

REL 2601 - Introduction to World Religions

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 42593,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Richard Schumacher

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Rev. Richard A. Schumacher

Instructor Professional Qualifications:

Graduate Certificate, Working Class Studies, Youngstown State University 2019

MA, English, Youngstown State University, 2017

MA, American Studies, Youngtown State University, 2014

BA Religious Studies, Youngstown State University, 2013

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Course Description

2601. Introduction to World Religions. A survey of the major world religions exploring their distinctive features and common threads. A study of their founders, systems of thought, symbols, and sacred literatures. 3 s.h.

In this course we explore the:

- Beliefs and practices of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Jainism, Sikhism, Indigenous Religions, Alternative Paths and The Modern Approach
- Rituals and celebrations specific to each tradition,
- Art, architecture, and music as expressions of religious faith,
- Mystical and spiritual experiences within different religious contexts,
- How religions shape individuals and cultures worldwide.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Experiencing the World's Religion, Eighth Edition	Michael Molloy	9781260813746

Additional readings may be required for students seeking contract Honors credit through the Sokolov Honors College.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Weekly Readings and Writing Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Syllabus	Course Introduction	
8/31	Chapter 1	Understanding Religion	Personal Reflection 1



9/7	Chapter 2	Indigenous Religions	Reading Summay 1 Personal Reflection 2
9/14	Chapter 3	Hinduism	Reading Summary 2 Personal Reflection 3
9/21	Chapter 4	Buddhism	Reading Summary 3 Unit Test 1 on Friday Sept 25th
9/28	Chapter 5	Jainism & Sikhism	Reading Summary 4 Personal Reflection 4
10/5	Chapter 6	Daoism & Confucianism	Reading Summary 5
10/12	Chapter 7	Shinto	Reading Summary 6 Personal Reflection 5
10/19	Chapter 8	Judaism	Unit Test 2 on Friday October 23rd Personal Reflection 6
10/26	Chapter 9	Christianity	Reading Summary 7 Personal Reflection 7
11/2	Chapter 10	Islam	Reading Summary Personal Reflection 8
11/9	Chapter 11	Alternative Paths	Reading Summary 10 Personal Reflection 9
11/16	Chapter 12	The Modern Search	
11/23	None	Final Thoughts, Next Steps	Personal Reflection 10
11/30	None	Independant Study & Exam Prep	Unit Test 3 on Friday December 4th

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.