Course Syllabus

WINTER 2016

WORLD RELIGIONS
THEO 0737 / MISS 0784

JANUARY 11 – April 11
MONDAYS, 6:45 – 9:35PM

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To reach me by phone use my cell phone number. Leave a message on my cell phone. When sending me an email please put Tyndale in subject line.

I am available on campus by appointment, usually Monday-Thursday. I can see students before or after class or during class break on Mondays. The most effective way to make an appointment is by email. If you need to reach me about something by phone, use my cell phone number.

To access your course material, please go to http://classes.tyndale.ca. Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account. For information how to access and forward emails to your personal account, see http://www.tyndale.ca/it/live-at-edu.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course begins with an introduction to different responses to world religions. We will then examine crucial guidelines in the study of other religions. After these methodological issues are addressed, attention will be directed to assessment of
Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, western esotericism and other religious traditions.

Mormonism will also be assessed. It is now often considered a world religion because of its unique history, beliefs and practices, and because of its longevity and incredible worldwide expansion.

Guests will be invited from various religions and we will have ex-members of groups in our class. We may also visit relevant religious sites.

**Purpose of Course**

The aims of this course are four-fold:

- to introduce students to several major religions of the world in order that they can understand the main beliefs and practices of these religions
- to assess these religions in light of the central claims of Christian faith
- to help students relate their Christian faith to other religions in an informed and loving manner
- to grasp the pluralistic context of Christian mission where the world religions have come to the west.

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the course, through participation in class, reading material, research and interaction with Professor Beverley and guests, students should be able to:

- Identify the basics of Christianity to serve as a standard for analysis of religions
- Understand the options in understanding the religions of the world
- Know the basics of the major world religions
- Interact and assess the various views in religions of the world
- Recognize the mission of the Church in relation to other religions

**III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**A. REQUIRED TEXTS AND PRIMARY and SECONDARY READING**

At the first class Professor Beverley will provide a list of primary reading from each religion dealt with in the course. These readings will be tied to Internet sites for easy access and will be readings that are central to each group, either from the group’s scriptures or other material directly from the group. As well, Professor Beverley will provide crucial secondary material about each group in terms of major analysis and/or critique from outside experts.

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Attendance, Interview and Participation (20%)
   Attendance is expected at all classes. **Students who miss more than three classes without exceptional reason will fail the course.**
   All students will have an interview with Professor Beverley during the course. This will provide an opportunity for the student to share his/her life story and views about Christian faith and other religions.

   Please provide a one-page timeline of your life for the interview.

2. Response to three books (40%) and supplementary material in terms of analysis of the religious groups, leaders, beliefs and practices.

   IF you have used Professor Beverley’s books in another course, substitute books will be suggested for learning.

   Students are to read the books related to course content and **make a dated log of ongoing thoughts and reactions** to the specific groups, leaders, issues being raised in the various chapters. This applies also to reading of primary and secondary material. The response can be informal but must be specific and tied to all readings. Lists can be used but tie comments to details in books, articles, and websites. Comments are to be **recorded/written in a binder** that will be shared with Professor Beverley.

   As reading takes place the student should keep two large questions in mind: (a) what is the most appealing aspect of the group in question that explains its success or impact, and (b) what represents the most significant errors or weaknesses in the group, from a Christian perspective.

   **Note on Responding to Professor Beverley’s books:**
   You are not asked to review the books but to use the books to address the important questions/issues about the various religions of the world, Islam and about Mormonism. Use the material in the book as a way of framing your own learning, thinking and perspective.
3. **Major Research Project (30%)**
Select a major research project that is explicitly about one world religion and about a focused topic about that world religion. Speak to Professor Beverley about the topic before you begin study. Write a 2500-word essay from your research.

The research project should be based on the relevant primary material from the group in question, both in terms of the scripture of the group and its other official material. As well, attention should be given to the major experts outside of the group, in relation to books, articles, and Internet material. As well, this learning from the group’s primary material and outside experts should be used to frame a proper Christian response to the group and topic explored.

4. **Final Exam (take home) 10%**

C. **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK**

**Late Assignments**
Assignments are expected when due and a penalty will be imposed for late submissions unless exceptional circumstances arise. Inform professor about necessary extension.

**Academic Integrity**
Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for academic polices on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at http://tyndale.ca/registrar.

For proper citation style, consult the *Chicago-Style Quick Guide* (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style Online*, especially ch. 14. For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.46 to 10.51 and 14.253 to 14.254.

**English Comprehension**
If you are not proficient in writing or understanding English, please check with the registrar’s office about a course designed to help you.
Notice on Written Assignments
On every assignment please put your name, phone number(s), student number, date assignment due, date assignment handed in, and number of hours of work on project.

Special Note about Assignment Due Dates
Please do not miss class in order to finish an assignment. Every student can ask for an extension without penalty due to extreme circumstances. Please inform Professor Beverley of these special circumstances in writing.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, Interview, and Participation</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to book content and primary and secondary reading</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Research Project</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (take home)</td>
<td>10 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS (tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 11</td>
<td>Introduction to Course Methodology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>Islam</td>
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### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Religion/Group(s)</th>
<th>Event/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Response to GJR content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>February 15</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Class Family Day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Hinduism/Buddhism</td>
<td>Response to A to Z content</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>March 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Class Reading Week</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Sikhism</td>
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<td>March 21</td>
<td>Mormonism</td>
<td>Response to MC content</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Baha’i</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>Western Esotericism (New Age)</td>
<td>Research Essay Due Apr 9</td>
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<td>April 11</td>
<td><strong>Class Party and Conclusions</strong></td>
<td>Take Home due Apr 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Professor Beverley’s books contain abundant bibliographical and Internet resources on each religion/group.