Application for Certification of a Course as a General Education Course

CTE HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS CATEGORY

Applicant: David Panisnick  
Course Alpha and Number: REL 150  
Course Title: Intro. to World's Living Religions

Instructions:

Explain how the learning taking place in this course (required course only) meets the hallmarks listed below for the Humanities and Fine Arts General Education Category. Do one or both of the following:

- Identify specific course SLOs that align with each hallmark.
- Describe class assignments or activities in which students learn and/or demonstrate the hallmark objective. Assignments and/or activities cited should be sufficiently important in terms of both time spent on them and their impact on students' final grades in the course.

Try to address all of the hallmarks. The strength of some responses should counterbalance the weakness of others. See Hallmark questions that should be addressed in response to each of the hallmarks.

Also attach a copy of the official course outline.

The Hallmarks:

The course...

1. promotes knowledge of the major trends, persons, and events in the historical development of world cultures.

   The course addresses the origins, historical development and contemporary trends in the world's major religions. This necessarily includes references to persons, places, dates and events. A general division is between Western and Eastern religions, which deals with different cultures; West and East each occupy about half of the course.

   SLOs 2, 3 and 5 address this hallmark. The instructor influences class discussions to reinforce the SLOs. The SLOs are also embedded in the exam questions.

2. promotes an understanding of how the arts and humanities reinforce human values and constitute significant human activity in the creation and expression of those values.

   The humanities are emphasized over the arts. Of all the humanities, few, if any, are more relevant to the historical transmission of human values. Those values are most evident in the ethical systems of the various religions. A historical approach traces how those values have evolved since their inception, as well as their impacts on cultures.

   SLO 4 specifically addresses this hallmark. See #1 for assignments and activities.

3. promotes the critical evaluation of different points of view and helps students develop reasoned and persuasive arguments in support of different historical, philosophical, religious, political, and ethical concerns or issues.

   From the beginning of the course and throughout the semester, the importance of an academic approach to religion is emphasized. Academic means critical evaluation and analysis. Students are encouraged to be candid in their reservations regarding religious beliefs and practices. As such, it is impossible not to teach the course as a semblance of integrated studies, and not just the disciplines mentiona in this hallmark, but also Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology.

   SLO s 1 and 2 address this hallmark. See #1 for assignments and activities.

4. promotes an understanding and ability to interpret, through critical inquiry or direct experience, one or more forms of artistic and humanistic expression (e.g., writing, visual or performing arts, historical analysis, philosophical inquiry).

   Again, reaffirming the academic nature of the course (critical inquiry), attention is given to written sources (e.g., scriptures), historical analysis (e.g., religions change enormously through place and time), and philosophical inquiry (e.g., comparison of different views of the Absolute, the afterlife and how supernatural beliefs help people manage existential anxieties like deception and death).

   SLO 1 addresses this hallmark. See #1 for assignments and activities.

Applicant's signature: ___________________________  
Date: 11/6/13

Please submit this application to your division secretary.
CTE Humanities and Fine Arts Hallmark Questions
(Please address the questions below.)

1. The course promotes knowledge of the major trends, persons, and events in the historical development of world cultures.

   Does the course content devote time tracing the stories of major events and influences in the historical experience of world cultures? Yes / No

   What topics are covered?
   In what level of detail? Not too much. It's an intro course. Only four classes per religion.
   What are students asked to do to demonstrate this knowledge?
   Essay exams and review discussions.

2. The course promotes an understanding of how the arts and humanities reinforce human values and constitute significant human activity in the creation and expression of those values.

   Does the course specifically address topics that develop student understanding of how art and other humanities disciplines (e.g., philosophy, religion, history, political science, literature, interdisciplinary studies) are areas of thought and expression that help societies define and explore human values? Yes / No

   What topics are covered?
   In what level of detail? The highlighted areas are all relevant depending on which religion being discussed.
   What are students asked to do to demonstrate this knowledge?
   Essay exams and review discussions.

3. The course promotes the critical evaluation of different points of view and helps students develop reasoned and persuasive arguments in support of different historical, philosophical, religious, political, and ethical concerns or issues.

   Does the course cover areas where there are debates and differences related to understanding human society and experiences (e.g., debates about causes and effects of historical events, issues in philosophy, differences between religions, or debates about political topics or ethical issues)? Yes / No

   Differences in religions are increasingly discussed as each successive religion is taught. Sometimes this is called Comparative Religion.

   What topics are covered?
   In what level of detail? Greater detail at end, less in beginning.
   What are students asked to do to demonstrate this knowledge?
   Essay exams and review discussions.

4. The course promotes an understanding and ability to interpret, through critical inquiry or direct experience, one or more forms of artistic and humanistic expression (e.g., writing, visual or performing arts, historical analysis, philosophical inquiry).

   Does the course require students to show – by analyzing and interpretation, or applying in practice – their awareness of how ideas are expressed through creative mediums (art, writing, philosophical ideas, historical theories etc.) Yes / No

   Students encouraged to delve deeper, critical thinking and challenge religious beliefs & practices, which are the primary topics being analyzed.

   What topics are covered?
   In what level of detail? Detail will vary depending on class.
   What are students asked to do to demonstrate this knowledge?
   Essay exams, review discussion and in class interest student exchange of views and opinions.
Rel. 150: Introduction to the World’s Major Religions: Introduction to the world’s living religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam.

I. INTRODUCTION

2. The Importance of Context and Interpretation.

II. JUDAISM

1. Historical Origins.
   a. The Hebrew Bible
   b. In Search of Ancient Israel

2. Cosmology.
   a. Yahweh: From Henotheism to Monotheism
   b. Salvation History and Damnation History

3. Ethics.
   a. The Torah: 613 Laws

   a. Orthodox, Conservative and Reform

5. Focus Analysis: Creation Myths

III. CHRISTIANITY

1. Historical Origins.
   a. The New Testament
   b. From Jesus to Paul to Constantine

2. Cosmology.
3. Ethics.
   a. Jesus and the Fulfillment of the Jewish Law

   a. Catholicism and Protestantism
   b. Liberal vs. Conservative

5. Focus Analysis: Sacrifice

IV. ISLAM

1. Historical Origins.
   a. From Muhammed to Uthman
   b. The Koran

2. Cosmology.
   a. Radical Monotheism: Allah
   b. The Five Doctrines

3. Ethics.
   a. The Five Pillars
   b. Other Observances

   a. Sunni and Shi’ite

5. Focus Analysis: Fundamentalism

V. HINDUISM

1. Historical Origins.
   a. Dravidian Civilization and the Aryan Invasion
   b. Sacred Texts: Vedas and Epics

2. Cosmology.
a. Brahman, Atman and Maya
b. Thirty-two Million gods

3. Ethics.
   a. Karma and the Caste System
   b. Stages and Duties of Life

   a. Yoga, Bhakti and Tantra

5. Focus Analysis: Gods and Goddesses

VI. BUDDHISM

1. Historical Origins.
   a. Siddhartha Gautama and the Indian Period
   b. The Pali Canon
   c. Geographical Expansion

2. Cosmology.
   a. The Four Noble Truths
   b. Non-Attachment
   c. Sunyata

3. Ethics.
   a. The Noble Eightfold Path
   b. The Bodhisattva and Compassion

   a. Theravada and Mahayana
   b. Zen

5. Focus Analysis: Meditation

VII. RELIGION IN CHINA: CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM

1. Historical Origins.
   a. Confucius and Mencius
b. The Han Dynasty
c. Texts: I Ching and Tao Te Ching

2. Cosmology.
   a. The Tao: Yin and Yang
   b. Household gods and Ancestor Veneration

3. Ethics.
   a. Confucian: Jen and Li
   b. Taoist: Wu Wei


5. Analysis: Ritual

VIII. SHINTO

1. Historical Origins.
   a. Primitive Shinto
   b. Chinese Influence
   c. Texts: Kojiki and Nihongi

2. Cosmology.
   a. Creation and the World of the Kami

3. Ethics.
   a. Ritual and Purification
   b. The Bushido Code

   a. The New Religions and the New New Religions

5. Focus Analysis: Purity Systems

IX. INDIGENOUS RELIGION

1. Case Study: Hawaiian Religion
a. Polynesian Antecedents  
b. Animism  
c. Anthropomorphism  

2. Focus Analysis: Myth  


GRADING: There will be three exams. The first exam will be worth 20% of your final grade. The second and third exams will each count for 40% of your final grade. All exams will be essays.  

David Panisnick  
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Hours: MW 8:00-8:30, 1:00-2:00, F 8:00-11:00; by appointment.  
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SLO: Student Learning Opportunities: Upon completion of the course a student should be able to:  

1. Speak and write objectively about Religion as an academic topic.  
2. Critically explain contemporary challenges in understanding the historical origins of the world’s major religions.  
3. Accurately identify important names, dates, and events in the world’s major religions.  
4. Succinctly and objectively explain the major beliefs and practices of the world’s major religions.  
5. Analyze the contemporary status of each of the world’s major religions within a global perspective.  

Prerequisites and General Education Core: Recommended Prep: Placement in ENG 22/60. Rel. 150 fulfills a general education core requirement for the A.S., A.A.S., and A.T.S. degrees in (d) Understanding and appreciating world cultures and values. For the A.A. degree, Rel. 150 fulfills a diversification requirement in Arts, Humanities, and Literature in Group 2: Humanities (DH). Rel. 150 fulfills 3 credits of the Foundations Requirements under Global and Multicultural Perspectives.