"Gaining Enlightenment is like the moon reflected on the water. The moon does not get wet; the water is not broken. Although its light is broad and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the sky are reflected in one dewdrop on the grass."
-Dogen- (1220-1253)

“Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”
- Jesus of Nazareth-

“Reason is like an officer when the king appears; The officer then loses his power and hides himself. Reason is God’s shadow; God is the sun. What power has the shadow before the sun?

Would you become a pilgrim on the road of love? The first condition is that you make yourself humble as dust and ashes.”
-Rumi-

"I would like to beg you to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Do not search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

-Rilke- (1875-1926)

“Knock on the Sky and listen to the sound.”
-Zen Proverb-

Leslie Hopkins
Office: B 265
Phone: 847-543-2961; Cell 262-325-5625
e-mail: lhopkins@clcillinois.edu
PHI 126 World Religions  
Instructor: Leslie Hopkins

Office Hours:

Mondays and Wednesdays

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Fridays

(I get to my office before class around 9:00, so please call me in transit if you need to talk to me before this; I also welcome texts/calls between 2:00 and 9:00, although there might be a delay in returning messages to you).

REQUARED TEXTS and MATERIALS:

Brodd, Little, et. All. Invitation to World Religions. (abbreviated now at IWR) Oxford University Press. 2013


Select Readings (abbreviated now as SR) and Select Handouts (abbreviated now as SH) (most also posted on Blackboard (abbreviated now as Bb))

- A pocket folder for handouts and other course materials
- A bound notebook for your Research Project materials.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the unique and ever changing character of major world religions (living faiths), and treats both their intrinsic (inner, extraordinary) and extrinsic (outer, ordinary) dimensions, by way of a philosophical lens. While the history and major tenets of traditional world religions will be given some formal treatment, we will also look at myths, rites, symbols, aesthetic practices, philosophical questions and problems still present among and between religious community practices, their teachings, and their scriptures. I apologize for those many times during this semester that the depth of treatment of all the world religions is not properly met due to the time constraints of the semester.

I tend to classify this course as inter/intradisciplinary because religious philosophy is often solidified and better experienced through the fine arts of poetry, music, dance, sculpture, architecture, anthropology, history, and philosophical theology. As such, the distinct philosophical questions of religion (PHI 123) may ostensibly be given less focus, but I believe that these crucial questions are still woven into the very fabric of living religions; that is, what designs and producing the “dyed in the cloth” religious believer. We will examine these.

A religious scholar, Mary Pat Fisher, wrote that religion is not a museum piece. Rather faith is emotional, rational, irrational and intuitive, ontological, ethical, epistemological and eschatological. (All of these terms will be defined later). Typically religion is represented as a three
part definition – that of the head, the hand and the heart. It is fluid and as students we often find it difficult to straddle the fence between a reverence and respect for the complexity of each religion’s living essence as an often contradictory faith vs. reason argument runs through it. Pluralistic methods should help us here, and these will be used as part of my teaching philosophy. Additionally, audio-visual experiences and textual analysis study will bring us to many bridges that span many cultural landscapes and cross deep ideological currents as we witness globalization in the 21st century. I hope you leave this course with an enhanced appreciation, if not a more in-depth understanding of the religious cultures that now influence every aspect of your new millennial journey. Namaste...

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

*After taking this course, you should be comfortable in:*

1. using your newly acquired working vocabulary and conceptual grasp of major living faiths and new religious movements by way of insider thinking, (scripture, literature, rites, rituals, music, slides, and video settings), as well as outsider-thinking, (including philosophy, anthropology, and history of comparative religion via a modernist "suspended faith";

2. comparing, contrasting, juxtaposing and synthesizing various religious visions, practices and philosophical positions through assessments, presentations, essays, a debate, and a visit to a religious shrine or ritual or event, and a research project;

3. comprehending your own sense of religious ontology (self meaning and truth) as it emerges by way of immersing yourself in a world religion project (written paper or presentation or other) that engages your religious passion;

4. analyzing, evaluating, perhaps even impacting the various ways and means by which globalization has effected the present changing nature of religion/s and propels us into future issues, concerns, and visions of faith, reason, intuition, and imagination.

5. Embracing faith as an important addition to reason; applying faith to ethical perspective current in the 21st century (specifically through the Sharma text).

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:**

1. 6 in-class/take home assessments @ 5% each @ =30%

2. A ritual, symbol, art, architecture sharing @ 10% (research hard copy and notes required) OR A Pilgrimage Visit to another religious environment, event or gathering that pertains to your project @10%

3. A Judaism Movements Research/Presentation @ 10% (some in-class prep provided)

4. A Christianity Movements Research/Presentation @ 10% (some in-class prep provided)

5. Islam Approaches/Movements Research Presentation @ 10% (some in-class prep provided)

6. Ethical Research Forum: notes on research from WR text and Bb @ 10%; presentation paper and/or creative object shared with other members of class @ 20%) @ 10% = 30%
The In-class/ Take Home Assessments (6):

Part 1
The in-class assessments might include T-F (where corrections are required), concept explanation and some scriptural identification/discussion. These will take approximately 45 in total time, and will be given at the beginning of the class period. (Coming late will shorten your writing allowance). I shall give you a study sheet to prepare for these quizzes the class prior to each quiz. You may use two pages of preparation for the quiz, and I shall give extra credit points for these based on depth of detail and thoroughness. All texts will be considered for these quizzes. These must be taken during our class period. Make-ups are allowed before the next class session.

Part 2
A take home essay will specifically relate to your texts and Blackboard readings, will be no longer than 3 pages in length, will require quotes, and will be handed out to you when the in-class assessment section is taken or on Blackboard. It will be due with an agreed upon class vote. No late essays will then be allowed.

(Note: The class may decide that all of this is to be done at home...)

Symbol/ Ritual/ Rite/ Thinker Sharing OR Religious Environment Pilgrimage Visit):

Your Choice:

- The Symbol/ Ritual/ Rite/ Thinker Sharing (10%)

Once during this course you may present a class presentation about a visual, audio, performing aspect of a religion of your choosing. This requires some in-depth research beyond your texts, and I ask that your research 4 SCHOLARLY sources for the substance of this component. It is essential that you provide copies of your essays, your power point, your bibliography etc. for your grade, for without this, you will receive no higher than a “C” quality grade. I also welcome group presentations centered on particular religion, but all participants must show additional number of sources to fit each student, and the work handed in by the students must provide evidence of individual thinking and writing. ALL work is expected at the presentation time. NO presentations will be allowed in May! (NOTE: Failure to do this Sharing will necessitate your completing the Pilgrimage Visit component.

OR

- Pilgrimage Visit to another Religious Environment (10%)

Many of you probably belong to, are attracted to, or are skeptical of various religions we will cover in this course. What we all have in common is the plethora of things to be learned in this subject. I suggest that with your visit you seek each other out for ways to attend a shrine, temple, event, church, etc. so that you can experience in a comfortable way a religious experience that is living, (i.e. in the flesh). ALL MATERIALS -- Photos, brochures, on-line information, etc. -- are required as evidence for this visit section. You will also provide three pages of writing to
explain how this augments your course progression, particularly as to what new information you might have gathered. Two SCHOLARLY resources, as well as a 5 pages paper or visual display are required.

**Ethical Research Forum Project:**

Your Ethical Research Forum will be grounded in topics found in your World Religions textbook (Sharma), the focus being decided upon by the class members. It should be one you explore with passion, with the intention to become more informed and instrumental in perceiving and influencing the post-9/11 world. As such, I ask that that you explore the internet after you have read pertinent articles in your Sharma text and find two scholarly articles for the topic event. It is essential that you also choose a religion, and provide the essays with highlighting and notes by the last week of the semester. These will form the substance of your paper.

There is no specified formal “structure” to this project; APA or MLA is not required except for your written synthesis section. Evidence of critical thinking and depth of content (use of your essays) is required. Terms, notes taken in class, new ideas found in your research MUST be compiled in some sort of notebook and pulled together in some sort of fashion so that your question is asked, studied, analyzed, and producing some sort of clarity of answer. You must somehow, someway, give some evaluative summary and closure to your Ethical Vision.

As a guideline, consider a good project to be:

1. A presentation preparation that is 20+ pages notes, personal response, detailed outline of the WR chapter and your outside articles. A works cited page it also required.
2. The ethical vision paper is a separate component and should be at least 7-9 pages beyond but synthesizing the 20 pages of other materials. It is due before our final exam meeting date as it will be copied and is to be shared with all other members of the class. I am thinking that you might be able to post this paper on Bb.

**There are two grades given for this project: one for the content and research; 2) one for the ethical vision paper. These are worth 5% and 10% each @ 15% total**

**GUIDELINES AND OTHER COURSE ESSENTIALS:**

1. I expect you to attend class and participate in the way you feel most comfortable and professional. It is important for you to know that after 6 missed classes, your grade will automatically be reduced one grade (no excuses). After more than 8 absences, consider the possibility that I shall either fail you or withdraw you from the course.
2. There is a "W" policy at the College of Lake County. Please become familiar with this policy. An "I" Incomplete grade will not be given unless you have serious unforeseen circumstances.
3. Study guides and handouts are often given in class. I also give you information that beyond your course materials and I shall assess you on much of through your assignments and quizzes. I shall also post SOME assignments on Bb. If you miss a class and want applicable handouts, please connect with me outside of class time.
4. Cheating, (including plagiarism) is not tolerated and an "F" grade will ensue.
5. Respect for each other’s presence and for varying religious beliefs is expected, not only because it makes for better course progression, but also because all living faiths require this as a prerequisite for virtuous behavior. Discourtesy and/or classroom disruption will be treated with appropriate, religious contextual promptness.
6. Assessments will require your use of course material (class, Bb readings and texts only). On-line research that does not show knowledge of our class progression is not acceptable and will be refused - given back to you for another effort. Plagiarism is also unacceptable, and it will result in a zero grade.
7. Out of professional courtesy, all electronic devices should be turned off; if you need to
text or make a call, please leave the classroom to do so; or, if you choose to stay, expect some
pro-active interaction from me thereof.
8. Due to the fact that our Final Exam week will be our Class Sharing of our projects and will
involve a grade, there will be a mandatory attendance policy for this day and the last class
day of class the week before. Those who do not attend class this final class will be marked
down in the grade for this project.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE BY WEEK
NOTE: Primary readings study of texts and Bb assignments and audio visual film showing may occur
anytime; extra credit for notes is often allowed during these class sessions. Some but not all assignments
will be posted on Bb.

WEEK 1 - January 20-24 (no class Monday for Martin Luther
King holiday)
RELIGION: WORLD PERSPECTIVES, ETHICAL VISIONS

Assignment:
IWR - Chapter 1
WW - Forward
WR - pp. xi-xiv, Part I, Lepard, pp. 75-80; Part 5, read Crowley, Sharma, Armstrong, Kirarira, The
Declaration of Human Rights, pp. 333-340
SR on Bb

WEEKS 2 AND 3 - January 27-31, February 3-7
African and/or Primal Aboriginal, or Ancient
Religions;(Class Vote)

Assignment:
IWR -- TBA
WW - Chapter 8
SR on Bb

Assessment (take home or in-class) #1 Week 3

WEEKS 4 AND 5 - February 10-14, 17-21
SANATANA DHARMA (HINDUISM)

Assignment:
WW - Chapter 1
IWR - Chapter 4
WR Part 1, read Sharma; Part 2, read Sharma; Part 3, read Singh; Part 7, read Vohrat, Achuta,
Lakshmi Devi
SR on Bb

Assessment #2 Week 5
WEEK 6 – (tentative) February 24-28
Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism or Bahai (Class Vote)

Assignment:
IWR – TBA
WR – (if Bahai, Lepard, Part II)
SR on Bb TBA

WEEKS 7-8 – March 3-7, 10-14

Assessment #3 Week 7

BUDDHISM

Assignment:
WW – Chapter 2
IWR – Chapter 5
WR – Part 6, “Buddhism meets Hinduism”; TBA

SR on Bb

WEEKS 9-10 March 17-21, Semester Break 24-30, 31 – April 4

Assessment #4 Week 9

JUDAISM

Assignment:
WW – Chapter 5
IWR – Chapter 10
WR -- Part I, read Rosen
SR on Bb

WEEKS 11-12 – April 7-11, 14-18
EAST ASIAN LIVING RELIGIONS (CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM)

Assignment:
WW – Chapters 3 and 4
IWR – TBA
WR -- TBA
SR on Bb

Assessment #5 Week 11
WEEKS 13 - 14, April 21-25,
CHRISTIANITY

Assignment:
WW - Chapter 6
IWR -- Chapter 11
WR -- Part 1, read O'Neill; Part 3, read Reuther; Part 6, read Baum
SR on Bb

WEEKS 15 AND 16 - April 28-May 2, May 5-9
ISLAM

Assignment:
WW – Chapter 7
IWR – Chapter 12
WR -- Chapter 7 select TBA
SR on Bb

(NOTE: CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM MAY BE IN REVERSE ORDER VIA CLASS VOTE)

Assessment #6 Week 15

WEEK 16

Final Forum on Ethical Issue within Religion (Class Choice via Topics found in WR Text)