offer adequate support for opinions and speech is limited to single sentence or simple utterances. |
| Social Skills |

**PROJECT RUBRIC NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ EVALUATOR: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL: \_\_\_\_ /100 points**

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| **LANGUAGE** | **36~40 points – Great (A)** | **32~35 points – Good (B)** | **24~31 points – Acceptable (C~D)** | **1~23 points – Poor (F)** |
| Language Mechanics  *(40 points)* | The report had few errors. Language was well-used. | The report had language errors, but they did not interfere with comprehension. | The report had language errors that interfered with comprehension. | The report was difficult to understand due to the quality and quantity of language errors. |
| **CONTENT** | **18~20 points – Great (A)** | **16~17 points – Good (B)** | **12~15 points – Acceptable (C~D)** | **1~11 points – Poor (F)** |
| Subject Knowledge  *(30 points)* | An abundance of material clearly related to the research was presented. Points were clearly made and evidence was used to support claims. | Sufficient information with many good points was made, but balance was uneven and there was little consistency. | A great deal of information was not clearly integrated or connected to the research. | The goal of the research was unclear, information was included that did not support the research claims in any way. |
|  | **18~20 points – Great (A)** | **16~17 points – Good (B)** | **12~15 points – Acceptable (C~D)** | **1~11 points – Poor (F)** |
| Organization  *(20 points)* | Information was presented in a logical and interesting sequence which the reader could follow. The writing flowed well. | Information was presented in logical sequence which the audience could follow. | The reader had difficulty following the report because it jumped around and lacked clear transitions. | The reader could not understand the report because there was no sequence of information. |
|  | **9~10 points – Great (A)** | **8 points – Good (B)** | **6~7 points – Acceptable (C~D)** | **1~5 points – Poor (F)** |
| Visuals  *(10 points)* | Excellent visuals that were tied into overall story of research were used. | Appropriate visuals were used and explained. | Visuals were used but not explained or put in context. Font or pictures may have been too small. Visuals may not have been compelling. | There were too few or no visuals, too much text, font was too small, and/or there was not enough support of content. |

**COMMENTS:**