

RELS 102-001

Winter Term

Instructor: Dr. Isabel Mukonyora

INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

On-Line Class:

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DESCRIPTION: This “Invitation to World Religions” introduces students to religion in terms of cultural, historical, contemporary, social, psychological, and ethical dimensions of world religions. Throughout the course, modern questions about social change and globalization will be used to highlight the need for new ways of defining and studying religions that are old and new.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students develop 1) the ability to acquire and organize different ideas and increase **proficiency in reading, writing and sharing ideas on Blackboard**. 2) theoretical connections between religions; 3) the capacity for objectivity and appreciation for values which govern the practice of different religions; 4) an appreciation of the complexity and diversity of world’s cultures.

Textbook: Invitation to World Religions, by Jeffrey Brodd, Layne Little, Bradley Nystrom and Robert Platzner (Oxford University Press, 2012).

First Assignment to be submitted on Blackboard before noon, Saturday January 10, 2015

Read thoroughly Chapter 1, 2 or 3 (pages 1-27).

- ✓ **REVIEW QUESTIONS 1-5 (page 26).**
Please give answers that show clearly what pages of the textbook you find the correct information needed to help you produce 5 good answers. Please remember to reflect on what you write by saying what is interesting, confusing or important about each answer as someone who will have read all of Chapter 1.
- ✓ **Find at least 5 words or phrases from the glossary on pages 26 and 27 whose meaning tells you something new or different about religion given your own assumptions about religion.**
- ✓ **Read thoroughly EITHER Chapter 2 “Indigenous African Religions” OR Chapter 3 on “Indigenous Religions of North America.”** Use the Discussion Board to demonstrate your comprehension skills by explaining two different religious factors which strike you the most. As you do this, please remember to specify where you find your information by providing in-text citations.
- ✓ *For example, “Although cremation is becoming popular in the US, it is not “likened to a fire sacrifice” (Brodd et.al 112). Apparently, the Hindu, wash, smear sandalwood paste, wrap the body in cloth before it is placed on pyre to burn with the head facing north (122). This interesting to me because I know that the Zoroaster use fire to pray to Ahura Mazda and also talk about the north as the direction from which forces of evil come. I*

wonder if the Zoroaster who live in India practice cremation (BM Lecture notes). This is a good answer because I have identified an aspect of Hinduism and reflecting further on the religious significance of fire in another religion I happen to know.

Because you are each working with me from home, take this as an opportunity to expand horizons by thinking critically. Assignments 2 and 3 are posted on Blackboard.

Student Disability Services: Students with disability who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Student Success Center, DUC A200. Per university policy, please DO NOT request accommodations from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services. ADA Guidebook for Faculty/Staff is available at: <http://www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/Legal/EOO/sds.htm>

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